PLANT FACT SHEET

Heracleum sphondylium L.

GENUS *Heracleum* **FAMILY** Apiaceae

COMMON NAMES Hogweed, Cow parsnip

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Roots, Stems, Seeds

The young leaves are boiled and eaten as a vegetable. They are also used in soup.
The roots have been used as a condiment.
The stems and seeds are used to make beer.
The leaf stalks are tied in bundles and sun-dried and they exude a sugary substance eaten as a delicacy.

DESCRIPTION

A fairly robust bristly herb. It can take 2 years to complete its life-cycle or grow for several years. It grows 2.5 m tall. The stems are hollow and ridged. The leaves are large and have leaflets along the stalk. These often have 5 lobed segments which have teeth. The upper leaves are smaller. The bases are inflated and flat and wrap around the developing flower. The flower umbel is large and flat. It can be 15 cm across. It is white or pink with 15-45 rays. The petals of the outer flowers are unequal and have notches. The fruit can be rounded or oval and 7-10 mm long. They are flattened and have broad wings.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in open woodland and grassy banks. It is often along streams. It suits hardiness zones 2-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed.

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