

*Conium maculatum*

# Poison Hemlock

Other common names:

deadly hemlock, carrot fern, poison parsley

Apiaceae, the parsley family

Category: CONTAINMENT



## Diagnostic Characteristics

- Erect biennial; grows 6-9 feet tall
- Plants exist as basal rosette in its first year
- Leaves are alternate, with bases sheathing the stems
- Leaves are fern-like and finely innately divided
- Stems are purple-spotted or purple-streaked; smooth and hollow
- Flowers are small, white, and in umbrella-shaped clusters

## Background

- Native to Europe; introduced as an ornamental
- Inhabits ditches, streams, rights-of-way, disturbed areas, and pastures; prefers poorly drained soils
- Reproduces by seed
- Contains highly toxic alkaloids that are poisonous to livestock and humans if ingested
- Handling plants can cause dermatitis in some individuals

Photo Credit:

J.M DiTomaso, Regents of the University of California

# Poison Hemlock

*Conium maculatum*

