



# Giant hogweed

(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

Originated in the Caucasus and was introduced as an ornamental plant in Northern and Western Europe in the 1800s. It became invasive starting in the 1950s-1960s and is currently found in three-quarters of France (the North and the East).

## Description

- Perennial, herbaceous plant that can reach a height of 2 to 5 metres. Strong stalk, 5 to 10 centimetres in diameter, fluted, hollow, purple spots and covered with white hairs
- Compound, alternating leaves:
  - length up to 1 metre, width 50 cm to 1 m
  - sessile leaflets, ending in a fine tip
  - smooth leaves with indented edges
- White flowers in a compound umbel, diameter greater than 50 centimetres, with between 50 and 120 stems
- The fruit is made up of flattened achenes, elliptical in shape, length 8 to 14 mm, width 6 to 8 mm
- Robust taproot with numerous lateral roots

## Ecology and reproduction

- The species can develop in different types of shaded environments rich in nitrogen:
  - idle land, embankments, landfill, roadsides and train lines
  - river banks, shaded edges of forests, transition areas between wetlands and forests, and wet meadows
- Plants can accept a range of pH values and soil textures
- Exclusively sexual reproduction, a vegetative phase of 3 to 4 years before the unique flowering and death of the plant
- The fruit of the plant is disseminated by water and transportation of contaminated soil

## Documentation

- Hudin S., Vahrameev P. (coord.) 2010. Guide d'identification des plantes exotiques envahissant les milieux aquatiques et les berges du bassin Loire-Bretagne. Fédération des conservatoires d'espaces naturels, 45 pp.
- Fried G. 2012. Guide des plantes invasives. Belin, Paris, 272 pp.
- Muller S. (coord.) 2004. Plantes invasives en France. Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, 168 pp

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### Classification

Order	Apiales
Family	Apiaceae
Genus	<i>Heracleum</i>
Species	<i>H. mantegazzianum</i> (Sommier et Levier, 1895)

