



Poison hemlock can cause harm to humans, livestock and wildlife. Photos courtesy of Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District

Weed of the month: Poison hemlock

By Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District

Poison hemlock is an unwelcome invasive plant in the landscape because every part of this plant is poisonous to humans, livestock, and wildlife. It even retains toxicity in hay because dead stems remain toxic for up to three years. Acute toxicity is fatal while skin irritation can occur if it is handled without gloves.

Poison hemlock is aggressive and easily colonizes pastures, roadsides, riparian areas, and other disturbed areas. It is an herbaceous biennial that can grow up to 10 feet tall. It is a member of the parsley family and can be confused with other plants in that family such as Queen Anne's lace. It can be distinguished by its fern like, glossy, finely divided leaves as well as its hairless, hollow stems with purple blotches. Small, five-petaled

white flowers grow on stalks in four-inch umbrella shaped clusters from April to July. It is native to Europe, Asia, and North Africa and is common throughout the Pacific Northwest. Poison hemlock is a prolific seed producer and seeds can be spread by animals, water, vehicles, or humans. Seeds remain viable for two to three years.

How to remove

The best approach to controlling new infestations is to get to them as early as possible. Digging small plants by hand when plants are young is effective (wearing gloves!) if the whole taproot is removed. Repeated mowing before flowering can be effective, as is proper and well-timed herbicide application.

AARP offers online driver safety courses

AARP has a series of live, virtual workshops through September on the following topics:

- **Using App-Based Ridesharing Services:** Learn about ridesharing apps and how they help you stay safe, mobile and connected at any age.
- **CarFitSM Workshop:** Improve safety and reduce risk of injury during a crash by making adjustments to ensure your car "fits" you properly. CarFit is a free educational program developed in collaboration with AAA, AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association.
- **Smart DriverTEK Workshop:** Technology is changing the driving experience. This workshop familiarizes drivers with important safety technology like blind spot warnings, smart headlights, and automatic braking.
- **Lets Talk about a Loved One's Driving:** It's a tough subject, but there comes a time when older family members need to stop or limit their driving. This seminar that helps assess a loved one's driving skills and provides tools to help navigate these important conversations.

A listing of all scheduled online events can be found at Aarp.org/DriverSafetyVirtual.

Volunteers needed

Volunteer instructors are also needed. Training is provided; no special skills or AARP membership is required. Visit aarp.org/ADSvolunteer for more information.

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