

# Garlic Mustard



Found in upland and floodplain forests as well as disturbed sites such as yards and road ditches. Causes a decline in native vegetation due to antifungal chemicals that disrupt relationships between mycorrhizal fungi and plant roots. Biennial species with first year plants forming basal rosettes and second year plants forming flowering stems.

## Leaves

First year plants have basal leaves that are dark green, heart or kidney-shaped, with scalloped-edges and wrinkled appearance. On second year plants, stem leaves on flowering plants are alternate, triangular, with large teeth, and up to 2-3" across. Leaves and stems smell like garlic when crushed.

## Flowers

Small, white, 4-petaled, and abundant. Bloom throughout the spring.

## Fruits and seeds

Seed pods are long (1-2 ½"), slender capsules (siliques) green in color, drying to pale brown. Inside, seeds are small, shiny black, and arranged in a single row. Plants can be recognized in late summer and fall by their dry, papery brown, erect seedpods atop dead stalks. Seeds remain viable in the soil for at least 7 years.

## Roots

White, slender taproot, "S"-shaped at the top. Will resprout from the root crown if only the top of the plant is removed.

## Similar Plants

Several native white flowered plants, the toothworts (*Dentaria* spp.) and sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytonii*), bloom at about the same time as garlic mustard and may be mistaken for it. The leaves of native violets (*Viola* spp.) and the non-native creeping Charlie (*Glechoma hederacea*) may be mistaken for first year garlic mustard plants, but they will not have a garlic odor when crushed.





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