

Do Not Touch This Plant

Giant Hogweed

CAUTION: If you come in contact with this plant, you could experience severe burns to your skin. Contact with eyes can cause temporary or permanent blindness.

Giant Hogweed is an invasive, non-native plant that poses a serious threat to human health and natural ecosystems.

Giant Hogweed has been identified in some areas of Thornhill and Markham. Efforts have been made to safely remove the plants; however, caution should still be taken in the infested areas. Please respect any warning signs posted and stay away from the plant.

Health Risk

The clear sap found in the hairs, leaves and stem of the Giant Hogweed plant contains compounds that cause photodermatitis (symptoms can range from redness and itching to painful blistering).

Contact with the eyes can cause temporary or even permanent blindness in some cases.

If you are exposed to Giant Hogweed:

- Wash the affected area thoroughly
- Avoid exposure to sunlight
- Seek medical attention

Infested Areas

In Thornhill, Giant Hogweed plants have been found along the banks of a tributary of the East Don River, near the intersection of Bayview and Steeles Avenues continuing upstream to the north-west as far as Yonge Street. Three parks, Almond, Proctor and Woodland, are included in this area.

In Markham, a single stand of Giant Hogweed has been found south of 16th Avenue, a short distance east of Main Street Markham, in an inaccessible natural area.



Key Identifying Features

Height: 1 to 5.5 meters

Leaves: large, deeply cut with sharp coarse teeth, reaching widths in excess of 1 meter.

Stems: hollow, ridged with red-purple splotching and coarse white hairs, with a diameter of 4-10 cm at its base.

Flowers: white, compound umbel (80 cm or more across) made up of 4 to 12 smaller (14 - 40 cm) flat, round units.

If you think that you have found Giant Hogweed outside the infested areas identified, please call the Town of Markham at **905-477-5530**.

