



# Goutweed *Aegopodium podagraria* L.

**Common Names:** goutweed, Bishop's goutweed, bishop's-weed and snow-on-the-mountain

**Native Origin:** Europe and northern Asia; introduced as an ornamental

**Description:** A rhizomatous herbaceous perennial in the carrot family (Apiaceae) that spreads mainly by vegetative means. Leaves arising from the rhizomes are about 1 foot tall and typically far outnumber the fertile, flower-bearing stems. The leaves are long-petioled and divided into leaflets arranged in groups of three. The leaflets are toothed or irregularly lobed, green or variegated green and white. Fertile stems grow 2 to 3 feet tall and bear attractive umbels of small, white, five-petaled flowers in mid-summer. The brown seeds are small and elongate, and ripen in late summer.



**Habitat:** Goutweed grows well partial sun to full shade, with a preference for well-drained, evenly moist soils. It is tolerant of poor soils and can stand a wide range of soil pH values. Most types of eastern deciduous forests are vulnerable to goutweed invasion. Infestations can usually be traced to abandoned or ill-kept gardens.

**Distribution:** This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported to be invasive in natural areas in Connecticut, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wisconsin.



**Ecological Impacts:** It is an aggressive invasive plant that often dominates the herbaceous layer of forests, to the likely detriment of the native plants. Effects on wildlife habitat warrant further study. Deer, for example, seem to avoid this species when grazing in forests. Horticulturalists recognize the highly invasive nature of this plant, and many recommend that it not be planted.

### Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Hand-pull is not effective because it difficult to remove the rhizomes and stolons. Dig up of entire plants along with rhizome. Bag and discard pulled plants. Frequent short mowing may control or slow the spread in lawns, along roadsides, and other areas.
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate. Contact herbicides are usually ineffective because goutweed readily leafs out again after defoliation. Repeat applications may be necessary to reduce densities. Follow label and state requirements. Managers should evaluate the specific circumstances of each infestation, seek professional advice and guidance if necessary, and use the herbicide in a manner that is consistent with the product label and other state requirements.

Once goutweed control has been achieved, re-vegetation with native or non-invasive exotic plant materials is recommended. This is particularly important on sites where erosion is a concern or where other invasive species are likely to colonize the site if left alone.

**References:** [plants.usda.gov:8080/plants//profile?symbol=AEPO](http://plants.usda.gov:8080/plants//profile?symbol=AEPO), <http://webapps.lib.uconn.edu/ipane/browsing.cfm?descriptionid=34>, [www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/aepo1.htm](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/aepo1.htm), [www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive\\_plants/weeds/goutweed.pdf](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/goutweed.pdf)