

Giant Hogweed was introduced as an ornamental plant in the 19th century. It escaped from gardens and now colonises many areas of wasteland and riverbanks. Each flowerhead produces several thousand seeds that are easily dispersed by water, so the plant spreads rapidly along watercourses.

Distribution map - Giant Hogweed  
Source: Botanical Society of the British Isles (2010)

A downloadable identification sheet for this species is available at [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org)

Separate leaflets are available outlining the legal requirements and responsibilities for landowners.

The correct disposal of plant material is vital because there is a high risk of spreading the problem further. Contact the Environment Agency (England and Wales) or SEPA (Scotland) for advice on disposal.

Environment Agency - Tel: 08708 506 506  
[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

Scottish Environment Protection Agency  
Tel : 01786 457 700 [www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)

Further information may also be found on the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology web pages:  
[http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sci\\_programmes/AquaticPlantManagement.html](http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sci_programmes/AquaticPlantManagement.html)

**A local project is currently underway with the aim of tackling Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) in the Tame Valley Wetlands scheme area.**

**We are asking local landowners, friends of groups and other interested parties to help us in this task to prevent the spread of these invasive species and promote native flora.**

**If you would like to know more about our project, need advice or help with management, we would like to hear from you.**

### Tame Valley Wetlands

Hams Hall Environmental Centre Phone:  
Off Canton Lane 01675 470917  
Coleshill  
Warwickshire E-mail:  
B46 1GA [enquiries@tamevalleywetlands.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tamevalleywetlands.co.uk)



## Control of invasive non-native species

# Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*



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Giant Hogweed is a large plant, growing up to five metres.

It is also a dangerous plant. Contact with any part must be avoided as even minute amounts of sap can cause blistering of the skin following exposure to sunlight.

Cut material remains active for several hours after cutting.

# Control methods for Giant Hogweed



Blistering symptoms occur 24-48 hours after exposure, and dense pigmentation is visible after three to five days. This may persist for six years or more.

## Control

**Protective clothing must be worn** when treating this plant because the hairs can penetrate light fabrics.

The aim should be to kill the plant or prevent flowering. Repeated treatment may be necessary during the growing season to prevent flowering.

Cutting down the stems with a sharp scythe or sickle before flowering will help to control this plant. Flail mowing may be carried out, but extreme caution is required to avoid the risk of being sprayed with sap.

**Strimming is not recommended, unless full protective clothing is worn.**

## Non-chemical control

### Cutting

Cut stem below ground using an axe or spade. Cut regularly early in the season to prevent flowering. Cutting should be repeated regularly for between 5 and 10 years to eradicate the plant.

### Digging

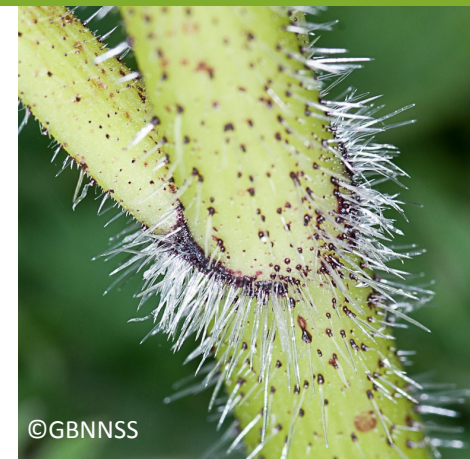
Shallow excavation to about 20cm will remove the growing crown. This can be done with an axe or sharp spade. Spoil should be disposed of at landfill or by piling on site and composting. Any regrowth should be treated chemically.

### Grazing

Grazing by cattle, sheep, pigs or goats throughout the growing season will suppress growth, but does not eradicate it.



The flowers are white, forming a large umbel. Each plant produces up to 50,000 seeds, approximately 10mm long by 7mm wide. Seeds may remain viable for up to 15 years.



Stems are ribbed, with sparse spiky hairs on the ridges. The stems are hollow and up to 100mm across.

## Chemical control

Chemical control using glyphosate at 6 litres/ha is the most effective method. Spraying can start as soon as the plant is about 1m high, usually in March and continue throughout the summer. More than one application is often necessary and follow-up spraying will be required to kill seedlings in subsequent years.

When mixed with other plants, use a weed wipe when plants are about 1m tall between March and May. When plants are more than 1.5m tall, proceed with extreme caution. Repeat chemical treatment may be required for up to 10 years.

### Stem injection.

Cutting the stem above ground, followed by injection of 1 in 10 dilution of glyphosate in water below the first node, will give good control. This technique can be used for established plants later in the season.

### In general.

It is essential to establish vegetation quickly after control measures have been applied. A dense grass sward is ideal as it tends to discourage seed germination. Control should be undertaken on a catchment basis, working from the upstream end to prevent seed recolonisation.