

TACKLING Wild Chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*)

Invasive species have significant impacts on the environment, human health, infrastructure and the economy in the Metro Vancouver region.

Wild chervil was introduced from Europe, likely in wildflower seed mixes. It has deep taproots and forms new plant buds from the base of the stems, which make control difficult. In BC, wild chervil is most common in the Fraser Valley but is becoming established in Metro Vancouver.

IMPACTS

Wild chervil competes with native and crop plants. It often hosts a plant virus that can spread to edible crops such as carrots and celery. It spreads quickly along roadsides and utility corridors. **Wild chervil can irritate skin.**

IDENTIFICATION

Identification should be confirmed by an expert, as some similar-looking plants are highly poisonous. Wild chervil is one of the first plants to grow and flower in the early spring in Metro Vancouver.

- **Lifecycle:** Plants live from one to many years; flowers are produced after 2-4 years
- **Stem:** Green, hollow, with ridges; 0.3-1.8 metres tall
- **Leaves:** Shiny green, resemble fern leaves; grow at the bottom of the stem and alternating on either side of the stem
- **Flowers:** Clusters of small, white flowers; each flower has five petals with notches; petals on the outside of the clusters are larger; bloom from March throughout the spring



Stem and branches

CREDIT: ISCMV



Plant in full bloom

CREDIT: ISCMV



Flowers

CREDIT: ISCMV



Leaves

CREDIT: ISCMV

- **Seeds:** Shiny brown and in pairs that are joined; up to 10,000 seeds produced per plant
- **Roots:** Thick taproots up to 2 metres long

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

To prevent further spread across the region and beyond, it is best not purchase, trade, or grow wild chervil plants or seeds. Review seed mixes carefully as wild chervil has been found in some wildflower seed mixes. If this plant is already present, it is critical to ensure it does not invade adjacent yards, parks and natural areas. Effective invasive plant management typically involves a variety of control methods. The following table summarizes the recommended techniques for controlling wild chervil on private property or where permission has been granted by the land owner or manager. Other methods may be used by professionals. **Wear gloves to avoid contact with skin.**

CONTROL STRATEGY	TECHNIQUES	SUITABLE SITES	NOTES
Manual	Pull or dig plants	Individual, isolated plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Causes minimal harm to surrounding plants• Repeated pulling/digging required• Taproots left in the soil may re-sprout
Mechanical	Use a tilling machine to break up the soil and bring the roots to the surface, where they will dry out	Sites with no other plants present and that are accessible to machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May cause damage to surrounding plants• Requires special equipment• Low success rate unless combined with other methods

Control should always take place prior to May before seeds ripen to avoid their spread. Monitor sites for regrowth for up to five years. Restore the area with native or non-invasive plants. Pastures and fields can be re-seeded with a grass seed mix that does not contain invasive species.

How Can You Help?

- Control invasive plants and replace them with a non-invasive alternative. Check out growgreenguide.ca for suggestions.
- Remove any plant parts or seeds from clothing, pets, tools, vehicles, etc.
- Do not place invasive plants in your backyard composter as the temperature will not become hot enough to destroy the seeds and roots.
- To reduce the spread of invasive species, dispose of yard waste and soil appropriately. Visit your municipality's website for more information.
- Download the '[Report Invasives BC](#)' app to identify and report invasive species

For the complete set of best management practices for wild chervil, and other key invasive species, visit MetroVancouver.org and search 'Invasive Species'.



A wild chervil meadow
CREDIT: CITY OF SURREY