

G. Wild Caraway (*Carum carvi*)

Key Characteristics:

Wild caraway is a member of the Parsley family. It is a biennial plant, producing a low-growing rosette of leaves in its first year of growth, and then a flowering stalk (bolt) in the second year. The plant is supported by a **narrow taproot** and grows in a wide range of soil types. Bolting plants can tolerate some spring flooding and seedlings can survive light frost. **Stems** are erect, smooth, branched, usually hollow, and grow 1- 3 feet tall. There can be several stems per plant. **Leaves** are alternate and very finely divided (parsley-like). The leaves of the first-year rosettes can look very similar to yarrow, a native plant. The **flowers** of Wild Caraway are usually white, but occasionally pinkish, and occur in loose umbels. **Fruit** has a distinct caraway odor.



Locations:

Wild caraway is grown in Canada as a spice crop; however it has escaped cultivation and has been invading pastures, rangeland and natural areas for several years now. This plant is prolific in Pitkin County. Small infestations have been noticed in Maroon Bells Park.

Biological control:

None known at this time.

Cultural control:

Healthy, competitive vegetation helps protect areas from invasion.

Mechanical control:

Hand-pulling of bolting stalks is effective at preventing seed production, but at maturity the seed heads are extremely fragile and shatter easily.

At this stage a plastic bag can be carefully placed over the mature plant, and closed tightly around the stem while hand-pulling. Carefully done, this method can remove seed without accidentally spreading it. Collected seed should be disposed of in landfill-bound garbage or thoroughly burned. Mowing is not effective because the plants will stay short and bloom.



Chemical control:

There are effective herbicide options for Wild Caraway control. Contact the Pitkin County Land Management Department for more specific information about products, rates, and equipment calibration.

G. Wild Caraway (*Carum carvi*) (continued)

Native Look-Alikes: Examples of similar-looking natives are pictured below. Contact the Land Management office with further questions.



Cow Parsnip
(*Heracleum sphondylium*)

Stem thicker, leaves much larger and less subdivided than Wild Caraway; seeds lack caraway odor.



Yarrow
(*Achillea lanulosa*)

Smaller and shorter, leaves more finely divided than Wild Caraway; stem and leaves wooly; seeds lack caraway odor

Porter's Loveage/Osha
(*Ligusticum porteri*)

Leaves not as finely divided as Wild Caraway; seeds lack caraway odor.

