

How to distinguish Giant hogweed from Native hogweed, & Angelica

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

An Roinn Cultúir,
Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta
Department of Culture,
Heritage and the Gaeltacht

Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Lúimnigh
Limerick City
& County Council

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Giant hogweed
Deeply incised, 1.5 m wide



Native hogweed
Less incised, more rounded
< 1 m



Angelica
'Pinnate', < 1m



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Giant hogweed
White umbrella-shaped 1m wide,
50 + rays,
July



Native hogweed
White, flat topped
3 x smaller, < 15 rays
May-June



Angelica
Ball shaped clusters
Greenish, white
May-June



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Giant hogweed

**Stiff bristles
purple splotches**



Grows in huge clumps, often linear along roads & rivers

Native hogweed

**Green, fine hairs
occ. purple spots**



Grows singly & scattered

Angelica

**Smooth, no hairs
purplish stem, waxy**



Grows singly & scattered



What is this?



What is this?



Answers: the first is native hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*); the second is giant hogweed (*H. mantegazzianum*)
Note the flat-topped flower head in the native hogweed and the umbrella shape of the flower head in giant hogweed. The stems of native hogweed are green with very little purple; the stems of giant hogweed are purple flecked. There is a huge difference in size, with giant hogweed being at least five times larger.

The main differences between native hogweed and giant hogweed are:

- Giant hogweed is huge, up to 5 metres tall; native hogweed rarely exceeds 2-3 metres tall. The leaves of giant hogweed are strikingly large, whereas native hogweed has 'normal' sized leaves.
- Giant hogweed seeds are heavy and fall close to the mother plant, which results in dense stands, sometimes hundreds of plants in a few square metres. Native hogweed generally grows as single plants even if it is abundant.
- Giant hogweed leaves are jagged and sharply divided, so the tips look pointed and sword-like, as if they have been cut with a pair of scissors. Native hogweed leaves are broad and bluntly toothed, and generally quite rounded in shape.
- Giant hogweed stems are stout, frequently with red/purplish splotches especially when mature, and with noticeable long bristles. Native hogweed stems are much thinner and with softer hairs.