PLANT FACT SHEET

Poisonous

This plant, or parts of it, can be poisonous. Do not eat it unless you know which parts are safe and how they must be prepared.

Conium maculatum L.

GENUS *Conium* **FAMILY** Apiaceae

COMMON NAMES Hemlock, Herb Bennet, Poison hemlock

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves

CAUTION: This plant is poisonous. It has been used in medicine but should not be eaten. The poison called Cociine is destroyed by heat so in some places the leaves have been boiled and eaten as a vegetable. The poison is destroyed by drying. It has been reported as eaten in some locations.
Cooking the leaves produces a nasty smell.

DESCRIPTION

A plant which usually grows over 2 years but can grow as an annual. It grows 2-2.5 m high. The stems are hollow. They are pale green with purple patches. The leaves at the base are in a ring. The leaves are pale green and large. They are divided twice. The segments are oblong or sword shaped. The edges have deep teeth. The leaf stalk sheaths the stem. The flowers have small white petals which curve inwards. The flowers are in a compound head. (The plant should not be confused with parsley nor the seeds with anise.) Both the fruit and leaves are poisonous.

HABITAT

It grows in subtropical and temperate places. It grows in cool, moist, sunny locations. Tasmania Herbarium.

NOTES

It can be invasive.

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