



POISON HEMLOCK (*Conium maculatum*)

Family: Apiaceae (Carrot)

Life Cycle: Biennial

Class: Weed of Concern - Control Recommended

AKA: Hemlock

POISON HEMLOCK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be confused with wild carrot or other edible wild plants in the carrot family • Key feature: purple splotches on stems • Thrives in rich, moist soils but highly adaptable • Native to Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa

CONTROL METHODS
<p><i>Always wear gloves and protective clothing when working with poison hemlock; all parts of the plant are poisonous. Do not burn plants. Do not allow animals to eat live or dry plant material.</i></p> <p>Mechanical: Digging small infestations is effective if entire taproot is removed. Dispose of plants in a trash bag. Mowing is ineffective; plant will re-sprout in the same season. Repeated cultivation can be effective.</p> <p>Cultural: Support or establish desirable vegetation on disturbed ground to reduce chance of invasion by poison hemlock. Monitor damp sites to address new invasions immediately before a poison hemlock population can become established.</p> <p>Biological: There are currently no biological agents approved for release in Washington State.</p> <p>Chemical*: Most effective on rosette before bolting. See below for recommendations.</p>

DESCRIPTION
<p>Growth Traits: Branching biennial with hollow, purple-splotched stems that can grow over twelve feet tall. Fern-like foliage smells unpleasant when crushed. Begins as a rosette in year one and bolts to bloom in year two.</p> <p>Leaves and Stems: Leaves may be two feet long, are bright green, fern-like, toothed and have strong scent when crushed. Stems are hollow, hairless and have noticeable purple blotches. Stems branch and end in flower clusters.</p> <p>Flowers: Blooms June - August, depending on site. Flowers appear in umbrella-shaped clusters of many small white flowers at the end of stems. Clusters may be four to eight inches in diameter.</p> <p>Roots and Reproduction: Long, forked, fleshy taproot and numerous lateral roots. Spreads by seed. Seeds are small and egg-shaped with ridges. Seeds may remain viable for three years in soil seed bank, but seed will germinate almost immediately in favorable conditions.</p> <p>Habitat: Does best in sites with rich moist soil, but is highly adaptable. Commonly invades riparian areas, wetlands, pastures, roadsides, ditches, woodlands and meadows. Can quickly form large infestations in pastures and waste areas.</p> <p>Toxicity: Entire plant is toxic to humans and animals. Contains poisonous alkaloids which cause neuromuscular dysfunction and leads to death from respiratory paralysis. Famous for the death of Socrates.</p>

***ALWAYS read herbicide labels and follow instructions for use and PPE.** The use of a surfactant (aka sticker) increases the efficacy of herbicide application, saving you time and money. If treating over multiple seasons, rotate using herbicides with different modes of action to reduce likelihood of herbicide resistance developing. Below are recommended herbicides based on stage of growth and time of year. All recommendations are supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Noxious Weed Board is implied. Trade names are used to simplify recommendations.

NOTE: There is no 'magic bullet' in noxious weed control, and control efforts must be repeated every season to stop their spread. Using a combination of methods (e.g. cultural and chemical) will lead to better control over time.

April - May Rosette, Seedling Stage	June - July Bolting, Bud, Bloom Stage	August - October Seeding, Fall Regrowth Stage
2,4-D	2,4-D	2,4-D
MCPA	Escort	
Method + Telar		
Roundup (spot spray)		