



POISON HEMLOCK

Conium maculatum



- * Other names: Poison parsley, Irish parsley
- * Poison Hemlock is a Class B Designate noxious weed.
- * A tall, herbaceous biennial, sometimes perennial, plant from the Apiaceae Family that reproduces solely by seeds.
- * Poison Hemlock is a very tall biennial plant that can grow up to 12 feet in height. It is a member of the parsnip or wild carrot family and its fernlike, finely divided leaves are similar to those of its parsley/carrot cousins. Leaves grow in leaflets of 3 and have a strong odor when crushed. The stem is hollow, smooth and hairless with purple splotches on it. It has

a long, white taproot, which may be branched. Its small white flowers that grow in umbrella shaped clusters. Each flower develops into a green, deeply ridged fruit that contains several seeds. Each plant is capable of producing up to 38,000 seeds a season and can remain viable in the soil for up to 6 years.

- * All parts of this plant are extremely toxic to animals and humans. The lower portions of the stem and root are particularly deadly. Dead canes remain toxic for up to 3 years.
- * Conditions that lead to P.H. poisonings: Leaves are mistaken for the edible plants like parsley, carrot, or Bur Chervil; seeds mistaken for Anise; root for Wild Carrot or parsnips; stems used for pea-shooters to blow through. It takes only 4 oz of P.H. vegetation to be fatal to adults, less for children; 16 oz is fatal for a horse or cow.
- * Poison hemlock remains toxic for several years after being pulled. Bag up and dispose of all dead plant material to prevent accidental poisoning of wildlife or children. Do not compost this plant.
- * Studies indicate that Poison Hemlock has allelopathic characteristics. Research shows that mowing Poison Hemlock during fruit development stage just after flowering or before seed set as practiced by many land managers, actually intensifies or concentrates the coniine and other forms of the alkaloids which then act as allelochemicals in the soil.



CONTROL OPTIONS

- ✱ Hand removal is recommended for small infestations. When pulling this plant, be sure to remove the entire tap root. Wear gloves, long sleeves, and wash thoroughly after working with poison hemlock. Mowing and cutting of this plant is not effective for control, as the plant simply develops new seed stalks in the same season the cutting occurs.
- ✱ The Defoliating Hemlock Moth has been released in several Western Washington counties, but results have been variable.
- ✱ Spot spraying with an herbicide containing the active ingredient *glyphosate* (Roundup Pro, Glyfos, etc.) or products containing the active ingredient *imazapyr* (Habitat® and Arsenal®), may be used effectively while the plant is actively growing, prior to seed production. Spray each plant thoroughly on the stems and leaves, enough to be wet but not dripping. Be aware, *glyphosate* & *imazapyr* are non-selective and will injure any plants that they come in contact with, including grass. After herbicide application the area must be monitored in succeeding years to check for new plants from the existing seed bank.
- ✱ When using herbicides, always read and follow all label instructions and obey all label precautions. (Note: pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.)

