

Invasive Species Alert

Wild Parsnip

(*Pastinaca sativa*)

Detected in Michigan

Identification:

- Biennial flowering herb on a single stem that grows to 5 feet tall
- Leaves consist of 2 to 5 pairs of leaflets that grow across from each other along the stem, and one diamond-shaped leaflet on the end
- Leaflets are toothed and often shaped like a mitten
- Yellowish green flowers form umbrella-shaped clusters 4 to 8 inches across
- Flowers bloom in June and July
- Stem is green, 1-2 inches thick and smooth with few hairs

Habitat: Wild parsnip tolerates a range of soils and moisture levels but requires sun. Often found in open areas, pastures, fields, roadsides and disturbed areas.



Ohio State Weed Lab Archive,
Ohio State University

Native Range: Eurasia

U.S. Distribution: Wild parsnip is widespread throughout the U.S. excepting Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Hawaii.

Local Concern: Wild parsnip spreads aggressively through seeds carried by wind, water and equipment. Stem, leaves, and flowers contain chemicals that can increase skin sensitivity to sunlight and cause severe rash or blistering. Plant chemicals are known to reduce weight gain and fertility in livestock that eat wild parsnip.

Look-Alikes: Other members of the carrot family, including cow parsnip, angelica and Queen Anne's lace, are often misidentified as wild parsnip. Take the time to review similar plants before reporting this species.



Photo by Kitty Kouhout

Report this species at
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the MISIN smartphone app and
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