



The photo above is typical of what you might find along an infested roadside.

This population is too large to hand-cut or pull, a power mower should be used before the seeds set. Plants may re-sprout when cut above the ground, and should be cut again or sprayed, a few weeks later to prevent flowering. Cutting done after seed set will greatly reduce the likelihood that the plants will be able to re-sprout and flower, but will increase the risk of spreading the seeds and creating new problems. Plants cut at this time must all be gathered and destroyed to prevent mature seed from developing and falling to the ground. Another effective way to eliminate reseeding is to hand-collect all seeds after they have set. If control of flowering or seeding plants is carried out over several years, the population will decrease as the seed bank is depleted. If mowing Wild Parsnip, be careful cleaning the equipment as the sap will still be present. It's suggested to clean the mower deck, if mowing while seeds are present and before traveling to the next area or the equipment storage area.

The best defense is to be able to identify the plant and be aware of what you need to do when working around or near it. Below you will find photos of various stages of development of Wild Parsnip. Sap will be present in all these stages, but increasing potency from spring to summer and decreasing potency after seed set to end of plant life. The photos are for the cycle of a second year plant.

Early Springs, Late Spring or fall



Early Summer



Flowers, Summer



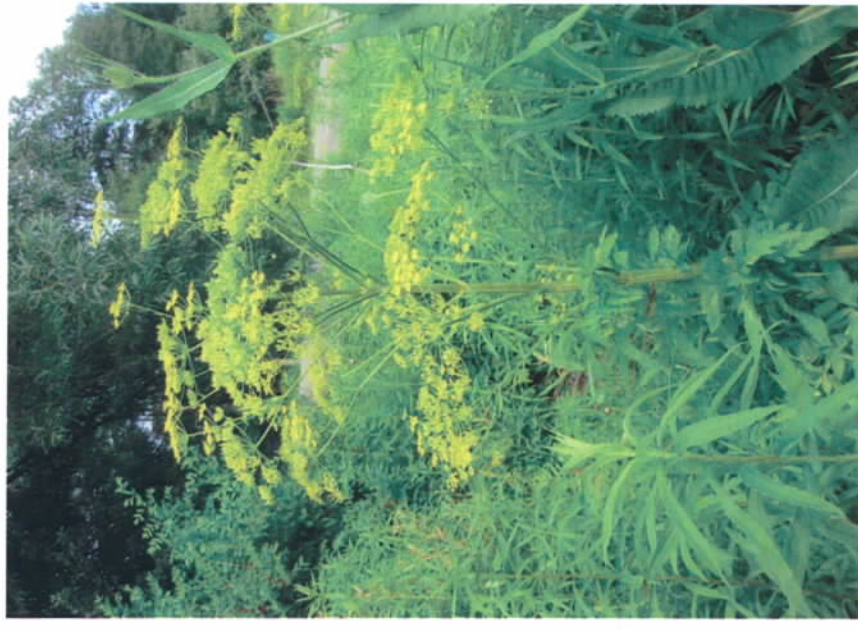
Fall.



Seedling/ Late Summer-Fall



BE AWARE OF WILD PARSNIP. (*Pastinaca sativa*)



Because of its harmful characteristics and concern over its increased spreading over the countryside, Wild Parsnip has been in the news recently.

The plant has become a weed of special concern along roadsides and in abandoned fields. Like many other introduced plants it is very aggressive and spreading rapidly.

Why the special concern about this plant?

Wild parsnip causes "phyto-photo-dermatitis", which happens when the sap of the plant, from broken stems and leaves, touches the skin and is exposed to ultraviolet light (whether cloudy or sunny).

Within 24 to 48 hours, the affected area will first redden and in most cases be followed by blisters that can be painful for a couple of days. In many cases, the blisters will lead to brownish pigmentation that can last for years. Unlike Poison Ivy, the reaction caused by contact with Wild Parsnip sap is not an allergic reaction. Toxin in the sap is absorbed by the skin and energized by ultraviolet light.

Moisture from perspiration speeds absorption. Burning is inevitable if skin comes in contact with juice from cut or broken stalks, leaves or flowers. The juices are most potent while in flower. **No one is exempt.** Symptoms usually take 24-48 hours to develop, but could take longer. Mild exposure is similar to sunburn. Severe exposure causes skin to blister.



Treatment

Once the toxin is absorbed into the skin and is exposed to sunlight, some reaction is inevitable. Immediately cover exposed skin

until it can be washed with soap and water.

To relieve symptoms:

- Cover affected area with a cool, wet cloth.
- If blisters appear, try not to rupture blisters as long as possible.
- To avoid infection, keep area clean and apply antiseptic cream.

Concern:

More people are coming into contact with wild parsnip due to its rapid spread into open habitats and roadsides. Individuals who will be working, hiking, or involved in other activities around it can reduce the risk of exposure by wearing long-sleeved shirts, gloves, and long pants.

During much of July, wild parsnip is one of the dominant yellow-flowered weeds in many roadsides and other right-of-ways, fence rows, prairie restorations, CRP sites and poorly managed pastures.

Botanical basics

Life history: Wild parsnip typically lives for two years. The first year, as a spindly rosette of leaves, it keeps fairly low to the ground while the plant's carrot-like taproot develops. It may live two or more years this way until conditions are right for flowering. The second year, a hollow, grooved flower stalk rises 2-5 feet high, first holding clusters of yellow flowers and later dozens of flat, oval seeds. **Leaves:** Pinnately compound, with a main stem and 5 to 15 leaflets. **Flowers:** Yellow, in flat-topped umbrella-like clusters at the top of the plant. **Season:** Wild parsnip rosettes are among the first plants to become green in spring, and its flowers turn a prominent yellow in midsummer. After flowering and going to seed, plants die and turn brown in fall, but first year rosettes remain green until frost. **Habitat:** Roadsides, abandoned fields, unmowed pastures, edges of woods, prairie restorations.



