

Giant Hogweed

Key Identification Features



Seeds

Leaves

Seeds with dark stripes 2 on one side and 4 on the other. 10mm long by 7mm wide.

Large dark green, sharply divided leaves with serrated edges. Can span up to 3m and appear from April onwards.



Flowers

Stem

Umbrella shaped heads up to 60cm diameter with small white flowers from June to August.

Hollow green stems with sharp bristles and red or purple spots. Grows up to 5m high.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Giant Hogweed grows quickly and dominates river banks and aquatic ecosystems threatening human health and native species as well as eroding riverbanks which is why we need your help! Together we can control the spread for the non-native invasive species for the benefit of the wildlife and all river users.

Report any sightings of Floating Pennywort to a free online recording application for Colne Valley and help map the spread of the species.

cvfc.org.uk/nnis

For further information on the species take a look below at the ColneCAN and Colne Valley Regional Park for local information and the GB non-native species secretariat website for national information.

www.colnevalleypark.org.uk

www.colnecan.org.uk

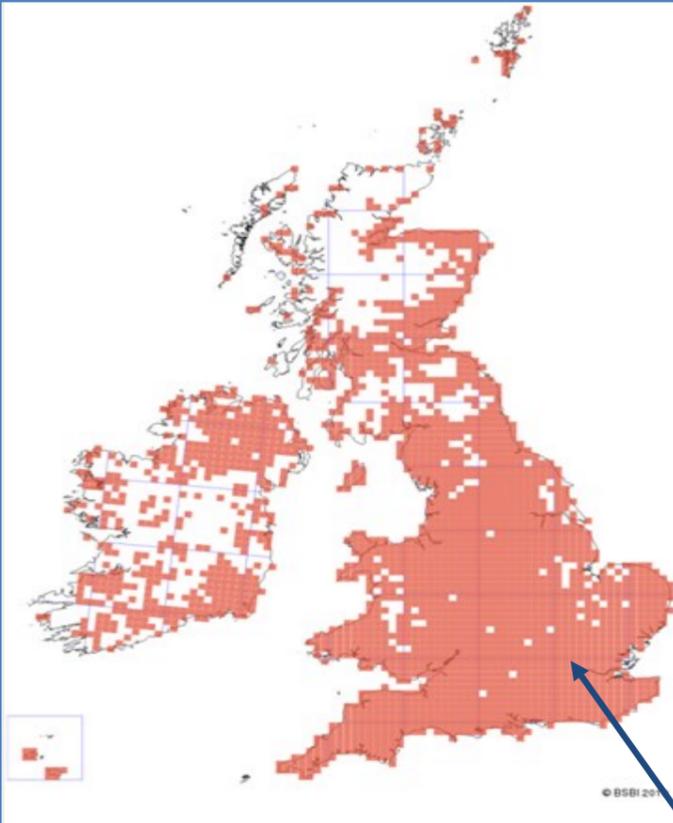
www.nonnativespecies.org

WARNING: IF YOU COME ACROSS THIS PLANT, DO NOT HANDLE YOURSELF AS DOING SO COULD RISK SERIOUS INJURIES.



*By and large, hogs riverbanks
and a weed in wastelands!*

National Distribution



Species Description

Origin: Caucasus Mountains in South West Russia and Georgia.

Latin: *Heracleum mantegazzianum*

Introduction: Brought to the UK in the 1820s for ornamental purposes, but escaped into the wild around 1828.

Habitat: thrives on riverbanks and waste land, and is well-established in lowland areas.

Reproduction: Self-pollinating and insect pollinating. Seeds disperse in short distances by wind and longer distances via water.

Appearance: Grows up to 5-6 meters tall. White umbrella-like flower heads (umbels). Large, serrated leaves growing on a thick purple-blotched stem.

Distribution: Widespread across the UK and is frequently found in the Colne Valley.

