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Photo: Steve Antunes-Kenyon



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Giant Hogweed

Heracleum mantegazzianum



Habit: Extremely tall 2.5-6 m, (8-20 ft) biennial or short-lived perennial with a deep 40-65 cm, (16-26 in) taproot.

Leaves: Alternate; large, reaching up to 3 m (9 ft) in length; deeply divided and dissected leaves; hairy beneath, leaf stalk enlarged and surrounding the stem; upper leaves gradually becoming smaller.

Stems: Thick, 5-10 cm (2-4 in) in diameter; hollow, purple-mottled; with coarse white hairs.

Flowers: Small, white flowers clustered into large umbels at the top of each stem; bloom June-July; typically bloom once and then die (robust biennial or monocarpic perennial).

Fruits/seeds: Seeds in flat, dry, oval pods; one plant can produce up to 100,000 seeds.

Habitat: Prefers open, moderately moist, cool sites but can be found in a range of habitats.

Reproduction: By seed.

Similar species: Cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) is smaller reaching only 2.75 m (9 ft) in height. It has dense fine white hairs under leaves and lacks purple mottling on stem; angelicas (*Angelica* spp.) may have purplish stems but lack mottling.

Comments: Native to Asia. This species has been listed as a noxious weed under federal law and is also prohibited under Michigan law.

Monitoring & rapid response: Monitor riparian sites and disturbed edge habitat in partial shade. Sap causes increased photosensitivity; may cause severe burns, blistering, dermatitis, dark scars, and even blindness; protect skin; mowing stimulates budding from the rootstalk; plants may be dug out—remove entire root as it may resprout. Research herbicide options as not all are effective.