Wild Parsnip info.

The plant has a long thick yellowish tap root which is edible. The edible roots were consumed in ancient Greece and Rome. Unfortunately, wild parsnip tolerates a wide range of habitats, but does prefer sunny locations. The plant readily moves into disturbed areas. Once it populates an area, it spreads rapidly.

It has been speculated that the plant may have been introduced as a vegetable, and as with many other flora and fauna introduced into the United States, it has reproduced and spread out of control. It is a monocarpic perennial, meaning it doesn't flower the first year, will flower in the second to fourth year after germination. It forms a rosette of basal leaves in the first year and over winter, then flowers the second to fourth year producing seeds. It is now in heavy populations along highways, trails or rivers in Southeast Minnesota. Wild parsnip is commonly seen in much of the United States and Canada.

Don't Touch

Wild Parsnip can cause phytophotodermatitis to the skin. This is an interaction with the plant (phyto) and light (photo) that induces skin (derm) inflammation (itis). When one's skin comes in contact with the plant and its toxic sap containing the chemical psoralen while in the sun, the resulting interaction causes a rash, skin reddening, or blistering. Once the sap is absorbed into the skin, the psoralen is energized by the UV light on both sunny and cloudy days. It may look like poison ivy blisters, but doesn't itch as much and may burn for a couple of days. Unlike poison ivy, everyone is sensitive to wild parsnip without a prior exposure. The burn, which is a chemical burn, can range from being similar to a mild sunburn to severe blistering, a long-lasting dark reddish brown skin discoloration and/or a disfiguring scar.

Treat the burned area with a cool wet cloth. Delay rupturing the blisters. If you know skin has been exposed, wash thoroughly to remove the toxic sap. The best way to avoid skin injury is to not touch the plant without protective clothing and gloves. Bicyclists, canoeists and hikers should be aware of wild parsnip.

According to the University of Minnesota Extension, horses with light-colored skin can also experience burns if exposed to UV light. This can also occur from ingestion of the plant at any stage of growth or in hay. Wild parsnip is listed as a plant poisonous or harmful to horses.

Control

The best way to control wild parsnip is early detection and eradication. The ultimate goal is to stop the life cycle and the production of seeds. Any method of control will have to be continued annually for several years as seeds can remain viable in the ground for four or more years. If the population is limited, pull before the seeds are set or cut the entire root with a sharp spade below ground and the root crown. Pulling can be easiest when the ground is saturated. Cutting below the root crown will prevent resprouting. Wear protective clothing.

With larger populations, use a power cutter after flowering BEFORE seeds set. Plants will have to be removed every couple of weeks for a total of three or more times as the plants resprout and try to produce a new seed head. It would be even more effective to collect and remove cut plants.

DON'T mow after the seed head is formed. Mowing after the seeds set, generally midsummer or later,

helps the plant spread by allowing it to complete its life cycle by producing seeds. Roadside ditch mowing after the seeds set is probably responsible for the population explosion of plants along roads. Seeds can then be transported on the mowers to new locations along the road. Mowers should be cleaned to remove seeds hitching a ride and the seeds destroyed. The Nature Conservancy doesn't recommend mowing in established natural areas as it decreases the competitive ability of other more desirable species.

Burning doesn't work as wild parsnip quickly resprouts before other plants do. If an area is burned, go through soon after with a sharp spade and cut the roots as the rosettes come up early and are easily recognized.

The most recommended use of herbicide control for larger populations seems to be the use a herbicide brand containing metsulfuron in the fall after deer season or killing frost when grasses are dormant and many other desirable plants will not be injured. Applications at this time can be effective on wild parsnip since it is a biennial. Applications can also be effective in the spring (April-May), but may be more detrimental to desirable plants. Soil residue can last from three weeks to a few years.

Spot applications using herbicide brands containing glyphosate on plants in the basal rosette stage in early spring or late fall is also recommended when other methods of control are not feasible. This would have to be repeated annually as needed. Products with glyphosate have no soil residue.

The application of 2,4-D in early spring or late fall with the spot application method when in the rosette stage is effective. There is no soil residue with 2,4-D.

Wild parsnip does have one natural enemy called the parsnip webworm, which does damage individual plants, but not prevalent enough to injure large stands.

Wild Parsnip Control

Document where it is now and go out at the end of May next spring and hit it with one and a half pints of 2,4D. This is cheap control and the rosettes are very susceptible at that stage. We have found that where ever there are mature plants there are loads of rosettes. The injury to crop risk is low at that time. We also did some spraying last September and had good results. Dealing with bolted and flowering plants is the least productive and we are not going to waste our time with that anymore. Hope this helps.

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Pope County Ag Inspector

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We have been using ¾ oz. of Escort when we're out doing Thistle spraying , add to Milestone. Been working well if spray at flower stage. Mowing would be next best if too far along to spray, but be careful not to spread seed everywhere. The side by side field test I did with MnDot last year we used Tordon as well at 1 ½ qt. if I remember and that worked very good. No Parsnip on either test strip this year. **Do whatever you have to keep from going to seed.**

Pete

Chemical Control: Chemical controls are effective, but should be used sparingly on quality habitats. The best method is to burn the site, then follow with spot applications of herbicide. Immediately after a burn, wild parsnip is one of the first plants to green. Herbicides such as 2,4-D, Escort® or glyphosate can be spot applied to the basal rosette of the parsnip. Adult plants should be spot treated during the time of plant bolting until flowering (mid-May to mid-June) or in the fall targeting plants in the rosette stage. Effective spot treatment mixtures are 1-3% active ingredient glyphosate mix or a 1 ounce Escort® plus surfactant mix. [Literature.]