



# Wild Chervil

*Anthriscus sylvestris*

**Description:** Wild chervil, a biennial or short-lived perennial, is a member of the parsley family. It grows 1-4 feet tall from a taproot. The stems are hollow; hairy in the lower portions and smooth in upper portions of the plant. The leaves are finely divided, fernlike, and slightly hairy, especially on the lower surface. Flowers are white and form clusters in an umbrella shape. Each flower produces 2 joined seeds, about ¼ inch long, that are narrow, smooth and shiny dark brown. The seeds of wild chervil distinguish it from the similar wild carrot and poison hemlock, which also have fernlike leaves, a taproot and white umbel flowers. Wild chervil blooms earlier than wild carrot and is a much smaller plant than poison hemlock, which can grow up to 10 feet. A strong distinguishing characteristic to identify this species from others is the ridges on the stems as well as the lack of odor of the foliage that is present with poison hemlock, etc.



**Impacts:** Wild chervil is listed as a “B Designate” on the state noxious weed control list and is mandated for control in Thurston County. Experience has shown that Wild Chervil is highly adaptable; growing in sandy, gravelly, loamy, wet or well-drained areas, with low to high light intensities and varying degrees of soil fertility. Most of Thurston County is highly susceptible to infestation. The plant’s fast growth, large size, and ability to create monocultures poses a serious threat to native plants, crops and agriculture.

**Control Options:** Thurston County’s Integrated Pest Management emphasizes cultural, biological, and manual control methods to keep pests and vegetation problems low enough to prevent damage. The goal of Thurston County’s pesticide use policy is to minimize the use of pesticides by utilizing and providing information about the most effective control options that are available and practical.

### ► Cultural / Habitat

The most effective control of Wild Chervil is prevention. Above all, prevent plants from going to seed. Wild chervil is a common ingredient in British wildflower seed mixtures. Review the ingredients of wildflower mixes to avoid accidental introduction, and avoid using wildflower mixes with unidentified seed components entirely. To prevent plants from spreading from known infestations, carefully clean vehicles, boots, clothing, and pets after visiting infested areas.

### ► Manual / Mechanical

Research conducted on a portion of the Black River Unit of Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge south of Olympia, WA showed that tillage and seeding of grass species provides less than 50% control of wild chervil after two consecutive years. Tilling the area during the drought stress portions of the year; July, August, and September is the most effective control measure when coupled with a springtime herbicide application. Tilling brings the storage roots of the plant to the surface where they dry out and no longer sprout. However, the tillage must take place several times and it will not prevent seed production in the wet months; March-June.



Extensive manual removal attempts have been performed near the Black River research site and were found to be ineffective. Cutting of wild chervil was done in May and by mid-June all of the plants had re-grown and were re-blooming. Digging and pulling of wild chervil was then tried but re-growth occurred from these practices also. Re-blossom on most sites took only about 10 days. In 2002, more than 10,000 lbs of chervil was removed from county rights of way using manual methods. After removal or final tillage of wild chervil; seeding or replanting the area with a beneficial species is recommended. Native plant communities provide competition which makes the area less prone to re-infestation.

### ► Biological

There are currently no biological control methods available for Wild Chervil.

## ► Chemical

Currently, products containing the active ingredient glyphosate are the only herbicides for the control of wild chervil that are considered “low in hazard” by Thurston County’s pesticide review process. The Roundup Pro® label recommends mixing a 1–2% solution for hand-held or spot applications for control of perennial weeds, the rate depending on size, species and conditions. Because of the extensive root system and waxy coating on the leaves and stems, the higher (2%) solution is the most appropriate. Spraying with a lower percentage solution may not kill the plants, which can contribute to herbicide resistance.

***Thurston County has observed that most ready-to-use, pre-mixed products do not contain sufficient active ingredients to be as effective as concentrated products that are then mixed with water to create a specific finished concentration. The following instructions are for products containing 41% glyphosate which will be mixed down to a specified dilution rate. Be sure to read your label carefully, and make adjustments to rates accordingly.***



Anthriscus sylvestris (L.) Hoffm.  
Image processed by Thomas Schoepke  
www.plant-pictures.de

### Foliar applications of *glyphosate* (ROUNDUP PRO™):

- Spot applications with glyphosate products are effective. Spot application means the herbicide is applied only to the plants and not on the surrounding plants or soil. Spray each plant thoroughly on the stems and leaves enough to be wet but not dripping.
- Glyphosate is non-selective, and will injure any plants that it comes in contact with, including grass.
- Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.

Herbicide & Method	Product Rates	Mix
RoundUp Pro® Spot/Foliar	2%	To 1 gallon of water add 2.66 oz. RoundUp Pro®, apply to foliage at or beyond bud stage.

Products containing the active ingredient imazapyr (**Habitat® and Arsenal®**), are considered “moderate in hazard” by Thurston County’s pesticide review process for the potential for chemical mobility and persistence and are a second choice for chemical control.

### Foliar applications of imazapyr (Habitat®), (Arsenal®)

- Licensed applicators are required to use this product
- Spot applications with imazapyr products are effective.
- Imazapyr is non-selective, and will injure any plants that it comes in contact with, including grass.
- Keep people and pets off treated areas until spray solution has dried.
- Do not use on lawns walks driveways or similar areas where roots of desirable vegetation may extend and be exposed to potential injury.

**Timing:** Plants can be treated any time they are actively growing, the most optimum time being the rosette stage through April and May, before plants bloom and produce seed.

**READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL DIRECTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS.** Obey all label precautions and safety measures. Always use personal protective equipment that includes coveralls, waterproof gloves, shoes plus socks, and protective eyewear. Use of brand names does not connote endorsement and is for reference only; other formulations of the same herbicides may be available under other names. Information provided is current as of the date of the fact sheet. Pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.

### REFERENCES:

WA State Noxious Weed Board Written Findings: [http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed\\_info/written\\_findings/CLASS%20B%20PDFs/Anthriscus%20sylvestris%20pt%201%201999.pdf](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weed_info/written_findings/CLASS%20B%20PDFs/Anthriscus%20sylvestris%20pt%201%201999.pdf)

Guide to Weeds in British Columbia: <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/chervil.htm>

Pacific Northwest Extension Bulletin #367

“Wild Chervil, A Relatively New Weed Problem in Central Vermont”, University of Vermont Extension  
Nova Scotia Dept. of Ag. & Fisheries Noxious Weed information for Wild Chervil, January 20, 2003



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