

# Invasive Plant Species: Wild Chervil

(*Anthriscus sylvestris*)



Native to Europe, Wild Chervil is thought to have been introduced through wildflower seed mixes. It prefers wet sites with rich soils in recently disturbed areas. Preferring wet sites, it grows in fields, pastures, forest edges and alone roadsides. Reproduction occurs from seed and root buds, with seed dispersal happening via animals, water and human activity. Can irritate skin, handle with gloves.

## Identification

Wild chervil has cluster of white flowers in small umbrella formations. Each flower produces 2 pointed, narrow seeds. The leaves look like ferns with fronds cut twice, attached to hollow, hairy stems that reach up to 1.8 m tall. Could be mistaken for salad chervil or bur chervil, as both have similar flowers and leaves. Salad chervil is smaller than wild chervil and is aromatic. While bur chervil has hairy leaves and prickly seeds. Plants that look similar to wild chervil are Queen Anne's Lace, Bur Chervil or Rough Chervil.



## Why is Wild Chervil a Problem?

Wild chervil prevents smaller native plants from growing by monopolizing light, water, space and nutrients. This puts riparian areas at risk considering wild chervil prefers wet, sloped areas.

Wild chervil also puts hay crops and pasturelands at risk by outcompeting plants and acting as a host for viral diseases.

Once established, mature wild chervil plants taproots grow rapidly. Burrowing up to 2 m deep into the soil, they are very difficult to remove.

**This plant's deep taproots make removal very difficult.**

## Impacts

Invasions of wild chervil can lower plant diversity by outcompeting for resources. With the potential of infecting other plants in the same family. As well as put riparian areas at risk of erosion and poorer biodiversity. Also, economically impact agriculture by reducing forage food for livestock and hay yields.



## Controlling Wild Chervil on Your Property

Prevention is the first step in managing wild chervil invasions. Be sure to removed seeds from clothing, machinery and animals to prevent further spread from occurring.

### DO

- Minimize soil disturbance and quickly revegetate disturbed areas.
- Begin treatment as soon as possible. The larger the infestation, the more difficult it is to eradicate.
- Hand pull smaller patches, ensuring to completely remove the roots.
- Frequently mow larger stands before going to seed
- Use larger machinery to remove plants in larger patches, ensuring all root fragments are taken out of soil.
- Monitor site for 5 years to ensure treatment was successful.

### DON'T

- **Do not** move or reuse soils contaminated with wild chervil. Seeds can stay viable in the soil.
- **Do not** compost wild chervil, as it can still produce viable seeds.
- **Do not** use wildflower seed mixtures

**Digging in the early spring, when soil is softer, allows for easier removal of deep tap root.**

## Proper Disposal

For safe disposal, place plant material in garbage bags labeled "invasive species," tied off using a gooseneck tie and zap strap and take to Bings Creek Solid Waste Management Facility (3900 Drinkwater Road, Duncan) or Peerless Road Drop-off Depot (10830 Peerless Road, Ladysmith).

**For more information on invasive plant species visit:**

[www.northcowichan.ca/Plants](http://www.northcowichan.ca/Plants)

Invasive Species Council of BC (ISC)

<https://bcinvasives.ca/>

Reporting Invasive Species  
[www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species)

**Need help identifying potential invasive species on your property?  
Email us a picture!**

**Contact us:**

E [environment@northcowichan.ca](mailto:environment@northcowichan.ca)

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