



Wild Parsnip

(*Pastinaca sativa*)

Identification:

Leaves: compound leaves with a central stem bearing 5 – 15 pairs of toothed leaflets. Leaf stalk encloses main stem.

Flowers: tiny, five petaled, yellow flowers in flat topped clusters atop a 2 – 5 foot stem.

Stems: stout, grooved, hollow.

Seeds: oval ¼", viable for four years.

Natural History:

- Introduced from Europe in 1700's as a food crop. Edible tap root. The wild version of cultivated parsnip.

Ecological impact:

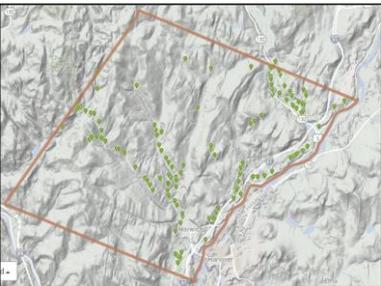
- Extremely aggressive invasive on roadsides, in pastures, and fields.
- **WARNING:** the sap from Wild Parsnip is photoreactive and will severely burn skin exposed to the sap after exposure to sunlight

Reproduction & spread:

- By seed only, primarily by the plants dropping ripe seeds, AND by mechanical means of mowing plants that bear ripened seeds.

Control Methods:

- Hand pull plants on a cloudy day after rain softens the soil. Wear protective gloves, long sleeves, etc.
- Properly timed mowing, while in flower before seeds have ripened, may require second mowing if mowed too early.



See Wild Parsnip here:

- **Roadsides:**
 - Beaver Meadow
 - Union Village
 - Turnpike
 - Goodrich 4 Corners
 - Route 132
- **Disturbed Areas**
 - By Transfer Station
- **Fields:**
 - Either side of approach road to Dresden fields

In Norwich:

In early spring, look for the emerging leaves of Wild Parsnip. This is the best time to remove or harvest it, before it flowers in the summer.

Several native wild-flowers resemble Wild Parsnip:

- **Golden Alexanders** (*Zizia aurea*)
- **Yellow Pimpernel** (*Taenidia integerrima*)
- **Meadow Parsnips** (*Thaspium barbinode*, *T. trifoliatum*)

They flower from early spring – early summer and pose no threat.