



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Beware of Giant Hogweed

CATHARINE YOUNG August 6, 2014



A harmful invasive plant species, giant hogweed, is spreading throughout the state.

Please be on the lookout for this poisonous plant, which has turned up in Western New York this summer.

With no known natural predator or opposition in our environment, this weed has been causing significant damage to yards and parks, eroding soil and crowding out native plants.

Most alarmingly, however, is that contact with giant hogweed is also very harmful to people and animals, so look after your children and pets.

Contact with the plant's poisonous sap can cause everything from mild skin irritation to severe burns and scarring. Contact with the eyes can cause blindness.

If you do come into contact, immediately wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and call a physician.

Giant hogweed is currently flowering and can grow to as high as 8 to 14 feet tall. It features large groups of small white flowers, a green stem with purple blotches, and coarse white hairs. Leaves can be up to 5 feet wide.

If you see it, DEC advises:

- Do not touch it.
- Take photos of the entire plant, including the seeds.
- Report the sighting and number of plants to DEC via phone at **845-256-3111** or email **ghogweed@dec.ny.gov**. Include photos if you can.

Visit the DEC website at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html for more information on giant hogweed and how to identify it.

With your help, we can get this invasive plant species under control and have a safe and healthy summer.

If there's ever anything I can help you with, don't hesitate to contact me.

Warmest regards,

Senator Cathy Young

57th District