

Common cowparsnip

Heracleum maximum Bartr.

Group: Dicot

Family: Apiaceae (carrot)

Growth Habit: Forb/herb

Duration: Perennial

U.S. Nativity: Native

Natural Enemies Attracted: Medium numbers of [Chalcidoidea](#) and [Orius insidiosus](#). Small numbers of [Cynipoidea](#), [Empididae](#), [Cantharidae](#) and [Syrphidae](#).

Pests Attracted: Medium numbers of thrips, root-maggot flies, lygus bugs and aphids.

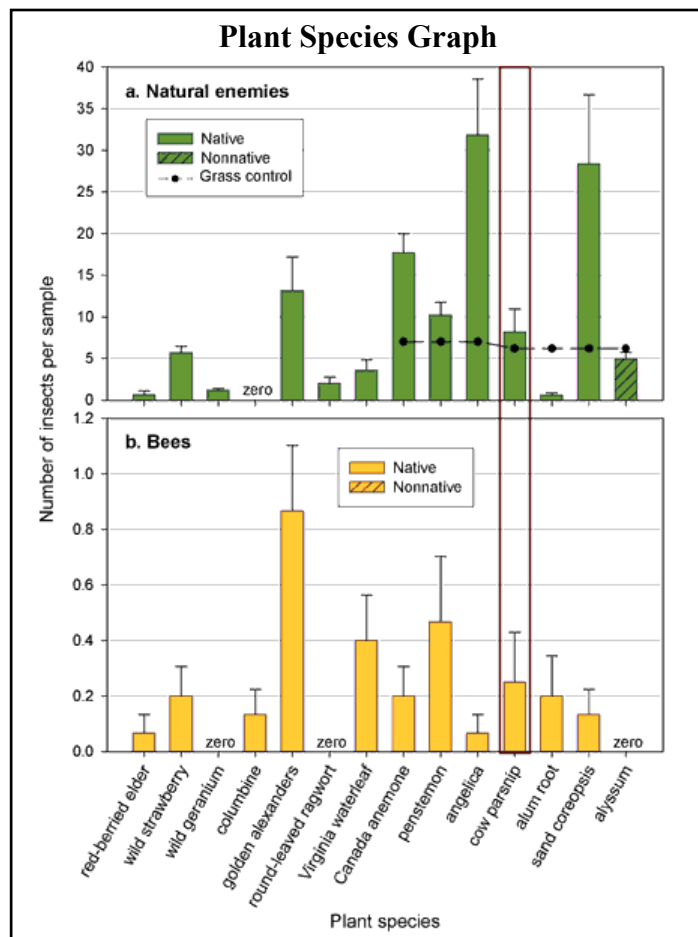
Bees attracted: Low numbers (less than 1 bee per meter square in a 30 second sample) of bees including yellow-faced bees and sweat bees.



Species Notes: Flowers are white, flat clusters up to 10 inches across. This large, stunning species grew to 3-6 feet tall under our conditions yet had excellent standability. Plants bloomed in mid June. This plant was the sixth most attractive to natural enemies in the early season, with similar natural enemy numbers as in the grass control.

About the Plant Species Graph:

Average number of beneficial insects collected at each plant species the week before, during, and after peak bloom, for plant species blooming from mid-August through early October (+ standard error). Cow Parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*) boxed in red. Bars for natural enemies are in green, bars for bees are in yellow. Bars for native plants are solid and nonnative plants are striped. The black line on the top graph shows the number of natural enemies in grass with no flowering plants (grass control). Plants are listed in order of peak bloom.



Habitat: Tolerances for this plant include full sun to partial shade, and average to very wet soil moisture. This species naturally grows in wet meadows and thickets, in floodplains and along river banks, as well as in borders of woods. Map indicates plant distribution by state.

Cultivation and Management: Low success rate when grown from seed, but flowers in second to third year. Also can be grown from plug material (flowers in first to second year). We saw no evidence of deer browsing on this species, but woodchucks reportedly eat it. This species is not susceptible to deer or other vertebrate browsing. This plant performed well in its first year of field establishment. Although it bloomed in the second year, plants and flower clusters were smaller.

Availability: Species is available as seed, plug or container grown material from various native plant nurseries. See the Michigan Native Plant Producers Association

For more information: View the online USDA-NRCS PLANTS database.

