

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)

Also known as hedge garlic, sauce-alone, jack-by-the-hedge, poor man's mustard, jack-in-the-bush, garlic root, garlicwort, and mustard root.

Threat: Garlic mustard monopolizes light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space to quickly establish a monoculture groundcover, excluding native plants and depriving wildlife of essential food and shelter • Produces toxins in the soil that prevents other plants from becoming established.

Description: Biennial shade tolerant herb • Small, white, four petalled flowers • Button-like clusters of flowers • Blooms in early spring of the plant's second year • Stalked, triangular to heart shaped leaves • Odor of garlic when crushed • First-year plants appear as a rosette of green leaves close to the ground • Rosettes remain green through the winter and develop into mature flowering plants the following spring • Flowering plants reach from 2 to 3-1/2 feet tall • Often confused with several white-flowered native plants which grow in the same habitats, including toothworts (*Dentaria* species), sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytonii*), and early saxifrage (*Saxifraga virginiensis*).

History: Introduced to North America by settlers as an herb for food or medicine. Leaves are edible.

Spread: Each plant produces thousands of seeds, quickly forming a monoculture understory. • Seeds travel on animal fur, clothing, shoes and tires.

Control: Seeds remain viable for at least 5 years • Control methods require on-going monitoring and treatment • Hand pulling plants in early Spring, before flowering, has proven difficult, but effective on small infestations • In all cases of hand removal, plants must be removed from the site and disposed of off-site (not in garden waste, as it will re-sprout) • Flower stalks can be cut at or near ground level, and seed pods can be cut and removed from the site, to reduce the seed stock • Seed pods may burst when cut, releasing the seeds; therefore, it is best to tent the pods to capture any released seeds before they reach the ground • Pulled or cut plants may continue to grow and produce seeds • Large patches can be treated with chemical controls in the winter • Once seedlings have started, cutting at ground level can again re-sprout • Second year plants must be removed or they will re-sprout.

Alternatives: Native ground covers include coastal strawberries, kinnikinnick, and low-growing Oregon grape • Horticultural alternatives include ground-covering raspberry (*Rubus calycinoides*), and dwarf sweet box (*Sarcococca hookeriana* var. *humilis*).

For more information:

National Invasive Species Council profile- www.invasivespecies.gov/profiles/garlmust.shtml

The Nature Conservancy, Invasive Species Initiative- <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/esadocs/allipeti.html>

National Park Service fact sheet- www.nps.gov/plants/alien/fact/alpe1.htm