



## Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program

Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife  
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## Hemlock Parsley

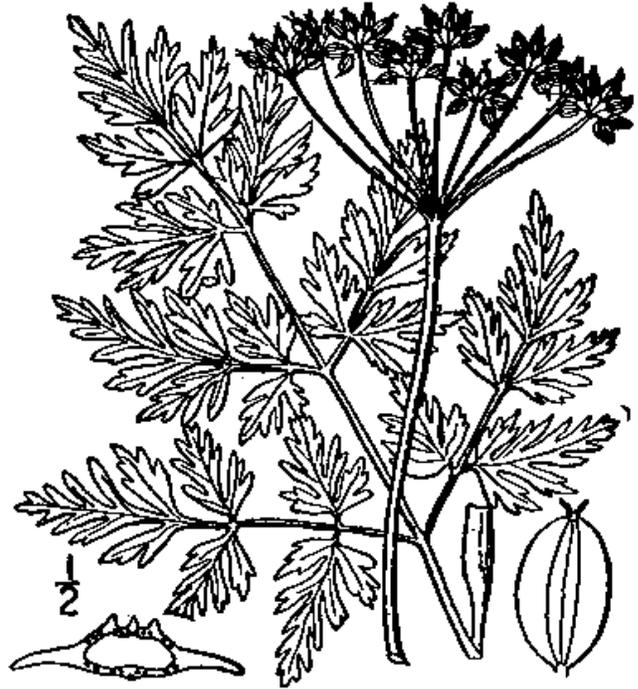
*Conioselinum chinense* (L.) B.S.P.

State Status: **Special Concern**

Federal Status: **None**

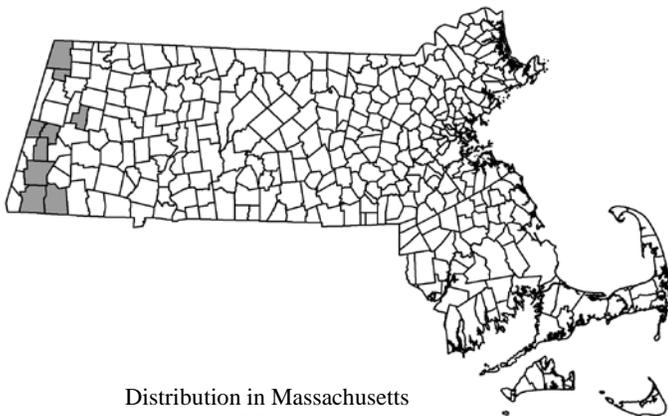
**General Description:** Hemlock Parsley is a perennial herb in the parsley or angelica family (Apiaceae). It is generally a slender plant, growing to a height of 1-5 ft. (4-15 dm) with a smooth, unspotted stem. The leaves are compound and highly dissected with short, broadly winged pedicels. Flowers are small, white, and occur in large flat clusters on an unbranched stem. Hemlock Parsley can be found in swamps, bogs, and wet meadows.

**Aids to Identification:** Hemlock Parsley's distinctive leaves are smooth below, and pinnately compound (leaflets are arranged along a midrib). The leaves are twice- or thrice-cut, with highly dissected or lobed leaflets. The leaf blades are 4-8 inches long (10-20 cm), while leaflets are 0.5-1.5 inches long (1.5-4.0 cm), growing on elongated petioles. The small flowers have white petals, but lack sepals; bracts are either narrow or lacking. The flowers are organized into umbels measuring 1-5 inches (3-12 cm) in diameter, positioned at the tips of the stems. Hemlock Parsley blooms from July until September, producing two one-seeded mericarps (fruits), oblong or elliptical in shape, and flattened dorsally with corky, winged ribs.



Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. Vol. 2: 636. Dover Publications, 1970. New York.

**Similar Species:** Few members of the carrot family inhabit forested swamps in Massachusetts. Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is a coarse plant with highly dissected leaves and enlarged leaf bases. Flowers are white, occurring in umbels; bracts are entire, underneath the floral clusters. Poison Hemlock has a smooth, spotted stem, and reaches heights of 24-72 inches (6-18 dm), growing commonly in waste places. It is poisonous and can be lethal when ingested. In drier places, Queen Anne's Lace is common along roadsides, and in dry meadows and waste places. Queen Anne's Lace or Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*) has wide, flat umbels of white flowers, often with a single purple flower in the center. Stiff, three-forked bracts lie directly underneath the flower clusters, and above the highly dissected leaves. Stems are covered with bristly hairs and reach a height of 12-36 inches (4-8 dm).



Distribution in Massachusetts  
1987-2012

Based on records in Natural Heritage Database

**Habitat & Associated Species:** In Massachusetts, Hemlock Parsley is usually found in swamps, wet meadows, bogs or fens, and marshy forests. It can tolerate shady environments and wet, acidic soils, although it is usually found in less acidic (circumneutral to limy) wetlands. It is often found in association with trees such as Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), Black Spruce (*Picea mariana*), Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), American Larch (*Larix laricina*), Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*), and Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*). Other associated species include Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Dasiphora floribunda*), Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*), Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*), Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), Bristly Black Currant (*Ribes lacustre*, Special Concern), and various species of Sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* spp.) and sedge (*Carex* spp.).

**Range:** Hemlock Parsley grows across North America, from Labrador and Newfoundland, westward through Minnesota, and Canada to Alaska and Siberia. Its range continues southward to Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Iowa, and into the mountains of North Carolina and Missouri.

**Population Status:** Hemlock Parsley is currently listed as a Species of Special Concern in Massachusetts. As with all species listed in Massachusetts, individuals of the species are protected from take (picking, collecting, killing...) and sale under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. Twelve current occurrences are known in the Commonwealth, all in Berkshire County. Hemlock Parsley is listed as rare in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Illinois and Indiana, and as possibly extirpated from Wisconsin (NatureServe, 2009).

**Management Recommendations:** As for many rare species, exact needs for management of Hemlock Parsley are not known. The following comments are based primarily on observations of populations in Massachusetts. Hemlock Parsley grows best in delicate environments, such as cold swamps and bogs, wet forests, and meadows. Any disturbance of these habitats, or change in the moisture regime or particular habitat, would negatively impact the populations. Wetlands such as swamps and bogs should be protected from disturbance and pollution, and an undeveloped buffer habitat should be maintained around these sensitive areas. Trail access to populations should be avoided, and where it occurs, efforts should be made to minimize trampling impacts.

Updated March 2012