

COMMUNITY UPDATE OCTOBER 17, 2018

Campbell River's Most Unwanted, Part 4 – Giant hogweed, a human health hazard

The locally-abundant and native cow parsnip is harmless, but easily confused with the toxic giant hogweed.

What's the difference?

Giant Hogweed – Invasive & Toxic	Cow Parsnip – Native & Non-toxic
Large leaves (up to 2.5m long) deeply serrated in three large segments	Leaves more rounded generally <0.5 metres wide
Stems green, hollow with purple spots	Stems usually green, lower portion may be purple (not streaked or spotted)
Up to five metres at maturity	Up to three metres at maturity
Blooms in mid-August flower heads up to 1.5 m in diameter	Blooms in July flower heads 20 cm diameter
Both plants have numerous small white flowers clusters in an umbrella-shaped head	



Picture above: Giant Hogweed

What to do about Giant Hogweed on private property - USE CAUTION:

- All removal methods carry a significant risk of exposure to the toxic sap.
- For small infestations, cut flower heads during growing season.
- For fewer than 100 plants, manually cut tap root 10 cm below soil surface using a sharp long-handled shovel or spade.
- An invasive plant specialist can advise on best removal method, including the application of herbicides.
- Wear protective clothing to ensure there is no exposed skin, gloves are essential and wear glasses or goggles. Wash all hand tools after contact with plant sap.
- Grow native plants recommended in the Grow Me Instead booklet from the Invasive Species Council of BC.

Disposal

- Let the above-ground portion of the plant decompose on site where there is no risk that people or animals will touch them.
- If plants can't be left to decompose, carefully bag and take to the Campbell River Waste Management Centre (landfill) for a reduced tipping fee (\$65 per metric tonne).
- Not suitable for backyard compost, curbside yard waste program or yard waste drop-off centre on Willis Road.

Additional information

- Invasive Species Council of BC bcinvasives.ca or Email Terri.Martin@campbellriver.ca.