

Invasive Plant Alert: Giant Hogweed

Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is an invasive plant that was first discovered in Massachusetts in 2002. It is most commonly found along roadsides and river banks and prefers rich, moist soil. When in flower, plants may reach 14ft or more in height. Plants die after flowering, typically after two years of growth.

Giant Hogweed is known not only for its invasive properties, but also for its poisonous “phototoxic” sap, which causes severe irritation and blistering when it comes into contact with skin that is then exposed to the sun. Because of this, care should be taken to avoid direct contact with this species.

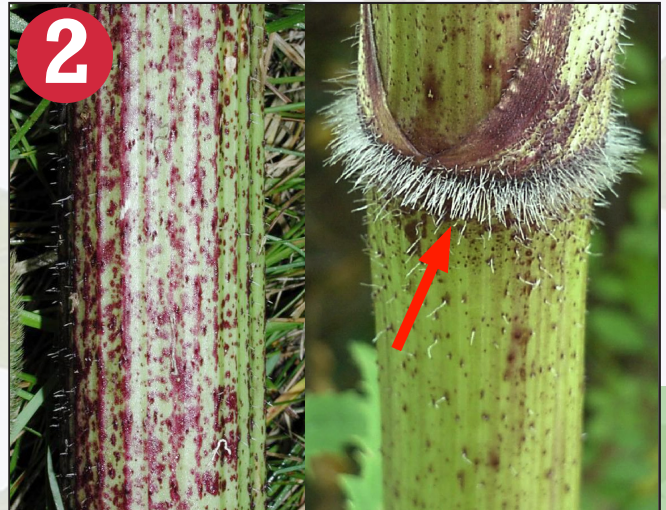
What to look for:

1



Leaves grow in a rosette around the bottom of the stem, and can grow up to 5ft wide. Mature leaves are deeply lobed, with each lobe deeply cut into pointed teeth. Smaller leaves are also found along the stem.

2



Green stems are splotted with purple and covered with stubby hairs. Stem nodes are prominently marked with a ring of coarse white hairs.

3



Flower heads are clusters of tiny, white flowers attached to the top of the stem in an umbrella-like shape (umbels), similar to Queen Anne’s Lace but significantly larger (up to 2ft across). Plants flower from June through July.

GIANT HOGWEED LOOK-ALIKES (Do Not Report):



Cow Parsnip



Canada Lettuce



Wild Angelica

If you suspect that you have found Giant Hogweed, please photograph the plant and report it to:

<http://massnrc.org/pests/report.aspx>