



Poison Hemlock

Scientific Name:	<i>Conium maculatum</i>
Weed Class:	B
Year Listed:	1988
Requirement:	Control Required
Other Names:	Fool's-Parsley, Spotted Hemlock
Native To:	Europe, Asia, Northern Africa
Toxicity:	Toxic to Humans & Livestock

Why Is It a Noxious Weed?

The entire plant is toxic to animals and humans, containing the poisonous alkaloid coniine and other alkaloids. Poison hemlock can quickly infest large areas of pasture as well as open waste places.

How would I identify it?

General Description

Poison hemlock is a very tall biennial plant that can grow up to 12 feet in height. It grows into a rosette the first year--a cluster of leaves growing on the ground and then flowering stems the next year.

Flower Description

Flowers are small and white and occur in 4 to 8 inch umbrella shaped clusters.

Leaf Description

Leaves are fern-like, toothed, finely divided and have a strong odor when crushed.

Stem Description

Stems are hollow, hairless and have noticeable purple blotches.



Fruit/Seed Description

Seed hairless, egg-shaped and about 0.09 inches (2 mm) long with prominent ridges.

Where does it grow?

Poison hemlock prefers rich, moist soil, but is highly adaptable to other conditions.

How Does it Reproduce?

Poison hemlock reproduces by seed. Up to 40,000 seeds are produced per plant and can remain viable in the soil for 10 years.

How do I control Poison Hemlock?

The most effective way to manage weed infestations is to research, plan for, and use a combination of prevention and control methods specific to the problem weed. This approach is called **I**ntegrated **W**eed **M**anagement (IWM), which uses mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical control methods that effectively treat the problem weed yet protect human health, habitat, water, and other natural resources.

IWM Control Method		Effectiveness of Control Method			Timing and Notes **
		Good	Fair	Poor	
Digging		G			Effective. Practical only for small infestations. Wear gloves - all parts of this plant are toxic.
Hand-Pulling		G			Effective. Practical only for small infestations in moist, loose soil. Wear gloves - all parts of this plant are toxic.
Mowing				P	Not effective. Plants will regrow.
Tilling			F		Multiple cultivations will likely be necessary.
Bark Mulch				P	Not effective as a sole control method. A deep layer of bark mulch will help restrict germination.
Black Plastic		G			Effective. Not practical in most forest understory settings.
Cover Crop				P	Not effective as sole control method.
Native Plant Restoration				P	Not effective.
Soil Amendments				P	Not effective.
Managed Grazing				-	Toxic to livestock! Remove plants if livestock are present.
Weed-Feeding Insects				-	None
Herbicides - (Examples*)		<i>Timing is Important! For most effective control, apply herbicides before plants bloom.</i>			
Glyphosate	Roundup, Aqua-Neat	G			Apply to plants germinating in the fall, or in the spring before flowering.
Triclopyr	Lilly Miller Brush Killer, Vastlan	G			Apply to plants germinating in the fall, or in the spring before flowering.

*Brand names are listed as examples only. Other products may contain the listed chemical. Clark County does not endorse any product or brand name. Always read and follow the herbicide label.

****Timing of control is critical!** Herbicide treatments are often not effective or appropriate when plants are in flower. If the weeds have produced seed, bag the plants and place in garbage, not compost. Regardless of control method chosen, multiple treatments may be needed each year. For more information on IWM, specific herbicides, and timing of control, please contact the Weed Board at:



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