

# Have you seen this plant?



Incursion of hogweed

## Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)



Close-up of leaf

Giant hogweed is an herbaceous plant that can reach heights of 15-20ft. The stem is hollow and usually blotched with purple. The stem can be 2-4in. in diameter. The leaves of this plant are dissected in their form (see photograph above) and can be 9-10ft. in length. Giant hogweed flowers from June-July. The flower head has many white florets that form a flat-topped umbel. Each flower head can have a diameter of up to 2.5ft. The fruits are dry and elliptic, being 0.3-0.4in. in length and 0.25-0.3in. in width. The fruits have brown resin canals that can be up to 0.04in. in diameter. This plant is often mistaken for other species and there is a chart available for assistance at <http://invasives.eeb.uconn.edu/ipane/noxious1.htm>

Giant hogweed has been reported from all the New England states. Giant hogweed is found along roadsides, in vacant lots and along streams and rivers. It prefers rich, moist soil, in semi-shade conditions.

This plant, though not yet highly invasive in New England, has shown the potential to form large stands in other states such as Pennsylvania and Washington. Giant hogweed is listed as a federal noxious weed as a result of its dangerous sap. This sap, if it gets on the skin, causes it to be highly sensitive to sunlight, resulting in blisters and burns. Care should be taken in removing this plant. For additional control information, see the website of the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (<http://www.hort.uconn.edu/cipwg/hogctrlw.html>).

