

WEED WATCH

Garlic Mustard



Weed Watch is part of the district's effort to raise awareness about noxious weeds and their impact on natural resources and the local economy. For more information about garlic mustard and other invasive weeds visit www.yamhillswcd.org/weeds.

Description

Garlic mustard, (*Alliaria petiolata*) is a biennial shade tolerant herb which has small, white flowers with button-like clusters of four petals. It has stalked, triangular to heart shaped leaves. Garlic mustard gives off the odor of garlic when crushed. It blooms in early spring of the plant's second year. In the 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. Garlic mustard is 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 virginensis*).

Manual Controls

Garlic mustard seeds remain viable for at least 5 years. Control methods require ongoing 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.

Mechanical Controls

Mechanical controls are not recommended because seeds are easily spread on equipment and mowing does not provide effective control.

Cultural

You can prevent establishment of new plants by maintaining a strong, competitive vegetative cover such as coastal strawberries, kinnikinnick and low-growing Oregon grape. Horticultural alternatives include ground-covering raspberry (*Rubus calycinoides*) and dwarf sweet box (*Sarcococca hookeriana* var. *humilis*).

Chemical

Large patches can be treated with chemical controls in the winter. For specific recommendations see "**Weed Watch**" at www.yamhillswcd.org/weeds.

When applying herbicides remember to follow label instructions. Use caution to avoid and prevent off-target drift and be aware of restrictions regarding livestock grazing. Find more information for herbicide products at <http://pnwhandbooks.org/weed>.

Contact Information:

503-472-6403 or visit www.yamhillswcd.org

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