

# Giant Hogweed Life Cycle

**Seedling**

**Young Plant**

**Pre-Flowering Plants**  
(spring/summer)  
Leaves sprout from overwintering roots for several years until plant flowers.

**Older Plant**

**Flowering Plants**  
(mid-summer)  
After several years of growth, the plant flowers.

**Seeds**  
(late summer)  
Average flowering plant produces 20,000 seeds.

**Dead Stems**  
(late fall/winter) After producing seeds that germinate in following years, the plant dies, leaving stems and seed heads standing.

Randy Westbrooks, U.S. Geological Survey, Bugwood.org

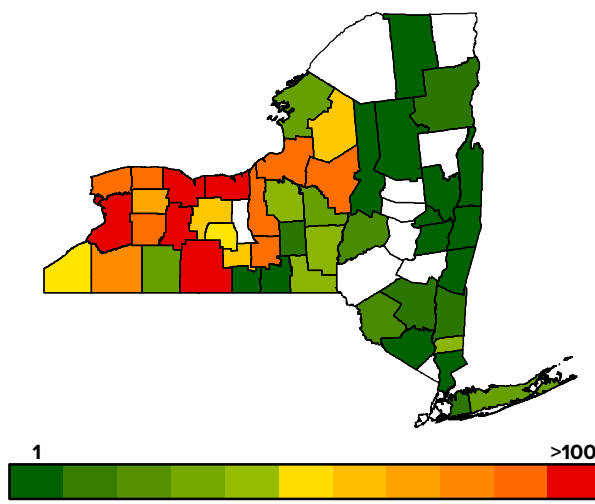
**Giant hogweed is a VERY LARGE, non-native, invasive plant that can cause painful burns, permanent scarring and even blindness.**

Skin burned and scarred by giant hogweed sap



Giant hogweed was brought to North America from the Caucasus region of Eurasia as a garden plant in the early 1900s, but escaped cultivation. It spreads quickly, especially along roads and streams, taking over untended land, crowding out other plants and causing soil erosion. NYS law prohibits possession of giant hogweed with the intent to sell, import, purchase, transport, introduce or propagate.

## GIANT HOGWEED SITES (2014 DATA)



Department of Environmental Conservation



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**ghogweed@dec.ny.gov**  
[www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html)  
**Giant Hogweed Hotline**  
**1-845-256-3111**

**Division of Lands and Forests**  
Forest Health and Protection  
21 South Putt Corners Road  
New Paltz, NY 12561

# BEWARE GIANT HOGWEED!



## Don't Touch This Plant!

Find Out How To

- Identify it
- Protect yourself
- Report it

## We can help!

## Protect Yourself

Brushing against or breaking the plant releases sap that, combined with sunlight and perspiration, can cause a severe burn within 24 to 48 hours.

- Don't use a weed-whacker; sap may splatter as stems are cut.
- If the plant touches your skin, immediately wash the area with soap and water and protect from sunlight for 48 hours.

See more precautions at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72556.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72556.html)



DEC workers conducting hogweed control

## What to Do if You See Giant Hogweed:

### Identify

- Use this brochure and see [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72766.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72766.html) to try to make a positive identification. Many plants look similar to giant hogweed.

### Photograph

- Entire plant, stem, leaves, flower, seed. High resolution preferred. We'll need them to confirm identification.

### Report

- E-mail DEC [ghogweed@dec.ny.gov](mailto:ghogweed@dec.ny.gov) or call the Giant Hogweed Hotline: 1-845-256-3111.

### Control

- If giant hogweed is confirmed, DEC will contact the landowner and may visit to assess the site and discuss management options, as resources allow.

## Controlling Giant Hogweed

Controlling giant hogweed is challenging, but it can be eradicated after repeated efforts. DEC uses the most effective methods, including:

- Cutting through the plant root
- Using herbicide
- Removing flowers and seed heads

It is safest to begin in the growing season when the plants are small.

If you decide to attempt control yourself, call for advice 1-845-256-3111

# How To Identify Giant Hogweed

## Flowers

Numerous small white flowers cluster into a flat-topped “umbrella” up to 2½ feet across. Late June/July



## Stem

Hollow, ridged, up to 4 inches across, with purple blotches and coarse white hairs circling the stem, especially at the base of the leaf stalks



## Height

8 to 14 feet tall when flowering

## Leaves

Lobed, deeply cut, up to 5 feet across

PLANTS OFTEN MISTAKEN FOR GIANT HOGWEED. THESE PLANTS MAY ALSO CAUSE BURNS.



### Cow Parsnip

Shorter (5' - 8' tall) and more slender; stem ridged, with fine hairs; green or may have a purplish hue, but not blotched; smaller, flat-topped flower cluster



### Angelica

Usually shorter (4' - 9' tall); stem smooth and waxy, green to purple (not blotched); flower cluster softball-size and shape; compound leaves made up of smaller leaflets



### Queen Anne's Lace

Shorter (1' - 3' tall) with smaller flower clusters (up to 4" across); lacy, fern-like leaves



### Wild Parsnip

Shorter (up to 5' tall); smooth stem with grooves; flower cluster yellowish-green. **DON'T TOUCH! CAN CAUSE SEVERE BURNS**

