

## So, you have found giant hogweed on your land, what should you do?

Firstly, are you certain that the suspect plant is **giant hogweed**?

Yes

Are you happy to try and eradicate the plant yourself?

Yes

No

No

### You will need to hire a contractor.

They are **certified** to use **different chemical treatments** (that are usually more effective) that can only be used by **professionals**. Depending on the size of the area infested with giant hogweed will decipher how the contractor recommends the plant should be treated. They may suggest **chemical control** (herbicide spray or injection) or, **physical control** (cutting).

Please refer to the **ID guide** produced by the **GBNNS**, our **Facebook page** or **email us** a picture and we will ID it for you.

### GBNNS website:

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonativespecies/factsheet/factsheet.cfm?speciesId=1495>

### Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/NorfolkInvasives?ref=hl>

### Email:

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There are **FOUR** different **eradication methods** for giant hogweed:

### 1.) Root Cutting

By breaking the taproot of the plant you will kill it. This is a **quick easy method** of eradication. Simply **cut the taproot** roughly 15cm below ground level using a spade, shovel or anything with a wide sharp edge. Plants on slopes will need to be cut at least 25cm below ground level. **You need to separate the root from the stem**. The plant can then be **cut up, bagged, left to thoroughly dry out and burnt on site**. Try to **avoid** taking the plant off site for disposal; if required it must be bagged (so as to contain the seeds) and taken to a waste disposal site that accepts giant hogweed waste. Go to <http://www.wastedirectory.org.uk/> (If you start typing into 'waste type' giant hogweed, an 'invasive weeds' box pops up, click this and enter your postcode).

**Attention:** If the treated giant hogweed plant has not died from the first cut, **cut the taproot again** and apply '**Round Up**' herbicide spray to the **cut root**. Please read the previous paragraph on disposal of cuttings.

**Note:** Ideal for single plant or small infestation.

**Health and Safety:** We advise that due to the risk of contact with sap from the plant, skin must be covered at all times and eradication by hand should be restricted and not considered once the plant has grown **above 1 metre** in height. We suggest herbicide treatment with '**Round Up**' herbicide spray if the plant is over this height.

## 2.) Giant hogweed flower/seed head removal and disposal

Firstly **cut off the flower heads** after the seeds have formed, but before they start seeding. This will prevent the plants from shedding the seeds and from forming new flowers on lower branches. Use a **pruner** (with cut and hold ability) to carefully remove all **flower heads, bag them**, allow them to **dry out** and burn on site. If sap has got on to the outside of the bag, put it inside another bag so the outside is safe to handle.

**Health and Safety:** Be careful to stand out of the way of the flower head when cutting. **NOTE:** This will not kill the plant, but will prevent it from seeding.

## 3.) Mowing and Cutting (DO NOT mow if the plant/plants are larger than your mower and NEVER mow if there is a flower or seed head)

Mow the plant when it is small and continue mowing throughout the year. They must be cut at least three times during a growing season for several years. Repeated mowing can be used if the infestation is large, this will eventually kill the plants. **Be careful** not to spread the seeds - all **flower heads** should be **removed** and carefully disposed of prior to mowing (bagged, thoroughly dried out and burnt on site).

**Note:** Mowing **equipment** should be **cleaned** before using in another area to **avoid** spreading giant hogweed seeds.

## 4.) Herbicide Control

You can spray giant hogweed with '**Round Up**' herbicide spray from your local garden centre. **Application tips:** Spray herbicide onto the plant during the growing season (March to August). Spray should be directed onto the leaves of the plant (under and upper sides). Use the recommended manufacturer's dose and follow label instructions. **Treatment period:** giant hogweed seeds can remain in the soil for several years, therefore a long-term eradication strategy involving herbicide treatment is recommended for larger infestations.

**Best Practice:** Remove the plants before flowering/seeding (this way seed dispersal during removal is not possible).

### ATTENTION

Is the giant hogweed you are treating close to a **watercourse**?

If 'yes' please contact the **Environment Agency** (EA) and ask to speak to your local **BASIS Officer** to seek written permission to use herbicide near to a watercourse.

If granted permission only certain herbicides can be used near/in water, for example '**Round up Biactive**'.

If the giant hogweed is on land designated as an **SSSI, SAC** or **SPA** you will need to seek written permission from **Natural England** to use herbicide.

**WARNING Health and Safety:** **DO NOT** get any sap on your bare skin, the sap reacts to sunlight and will cause **SERIOUS** skin blisters. If this occurs seek medical attention immediately. Make sure that you wear eye protection, that your skin is covered at all times and that you are wearing sturdy waterproof gardening gloves when working with the plant.

It is **ILLEGAL** to knowingly cause this plant to spread into the wild



Credit: UK Weed Control Ltd

### Re-planting

It is very important that after removing invasive non-native vegetation, it is just as important to re-establish native and non-invasive plants. This will help to achieve control, reduce soil erosion and provide competition for giant hogweed seedlings.

## **References**

Department of Environmental Conservation. 2012. **How to Control Giant Hogweed**. Available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/40961.html> (Accessed July 2012)