

Beware of Wild Parsnip!

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) is an invasive, non-native Eurasian plant that can cause serious chemical burns if the sap comes into contact with skin in the presence of sunlight.



Chemical burns and blistering can appear up to 48 hours after contact. Discoloration might last as long as 6 months. The toxic reaction can take place any time of year, but it's most potent when the plant is flowering.

Learn to Identify Wild Parsnip

Wild parsnip is a biennial related to carrots, parsley, celery and dill. The first year it grows a rosette with fern-like leaves. The second year it produces a flowering stalk up to 4 ft. tall with yellow, lacy blooms resembling Queen Anne's Lace. Flowering occurs in mid-summer. After flowering, the plant sets seed, then dies.

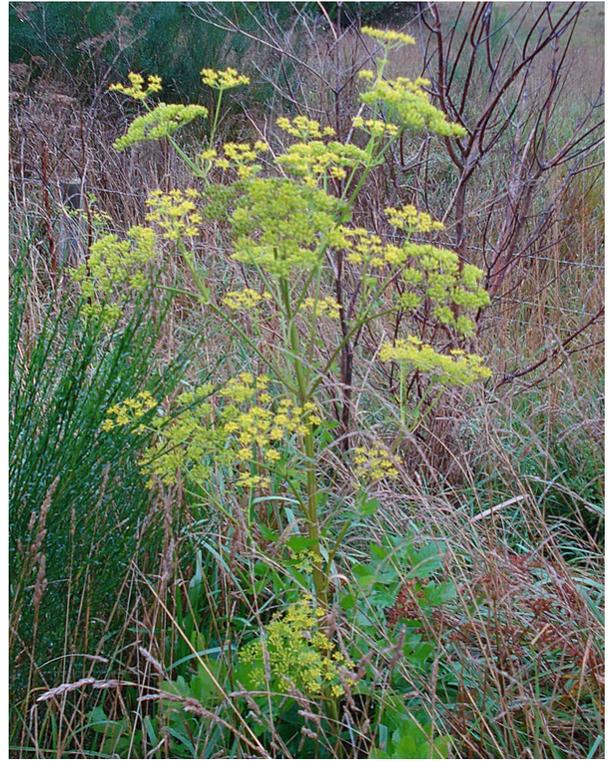


First year rosette

Potential Health Hazard! Wild parsnip can cause serious skin irritation, chemical burns and blistering. Unlike poison ivy, casually touching the leaves or brushing against the plant will usually not cause injury; sap from inside the leaves or stem needs to come into contact with skin.



**If you see this plant in the park,
tell a ranger!**



Blooms mid summer of second year. Flower stalk can reach 4—5 ft.



Brown seed heads appear after flowering

Wild parsnip is found throughout the U.S., generally in sunny locations along roadsides, fencerows and disturbed habitats. At Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, small populations have been discovered and removed. However, the plant is prominent along roads and fields that border the park.