



POISON HEMLOCK

(*Conium maculatum*)

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? Poison hemlock is a tall plant with a biennial life cycle. Biennial means it forms a rosette but does not flower during its first year of growth. In the second year, a tall, erect, flowering stem will grow up to 12 feet. The white or yellow 5 petal flowers form an umbrella shaped cluster, and the stems are ribbed with purple splotches. Poison hemlock has a long, white taproot and the stem is strong, smooth and covered with purple spots. The leaves are fern-like in appearance.

WHERE DOES IT LIKE TO GROW? Poison hemlock can be found along roadsides, edges of cultivated fields and on stream and ditch banks. It prefers wet soil conditions but can survive in dry sites.

WHEN DOES IT BLOOM? Small erect clusters of white flowers appear in July and August. Each flower develops into a green, deeply ridged fruit that contains several seeds which turn gray-brown when ripe.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD? Poison hemlock reproduces only from seed. Seeds will drop next to the parent plant or be carried to new locations by water or birds.



CAUTION All parts of this plant are toxic to animals and humans. The toxic compounds are found in the stems, leaves and fruits of this plant.

NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL:

- Always wear long sleeves, long pants and gloves when around or handling this plant.
- Plowing or repeated cultivation will prevent poison hemlock seedlings from establishing.
- Repeated mowing will prevent the plant from flowering and setting seed.



See the reverse side for more information on mechanical, cultural, biological and chemical control of Poison Hemlock. Also see our Chemical Treatment handout for more information.

Want more information? Contact:

Kootenai County Noxious Weed Control

10905 N. Ramsey Road

Hayden, ID 83835

208-446-1290

kcnoxiousweeds@kcgov.us or www.kcweeds.com

Kootenai County does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its public meetings, programs, or activities. Requests for assistance or accommodations can be arranged by contacting the Noxious Weed Control Department at (208) 446-1290 or County Administration Office TTY (208)446-2145 with 3 days advance notice.

How to Control Poison Hemlock

Poison Hemlock is a biennial that reproduces by seed only. Control is achieved by preventing seed production.

Mechanical Pulling/digging efforts that remove the root can be very effective at controlling Poison Hemlock, but avoid disturbing more soil than necessary because soil disturbance leads to more germinations. USE GLOVES AND WASH HANDS AFTER HANDLING.

Cultural The best long term weed control is to get your desirable native plants thriving. Killing weeds is only one step, you have to also replace them with something good. Seed and fertilize so your grass can take nutrients away from the weeds and not leave available open soil for new weeds to germinate.

Biological There are currently no biological agents available in the US for Poison Hemlock.

Chemical **See our Chemical Treatment handout for more information on using herbicides.*

- **2,4-D** is the active ingredient in many herbicide products such as **Hardball**, **Weedar**, **Hi-Dep**, etc. It is broadleaf selective (safe on grass) and can be effective on small Poison Hemlock rosettes if applied soon after they emerge.
- **Chlorsulfuron** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Telar XP**. It is safe to most well established perennial grasses and can be effective on Poison Hemlock if applied while the plant is rapidly growing.
- **Metsulfuron Methyl** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as **Escort XP**. It is safe to most grasses and can be effective on Poison Hemlock if applied while the plants are rapidly growing.
- **Triclopyr** is the active ingredient in herbicide products such as Garlon, Element, and many “Poison Ivy and Tough Brush Killer” type products. It can be effective on young/small Poison Hemlock plants if applied during the seedling to rosette stages.

Chemical recommendations are based on University of Idaho Extension Bulletin 865 [Idaho's Noxious Weeds 2011 Control Guidelines Noncrop and Rangeland Sites](#), the book [Weed Control in Natural Areas in the Western United States](#) published by UC Davis Weed Research & Information Center, and herbicide labels.