

# Weeds to Avoid!

“Leaflets three, let in be.” is the rhyming reminder to avoid poison ivy. But wild parsnip is much more common and can even be worse than poison Ivy!

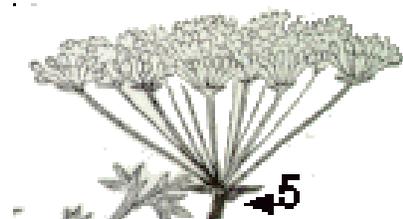


Wild Parsnip is a biennial weed that grows a rosette of leaves the first year. It sends up a flower stalk the second year and dies after setting seeds. The danger of wild parsnip is a chemical burn if you get sap on your skin and are exposed to sunlight.

The plant grows 2-5 feet tall its 2<sup>nd</sup> year. It is a member of the Parsley family (Umbelliferae) and has flower clusters shaped like an Umbrella. —————→

For more information, click on the link below.

<http://www.wnrmag.com/stories/1999/jun99/parsnip.htm>



There are also several look-alikes that you may find in the ditches:



### Yellow Sweetclover

Yellow sweetclover resembles a yellow version of alfalfa that grows 2-6 feet tall. It is a common ditch “weed” that is not native. It is useful for stabilizing sloping soils and a favorite of beekeepers. It is a pioneer plant; one of the first to get established on a disturbed site.

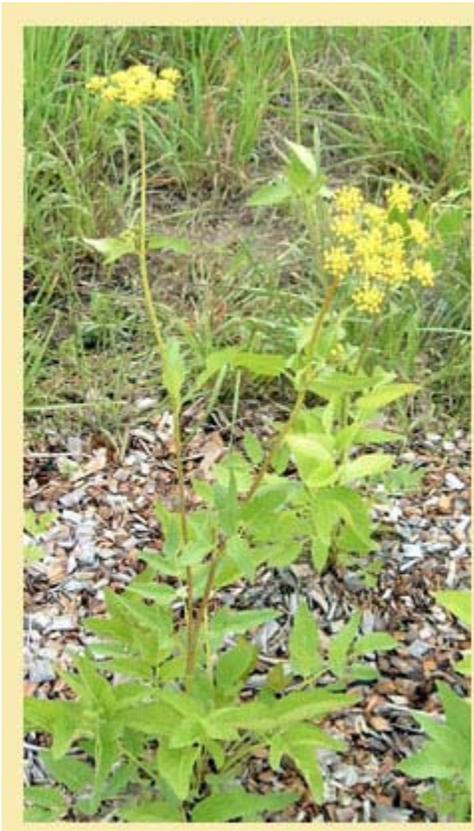
It is the bane of prairie restorers, since it is not native and will out-compete some native prairie plants.



### Queen Anne's Lace or Wild Carrot

Queen Anne's Lace is a biennial that grows 2-4 feet tall.that has a similar flower head as wild parsnip but is **White** instead of **Yellow**.

Larry Allain @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



### Golden Alexanders

Golden Alexanders is also a member of the Parsley family with typical flower form. The flower color is also similar to wild parsnip.

It is a native perennial that grows 1-3 feet tall. It blooms earlier than wild parsnip and the leaves are quite different.

Courtesy of Michigan State University



### Poison Hemlock

Poison Hemlock is yet another member of the parsley family. It is not common since it prefers moist soils.

But this year...

It grows 6-8 feet tall and has white flowers. It is reputed to be the hemlock that killed Socrates. According to Weeds of the West, "Humans have been poisoned by mistaking the plant for parsley."