Impact on Environment



Giant Hogweed produces on average about 20,000 seeds and remain viable up to 7 years, enabling rapid spreading to colonise riverbanks and wastelands. The plant is listed under Schedule 9 in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, deeming it an offence to plant, spread or cause this species to grow in the wild. Its Impacts include:

- Large dense populations reduce available light and space on riverbanks, outcompeting native plant species.
- Reduces diversity in plant communities, degrading habitat quality.
- The plants dieback during autumn, leaving hollow stems and bare riverbanks, increasing riverbank erosion and spoil river aesthetics.
- Riverbank erosion increases siltation of river beds, reducing the availability of fish and aquatic spawning grounds.

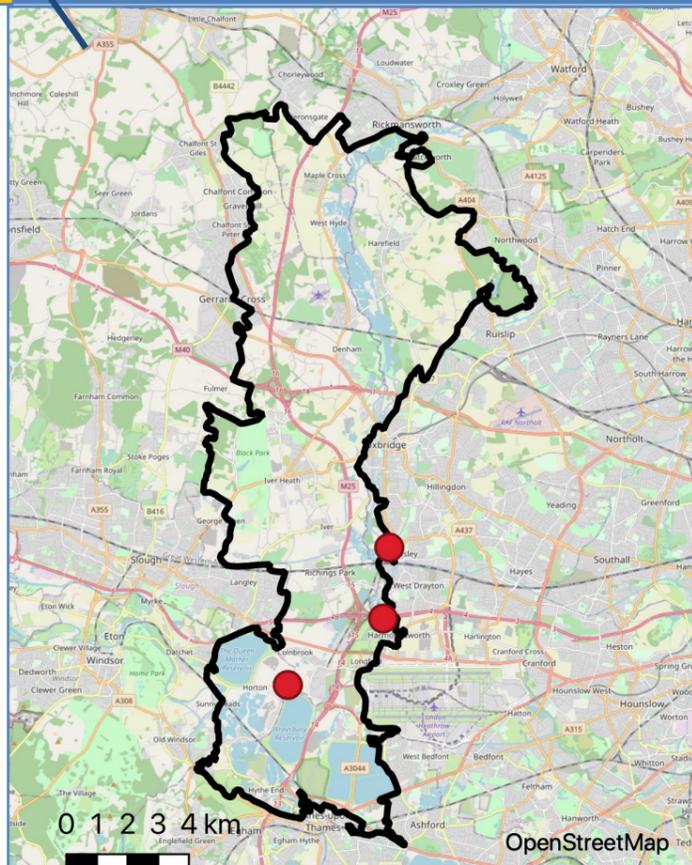
BIOSECURITY

Biosecurity is extremely important to prevent the spread of the species. Giant Hogweed is able to travel through watercourses with seeds are buoyant up to three days, and viable for seven years, causing it to spread dangerously far and wide.



It can also be spread by humans if trampled upon. Please **check** footwear and any equipment to remove any Giant Hogweed seeds, **clean** the items, then **dry** to prevent dispersal.

Local Distribution



Control Measures

Giant Hogweed is a perennial monocarpic plant which can take up to two to five years to mature and flower, with seeds being produced en masse in late summer. Control measures should be conducted before then for maximum effect. Current control methods are listed below:

Mechanical Control - Remove populations by hand, cutting or digging the whole plant and root system. It is vital to wear protective equipment to avoid potential risk of injury (see right).

Herbicides treatments— Glyphosate can be applied via foliar, weed wiper and stem injection. An **Aqherb01** licence and an agreement must be obtained from the local Environment Agency office before application.

WARNING

Contact with the plant's phytotoxic sap causes severe blistering and skin irritation which is heightened when in sunlight. Blistering symptoms occur 24-48 hours after exposure and dense pigmentation is visible after 3-5 days and may persist for 6 years or more. Avoid the plant and wear protective clothing.



Photos sourced from GBNSS

CHECK

CLEAN

DRY

STOP THE SPREAD