

Parsnip Control

		April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Mar	
	Burn	Use fire to improve competing native plant community										
Herbicide	Foliar											
	Cut stem											
	Mow											
	Don't mow											
Flowering Period												

Hand Pulling

Grip the stalk near the ground and pull the plant up.
 Caution: use protective clothing: long sleeves, gloves etc.
 Effective: Before the plant goes to seed. If pulling after viable seed is present, plants must be collected and burned.

Chopping the Root

Using a spaded shovel or a blunt edge, cut the Wild Parsnip root approximately one inch below the ground.
 Effective: Before the plant goes to seed.

Burn the Seeds

After the plant has gone to seed, chemical spraying is no longer effective, burning the seed from the plant with a torch is a possibility. Caution: obtain necessary permits.
 Effective: After the plant has turned brown and seeded. When green flowering plants and plants with green seeds were burned there was little impact on the plant.

Cut and Collect the Seed

Once the plant has produced seed, cut flower from the plant with a clippers, bag the seed and burn it to reduce seed dispersal
 Effective: After the plant has turned brown and seeded.

Mowing

Mowing Wild Parsnip can cause more harm than good when trying to eliminate the plant. If mowed too early in the year, Wild Parsnip will re-sprout like a tree stump sending out 2—3 new stalks. Too late will spread the seed.
 Effective: multiple trips needed. From early spring until seed production starts.

Spraying

2, 4-D
 Effective: Early spring when rosettes are first visible until plant grows to 8 inches tall.

Metsulfuron methyl or Triclopyr - Broadleaf

Effective: From early spring until the plant turns woody and produces viable seed.

Glyphosate (not recommended)

Effective: From early spring until the plant turns woody produces viable seed.

Caution: glyphosate will affect any green vegetation thus creating “dead spots” that can benefit Wild Parsnip and other weeds.

The best defense, is to be able to identify the plant and be aware of precautions to take when near it. Sap is present in all stages, potency increases during spring and summer and decreases after the seed has set. There are native plants that may look similar so learn to identify Wild Parsnip before performing control methods. Below are photos of the various stages of the Wild Parsnip life cycle.

Early Spring



Late Spring or Fall



Early Summer



Flowering, Summer



Seeding, Fall



Rosette, Late Summer- Fall



BEWARE
Wild Parsnip
(Pastinaca sativa)



Wild Parsnip has been in the news recently because of its harmful characteristics and concern over its increased spreading over the landscape.

This plant has become a weed of special concern along roadsides, abandoned areas and in grasslands. Like many other introduced plants, it is very aggressive and spreads rapidly.

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Why Be Concerned

Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) is the most recent addition to Wright County's Invasive Specie List. This rapidly spreading plant is a native of Europe and Asia. It was grown as a root vegetable and escaped from agriculture. Wild Parsnip is a biennial, meaning it germinates and grows one year then reoccurs and seeds the following year. Wild Parsnip moves into disturbed habitats and invades slowly. Once established it seeds and spreads rapidly choking out other vegetation. Wild Parsnip survives in nearly any condition and is commonly found along road ditches and railways, in pastures and grasslands.

More people are coming into contact with Wild Parsnip due to its rapid spread into open habitats and roadsides. Individuals who are working, hiking or involved in activities around Wild Parsnip should be informed of what harmful health effects it can cause.

During the month of July, Wild Parsnip is a dominant yellow flowering weed in many roadsides and right-of-ways.



Avoid skin contact with the toxic sap produced by the plant tissue. The sap of Wild Parsnip in contact with skin and in the presence of sunlight can cause a rash, blistering or discoloration of skin (phytophotodermatitis). The rash is very painful and may last several months or longer. This rash can also lead to scarring. The highest risk for Wild Parsnip infection is at the time of flowering from June through September.

To Relieve Symptoms

- Cover affected area with a cool, wet cloth.
- If blister(s) appears, try not to rupture for as long as possible.
- To avoid infection, keep area clean and apply antiseptic.

Spread

Wild Parsnip seed is being unintentionally moved around the County by things like mowing decks, ATV's, snowmobiles, and mulch. Seeds also disperse naturally by wind and water.



Biological Basics

Life History: Wild Parsnip typically lives two years. The first year, as a spindly rosette of leaves, it keeps fairly low to the ground while the plant's carrot-like taproot develops. It may live up to two years this way until conditions are right for flowering. The second year, a hollow grooved flower stalk rises 2 to 5 feet high, first holding clusters of yellow flowers that develop into dozens of flat, oval shaped seeds.

Leaves: Pinnately compound, with a main stem and 5 to 15 leaflets.

Flowers: Yellow, flat-topped, umbrella like clusters at the top of the plant.

Season: Wild Parsnip rosettes are among the first to become green in spring with flowers turning a prominent yellow in June. After flowering and going to seed, plants die and turn brown in fall. First year rosettes remain green until frost.

Habitat: Roadsides, abandoned fields, fence rows, pastures, railroad right-of-ways, prairie restorations, and open grasslands.

