



Garlic Mustard

Scientific Name:	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Year Listed:	2000
Weed Class:	A
Requirement:	Eradication
Other Names:	None
Native To:	Europe, Asia & N.Africa
Toxicity:	Not known to be

Why is it a noxious weed?

Garlic mustard is shade tolerant and difficult to control once it establishes on a site. It is self-fertile and has a high seed production rate. It outcompetes native vegetation with early spring germination and can invade a relatively stable forest understory.

How would I identify it?

General Description

Garlic mustard is a biennial to short-lived perennial plant that is garlic scented and can grow to a height of 3 feet.

Flower Description

Flowers have 4 petals, 4 sepals and 6 stamens. Petals are white, about 1/4 inch long and are twice as long as the sepals.

Leaf Description

Basal leaves are broad and kidney shaped. Upper stem leaves are alternate and triangular. Both leaf types have petioles (leaf stems). Leaf margins are often coarsely toothed. New leaves have a strong garlic odor when crushed.

Stem Description

Stems are generally upright, and one to many can grow from a rosette (cluster of radiating leaves at base of plant). They may be branched or unbranched.

Fruit/Seed Description

Seed pods are long and slender, curving upward, up to 2.4 inches long. Seeds are dark brown to black, grooved and oblong in shape. One plant can produce up to 8,000 seeds.



Where does it grow?

In Washington State, garlic mustard is found in forested understory areas including urban parks, on roadsides, trails, streambanks, fields, slopes and floodplains.

How does it reproduce?

Garlic mustard reproduces by seed that remains viable for 10 years. It is capable of both cross-pollination and self-pollination.

How do I control Garlic Mustard?

The most effective way to manage weed infestations is to research, plan for, and use a combination of prevention and control methods specific to the problem weed. This approach is called **Integrated Weed Management (IWM)**, which uses mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical control methods that effectively treat the problem weed yet protect human health, habitat, water, and other natural resources.

IWM Control Method		Effectiveness of Control Method			Timing and Notes **
		Good	Fair	Poor	
Digging		G			Effective but time-consuming.
Hand-Pulling		G			Effective if entire root system is removed. <i>When growing in loose woodland soil, hand-pulling is the most effective method of controlling flowering garlic mustard. Grab the stem at ground level and pull slowly to avoid breakage. Bag and dispose of plants in the garbage; do not compost.</i>
Mowing					Not acceptable. Eradication is required for Class A noxious weeds.
Tilling			F		Not practical when garlic mustard is growing in forest understory.
Bark Mulch			F		Not effective as a sole control method. A deep layer of bark mulch (four inches or more) will reduce germination.
Black Plastic		G			Effective. Not practical in most forest understory settings.
Cover Crop					Not acceptable. Eradication is required for Class A noxious weeds.
Managed Grazing					Not acceptable. Eradication is required for Class A noxious weeds.
Weed-Feeding Insects					None.
Herbicides - (Examples*)		<i>Timing is Important!</i> For most effective control, apply herbicides before plants bloom.			
Glyphosate	Roundup	G			Apply in spring to seedlings or overwintered rosettes. This can be timed before most of our native woodland flowers have emerged. A week or so after treatment, plants will fade or yellow. Monitor to be certain plants do not regrow afterwards. Fall treatments to rosettes are also effective.
Triclopyr	Lilly Miller Brush Killer; Vastlan	G			Apply in spring to seedlings or overwintered rosettes. This can be timed before most of our native woodland flowers have emerged. Stems and leaves will curl one week after treatment. Check back to be certain plants do not regrow afterwards. Fall treatments to rosettes are also effective.

*Brand names are listed as examples only. Other products may contain the listed chemical. Clark County does not endorse any product or brand name. Always read and follow the herbicide label.

****Timing of control is critical!** Herbicide treatments are often not effective or appropriate when plants are in flower. If the weeds have produced seed, bag the plants and place in garbage, not compost. Regardless of control method chosen, multiple treatments may be needed each year. For more information on IWM, specific herbicides, and timing of control, please contact the Weed Board at:



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