

Giant Hogweed: Identification Guidance

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), is a perennial plant which takes around 4 years to mature and flower. It forms dense colonies and suppresses growth of native plants leading to banks bare of vegetation and erosion problems. Each flower head produces several thousand seeds which can be easily dispersed along watercourses.

Leaves



The leaves of the Giant Hogweed
(Photograph courtesy of the
Environment Agency)

- Dark green, in a rosette
- Jagged appearance and spiky at the ends
- Lower leaves up to 1.5m long.

**DO NOT TOUCH GIANT
HOGWEED!!**

**THE SAP IS EXTREMELY
HARMFUL TO YOUR
SKIN!!**

Flowers



The umbrella-like flower of the
Giant Hogweed

- White
- Several hundred in large umbrella-like flower heads up to 500mm across.
- Flowers in June - July.

Stem



The hairy bloched stem of the
Giant Hogweed

- Green with dark-red or purple blotches.
- Hollow
- Up to 100mm across
- Up to 5m tall.

Important Information for Landowners and Tenants

As a landowner or the tenant of an area, it is not an offence to have an invasive species on your land, but it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), to spread an invasive species around the countryside. It is therefore better to take positive steps to eradicate plants before they establish, become out of control and become expensive to manage in the future.