

GIANT HOGWEED

[*Heracleum mantegazzianum* Sommier & Levier.]
HEMA17



UGA1460060

Habit: Biennial or perennial herb with a deep (40-65 cm or 16-26 in), branching tap root;⁹ blooms once then dies (monocarpic);^{4,9} some perennials have survived after flowering.⁹

Reproduction: By seed; cut stems may re-sprout; self-compatible, outcrossing, protandrous hermaphrodite.⁹

Leaves: Alternate;^{4,8,9} up to 3 m (10 ft) long, three-parted and pinnate;⁴ pubescent beneath;⁸ petiole base enlarged, surrounding the stem;⁴ upper leaves become gradually smaller.⁸

Stems: Often purple-mottled, 2-5 m (7-16 ft) tall, up to 10 cm (4 in) in diameter; hollow and ridged.^{4,8,9}

Flowers: Compound umbel up to 1.5 m (5 ft) in diameter with 50 to 150 rays; white ;^{4,9} most plants flower in third or fourth year;^{2,9} June-August;^{8,9} pollinated by a variety of insects, mostly bees and flies; self-pollination may occur between different umbels.^{5,9}

Fruits/Seeds: Fruit elliptic, ridged, and winged, 8-15 mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ - $\frac{5}{8}$ in) in length on elongate stalks; splits in half, each half with one seed; shed August-October;^{4,8,9} over 100,000 seeds per plant possible;⁹ water, wind, or human dispersed, mostly within 10 m (33 ft) of mother plant;^{2,6,9} germination appears to require moisture and cold stratification^{7,9} and will occur in light or dark; viability ranges between 2-15 years.⁹

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UGA1151039



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Habitat: Native to southwestern Asia;⁹ introduced as an ornamental;² waste places, roadsides, disturbed woodlands, and streambanks;^{2,8} may invade a range of habitats,^{3,10} but possible preference for open, mesic, and seasonally cold environments.^{7,9}

Comments: Sap has secondary compounds (furanocoumarins) that may cause blistering and rashes on humans, with sun exposure;^{3,9} some of the same substances inhibit insect herbivory by generalists but specialist insect herbivory is common;¹ cattle, sheep, goat, pig, mollusc, and snail grazing are common; fungal pathogens are noted;⁹ an *H. mantegazzianum* x *H. sphondylium* (native to UK) hybrid with low fertility is rare in the UK.^{5,6}

Similar Native Species: Cow-parsnip (*H. lanatum*); flower usually has only 15-30 rays and stem reaches only 3 m (10 ft).⁴