

# NYSDEC Giant Hogweed Control Program 2014

## Where to route calls/emails & how you can help

Giant hogweed is a very large, non-native, invasive plant that can cause painful burns, permanent scarring and even blindness. Brushing against it releases sap that, when combined with sunlight and moisture, can cause a severe burn within 24 to 48 hours.

Controlling giant hogweed is challenging, but it can be eradicated after repeated efforts. This is the seventh year that NYSDEC Forest Health and Protection crews will be working to control giant hogweed plants using manual or chemical control methods and we are having a positive impact. 348 sites with prior control had no plants last year and 67% of all our sites now have less than 100 plants! If you receive inquiries from the public regarding giant hogweed, please route all potential reports to the statewide hotline.



### Giant Hogweed Hotline

Route calls and emails to DEC's Giant Hogweed Hotline **845-256-3111**, [ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us).

The hotline is for the public to:

- Report new sites
- Get help identifying suspected giant hogweed plants
- Ask questions about giant hogweed and how to control it
- Connect with our statewide control project

Callers will be asked to provide photos of suspect plants and information about the site such as directions and number of plants. Confirmed sites (verified with photos) will be entered into our database. DEC will either help property owners learn how to control the plants themselves, or have our field crews control it for them if time allows.



### Giant Hogweed Control Project



Funding for 2014 is provided by New York State (Office of Invasive Species Coordination and EPF fund) and USFS. Control crews are located at DEC's Avon, Allegany, Cortland, New Paltz and Northern Montezuma offices. This year, we have seven giant hogweed crews (12 people) who will be visiting most of the 1,387 known giant hogweed sites. We are also working with partner agencies (APIPP, CRISP, Lower Hudson, OCSWCD, SLELO) that are controlling giant hogweed sites in their areas. In general, sites with less

than 400 plants will be controlled with the manual root-cutting method, while sites with more than 400 plants will be controlled with herbicide. New sites should be reported to the Giant Hogweed Hotline, NOT directly to the crews. Sites confirmed through the hotline will be reported to the crews. See our annual reports to view our yearly accomplishments <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72570.html>.

### What to tell the public when they contact you

1. Encourage them to report a suspected giant hogweed plant or infestation by contacting DEC's Giant Hogweed Hotline [ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us) or **845-256-3111**.
2. Send them to DEC's Giant Hogweed web page (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html>) or to DEC's main page and search: "giant hogweed") There, they can find information about the plant, how to identify and control it, look at a map of New York State sites and more.



3. Be aware that many of the calls are actually for “look-alike” plants like cow parsnip, angelica, wild parsnip, poison hemlock, elderberry, Queen Anne’s lace or others. Let callers know that cow parsnip and wild parsnip can also cause burns when their sap contacts skin that is later exposed to the sun.
4. If you want to provide them with giant hogweed information, there are PDFs of many giant hogweed documents available on the web site.

### More ways you can help

- Verify possible new sites in your region for us. These are sites for which people were unable to send photos when making their report. Please let me know which towns or counties you can cover, and I will send you the necessary forms and locations of sites for you to visit and photograph. Do not touch the plants while taking photos! The best pictures to take are:
  - One picture of the whole plant, so we can see how tall it is
  - Pictures of the basal (bottom) leaves
  - Close-up of the stem, where the leaf stalk connects
  - Flower head (include one from the bottom/side so the number of flower rays/stalks can be roughly counted. If only a dead flower head from last year is available, that is OK too.)
  - Close-up of seeds if visible
- Report any new giant hogweed sites that you find. We can either provide you with a form to fill out and e-mail to us, or you can call the hotline. Provide the following information:
  - Photos of the plants (see recommended photos above)
  - County & Township
  - Address or GPS coordinates of location where hogweed is located
  - Directions to plants at that location
  - Property owner’s name and contact information (phone/address)
  - Estimated number of giant hogweed plants or approximate area covered by giant hogweed.
- For people or agencies already doing or planning giant hogweed control, please contact me and let me know what sites you are controlling. I will connect you with the giant hogweed crew doing work in your area to ensure we are not duplicating efforts.
- For agencies interested in collaborating with us, please send me the name, phone and e-mail of a contact person, what areas (e.g., towns, counties) you cover, and how your agency can help with this project (e.g., site verification, outreach, control).
- Distribute giant hogweed brochures. Please let us know if you would like some for outreach.



Thanks in advance for all your help and cooperation,

**Naja Kraus**, Giant Hogweed Program Coordinator  
**Jerry Carlson**, Research Scientist



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