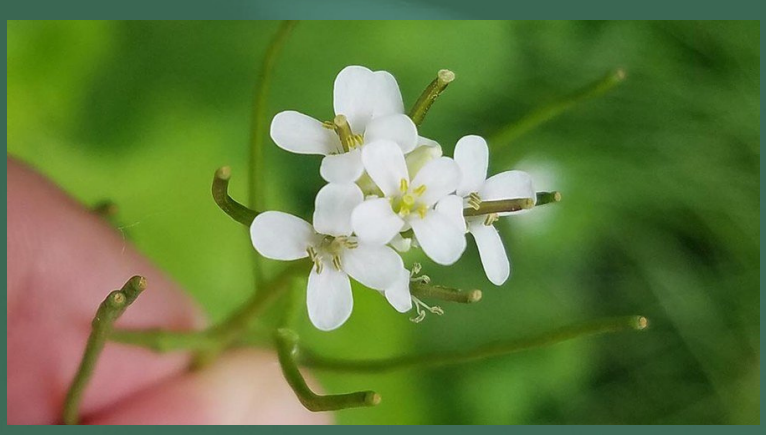
DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP'S
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

INVASIVE PLANT OF THE MONTH

MAY



https://extension.psu.edu/garlic-mustard

GARLIC MUSTARD

Alliaria petiolata

HISTORY & IDENTIFICATION

- A highly invasive exotic herbaceous weed
- Member of the mustard family.
- Originally from Europe and Asia and introduced in the mid-1800s
- Has strong garlic odor when leaves are crushed
- Fast growing dense stands in disturbed areas will choke out native plants and may affect the forest tree composition.

LIFE CYCLE & GROWTH HABIT

- Has a biennial life cycle and takes two years to fully mature and produce seeds.
- Seeds germinate in early Spring in the first year, producing short rosettes, which are dark green and kidney shaped leaves with scalloped edges.
- In second year, a 2-3' stalk develops, produces small white flowers in April and dies back in June, bearing a four-sided seedpod.
- Each plant produces 22 seedpods or siliques containing from 600 to 8000 tiny brown seeds
- Seeds are distributed via wind, water or on passing animals and viable for over 5 years.

PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

IDENTIFY & CONTROL

Be aware that there are many native members of the mustard family, such as cut-leaf toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*), also have cross-shaped white flowers with four petals. However, garlic mustard leaves are unique with their simple, kidney- or heart-shaped leaves in contrast to the compound leaves of the native species.

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MECHANICAL

- Hand-pulling before it goes to seed from April to June is an effective way to control it.
- Be sure to bag and remove pulled plants from the site.
- It has a taproot, so it does not regenerate from root fragments.

RESOURCES

https://extension.psu.edu/garlic-mustard

http://nyis.info/invasive_species/garlic-mustard/

https://naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/encyclopedia/garlic-mustard-invasive-species-profile\