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INVASIVE PLANTS

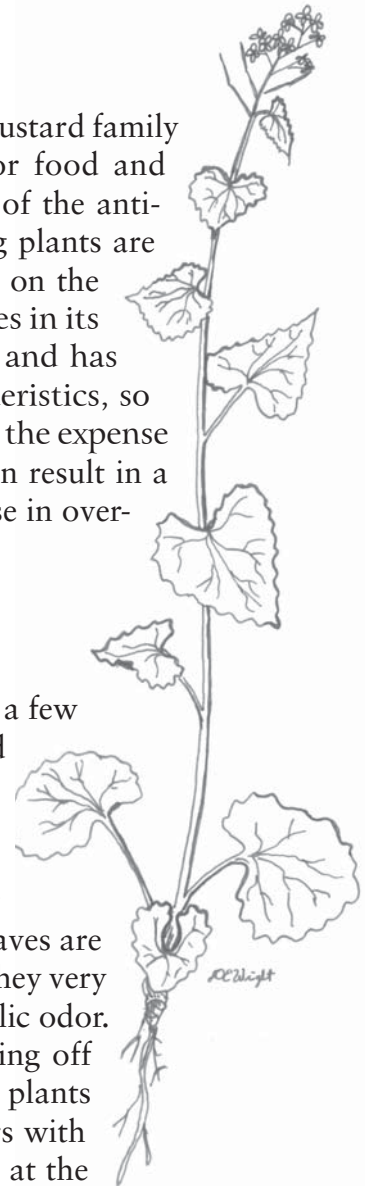
Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*

History

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is a biennial herb in the mustard family which was introduced from Europe in the mid-1800s for food and medicinal purposes. The plant was thought to have many of the anti-bacterial qualities of the bulb its smell so resembles. Young plants are actually edible and tender and recipes are readily available on the internet. Garlic mustard has no natural predators or diseases in its non-native environment, is very adept at seed dispersal, and has a longer growing season than our natives. These characteristics, so often found in invasives, contribute to their rapid spread at the expense of native biodiversity. Over time its continued presence can result in a total loss of native groundcover in large areas and a decrease in overall species diversity.

How Can I Identify It?

First year plants remain a rosette and reach a height of only a few inches. The rosette remains green throughout the winter and develops into a mature flowering plant the second year. In the second spring the bolted plant produces seeds in slender pods which are dispersed when the capsules burst open later in the summer. The seeds are tiny and easily spread to other areas in mud on shoes and animal feet and in fur. Rosette leaves are variable in size, kidney shaped and have palmate venation. They very much resemble wild violets, but when crushed give off a garlic odor. Stem leaves are alternate, toothed, and triangular, also giving off a distinctive garlic or onion odor when crushed. Flowering plants reach 1 – 4 feet in height. They produce small white flowers with four petals in the shape of a cross that are mainly clustered at the top of the stem.



F A C T S H E E T

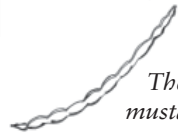
GARLIC MUSTARD *Alliaria petiolata*

How Can Garlic Mustard Be Controlled?

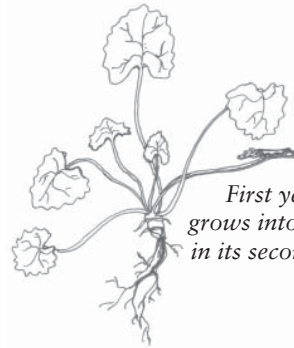
- NAP's preferred method of control is hand-pulling.
- Prescribed burning is effective on seedling plants and first year rosettes.
- For more information on control methods visit The Nature Conservancy website at: <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu>



This is a typical mustard family flower. Garlic mustard's flower is 1/4 inch wide and is white.



The seed pod of garlic mustard is 2.5-7.5 cm long.



First year garlic mustard grows into a rosette and bolts in its second spring.

What Can I Do?

- If you see a small infestation, pull it. When pulling be sure to remove the root to prevent resprouting from root fragments. Pulled plants should be bagged and taken to a municipal compost facility to prevent the spread of seed.
- Stay on, and keep pets on, established roads and trails to prevent invasive seed dispersal.
- After visiting an area that has garlic mustard, or other invasive weeds present, clean up before you leave the site! Make sure your clothes, shoes, vehicles, and pets are mud and/or seed free.
- Use plants native to southeastern Michigan in upcoming landscaping projects. NAP has a series of brochures to assist you in choosing native plants for your garden.
- Participate in NAP-sponsored volunteer workdays to remove garlic mustard and other invasives from city natural areas.
- Learn to identify garlic mustard and other invasive weeds. Invasive herbaceous plants NAP would appreciate help with are:

garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

bittercress (*Cardamine impatiens*)

knapweed (*Centaurea spp.*)

Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*)

dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)

golden archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*)

common motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)

purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)