



photo courtesy Glenn Miller, Oregon Dept. of Ag.

DESCRIPTION

Garlic mustard is a biennial herb that ranges from 12 to 48 inches in height as an adult. First year plants are a rosette of 3 or 4 kidney-shaped, scallop edged leaves. Second-year plants generally produce one or two flowering stems with numerous white flowers that have four separate petals forming a cross. The plant produces black, oblong seeds in 1 to 2 ½ inch slender pods called siliques that radiate from the stem just below the flowers. Its slender taproot is "s"-shaped at the top.

NATIVE LOOK-A-LIKES

- Tellima grandiflora (fringecup) and Tolmiea menziesii (piggy-back plant) look similar, but can be distinguished by long hair
- The non-native money plant (Lunaria annua) also looks similar vegetatively, but has pink petals.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- onion or garlic odor when crushed
- “s”- shaped tap-root
- four-petaled, white flower

WHEN TO FIND GARLIC MUSTARD

Garlic mustard can be found throughout the year, but it is most easily recognizable in the spring when second year plants are in bloom.

WHERE TO FIND GARLIC MUSTARD

Look in the partial or filtered light of forest understory or edges. It is also found in shaded roadsides, urban areas, riparian areas, along hiking trails, and on agricultural lands.

WHAT TO DO

It is critical to pull garlic mustard before it goes to seed in May/June. Bag and remove pulled plants, as seed ripening continues even after plants are pulled. Products that contain glyphosate (examples: Round Up™ for upland sites, Rodeo™ or Aquamaster™ for use near water) or triclopyr (examples: Garlon3a™ or Renovate 3™) can be used to control garlic mustard. Always follow label instructions and use very cautiously to avoid damage to desirable native vegetation.

Garlic Mustard

Alliaria petiolata

Garlic mustard is a known aggressive plant newly introduced to Oregon and expected to become widespread if no action is taken. Introduced to the East coast from Europe, this plant now carpets forest understories of the Northeast and Midwest and continues to spread westward across the United States. In Oregon, garlic mustard is established in the Portland and The Columbia Gorge and a new population was recently found in the Rogue River valley.

As one of the few invasive plants capable of dominating undisturbed forests understories, garlic mustard has the potential to alter forest communities. It can change the tree composition of the forest by suppressing hardwoods such as maples and ashes. An abundance of garlic mustard can alter the suitability of habitats for native birds, mammals, and amphibians.

Garlic mustard is a biennial that can produce hundreds of seeds, which germinate after a period of dormancy in late February or early March until May. The seeds dispersed primarily by human activity, but are also spread by flowing water, birds, and rodents, and may possibly even catch a ride on the fur of larger animals, such as deer.

It is important to help prevent the spread of garlic mustard by brushing off your boots, socks, and gear after visiting an infested area. Do your part by joining work parties and controlling any garlic mustard on your property.

REFERENCES

Nuzzo, Victoria, Natural Area Consultants. "Element Stewardship Abstract for *Alliaria petiolata* (*Alliaria officinalis*) Garlic Mustard." The Nature Conservancy

East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
http://emswcd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=32&Itemid=33

Field Guide to Weeds of the Willamette Valley. Institute for Applied Ecology. <http://www.appliedeco.org/invasive-species-resources/>



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