

# Warning

## Toxic Giant Hogweed

*Heracleum mantegazzianum*

**Avoid contact with all parts of this plant**



### Why is Giant Hogweed dangerous?

Giant Hogweed plants produce toxic sap. Upon contact with bare skin and exposure to sunlight a reaction occurs that can cause severe burns and blistering that may require medical attention.

### What to do if you touch giant hogweed

Immediately shield the affected area from sunlight.

As soon as possible, wash the affected area with cold water and soap. Keep it covered for at least 48 hours to avoid exposure to sunlight.

Seek medical attention if you get sap in your eyes or a rash or blister forms on the skin.

### Where are Giant Hogweed plants found locally?

Around Stewarton, Giant Hogweed plants are mainly found near watercourses including the Clerkland Burn and Annick Water.

For additional information, see the Giant Hogweed Identification Sheet published by Great Britain's Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS)

[https://www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Uploads/ID\\_Heracleum\\_mantegazzianum\\_Giant\\_Hogweed-2.pdf](https://www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Uploads/ID_Heracleum_mantegazzianum_Giant_Hogweed-2.pdf)



Flowering Giant Hogweed  
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### Species Description

Scientific name: *Heracleum mantegazzianum*

Native to: **Caucasus mountains in south west Russia and Georgia**

Classification in Great Britain: **Non-native, invasive species**

Habitat: **Widespread, most common on or near banks of watercourses**

### Plant Identification

Fully-grown, Giant Hogweed is typically 2 to 4 metres tall (6½ to 13 feet), with large white clusters of flowers up to 80 cm across (around 2½ feet).

Each plant can produce tens of thousands of seeds that remain viable for up to fifteen years. This is why it is so invasive.

Its leaves are very large and sharply divided and can be over 1 metre across.

The stems are usually green with purple blotches and covered with bristly hairs.



Early growth  
Photo © Derek Harper



Seed-head forming  
Photo © Robin Stott

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### Legal Status

**Giant Hogweed is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England, Wales and Scotland. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause this species to grow in the wild. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Giant Hogweed is also classified as controlled waste.**