

Garlic Mustard

How to recognize and remove it



Garlic Mustard Facts

- Garlic mustard is an invasive weed brought to North America from Europe in the mid-1800s, most likely as a medicinal herb or green vegetable.
- It is now found in 30 states, mostly in the Northeast and Midwest. Garlic mustard is distributed throughout Ohio in woods and along forest edges and stream banks. It also invades disturbed areas such as roadsides and railways.



Second year flowering plant with distinctive saw-toothed leaves.

Sources: *Ohio Perennial & Biennial Weed Guide*, Ohio State University Extension; Ohio Invasive Plants Council, www.oipc.info.

For more information:
<http://ohioline.osu.edu/for-fact/pdf/0066.pdf>

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- Garlic mustard grows rapidly in the spring and crowds out native plants such as wildflowers and shrubs. **Tip: if you see a cluster of green plants that are already 8" to 10" tall in early May, they are probably garlic mustard.**
- Garlic mustard is a biennial that forms a rosette the first spring and an upright stem with small white flowers the second spring. It is characterized by triangular, coarsely toothed leaves and a slender taproot with a distinct S-curve just below the root crown. Young leaves give off a garlic odor when crushed. **Important: when pulling garlic mustard, be sure to pull the plant by the root below the curve so it doesn't break off and grow back.**
- It is best to pull plants in the spring before they can flower. Seed pods begin to mature in mid-June and are dispersed through September.
- In dense patches of garlic mustard, over 20,000 seeds per square foot can be produced annually.
- Seeds can stay viable in the seed bank for 5 to 6 years.
- **When pulling garlic mustard, the plants need to be bagged since garlic mustard seeds can still ripen after the plants are uprooted.**



Dense ground cover of first year plants with rosette leaves.