

# Garlic Mustard: A Threat to Skyline's Woodland Habitat

Skyline Resident-Based Garlic Mustard Control Effort: a collaborative effort of Skyline Ridge Neighbors, Skyline Grange & Forest Park Neighborhood Association



## What is Garlic Mustard?

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is a noxious weed with economic and habitat consequences. It is a member of the exclusive club, Oregon's Noxious Weed List.

Unlike what its name would suggest, garlic mustard is not a rare culinary herb. Instead garlic mustard is an aggressive, highly invasive, malevolent plant from Eurasia and has become a major threat to the health of our local woodland habitat.

## Why is It a Threat?

- It out-competes woodland native plants by aggressively monopolizing light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space.
- It reduces plant diversity.
- It decreases essential food sources to wildlife species that depend upon native plants for their foliage, pollen, nectar, fruits and roots.
- It negatively alters soil composition and structure and harmfully impacts soil fungi that are vital to native hardwoods.
- It has a high seed production and the ability to spread rapidly.

## Where Does It Grow?

It most often grows in woodland understory or along forest edges. It is shade tolerant and has adapted to take advantage of areas where the soil is disturbed, such as along animal & people trails and along roadsides.

## What are Its Characteristics?

- Garlic mustard is a biennial, meaning the plant lives for two years. During its first year, it forms a basal rosette with kidney-shaped, scalloped leaves. (see photo)
- In the spring of its second year, it bolts and elongates becoming 12-48 inches tall. Leaves alternate on the stem, are sharp toothed and triangular in shape. Flowers are white with four petals growing on a single stalk.
- A good nose will smell a garlic-like odor when the plant is crushed.
- Seeds grow in long, narrow pods which eventually will burst and disperse the seeds.



1<sup>st</sup> year: rosette stage



2<sup>nd</sup> yr flowers w/4 white petals



Seed Pods

## How Does It Spread?

The 2nd year flowering plants produce seed pods (siliques) that burst, releasing thousands of seeds,

and dispersing them up to several yards from the parent plant before the plant dies. Seeds can remain viable in the soil for 5-10 years, consequently, effective management requires a long-term commitment.

Shoes, pets, bicycle & vehicle tires can pick up seeds, spreading them to sites uncontaminated by garlic mustard... and to your property! Clean your boots! Wash off bike tires. Brush the dog. Do not spread seeds.

### **Places to Inspect Plants & Get Information (April thru mid-June)**

- Skyline Grange 11275 NW Skyline Boulevard
- Roadside Display Signs along local roadsides, such as Skyline, Newberry, & Germantown

### **Help with Garlic Mustard on Your Property?**

#### **If you live within the SRN or FPNA boundaries:**

- Since 2007, Skyline Ridge Neighbors, Skyline Grange & Forest Park Neighborhood Association have collaborated together and with local environmental agencies to control the spread of Garlic Mustard in its Skyline Resident-Based Garlic Mustard Effort (SRBGME). Local residents are encouraged to learn how to identify plants, monitor their property, pull plants, and to report infestations.
- If you are unsure whether a plant is garlic mustard, contact Sen Speroff (SRN) at 503-708-1414 or Tom Lovett (FPNA) 503-289-2027.
- Small patches of garlic mustard are often easily to remove by pulling. See “Hand Pulling Garlic Mustard: Guidelines for Volunteers in “The Skyline Residents-Based Garlic Mustard Effort”.

A number of local agencies may be able to assist landowners with garlic mustard if there is too much to pull by the landowner. Some give priority to infestations in riparian areas. You will need to sign and return a Permit of Entry Form before an agency can treat your garlic mustard. Treatment may involve spot spraying with an herbicide or hand-pulling or both. Return the form now; treatment period is limited usually from April to mid-June.

#### **If you live within the City of Portland:**

- Learn more about Portland’s Bureau of Environmental Services’ garlic mustard containment program at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/483976>.
- Download a Permit of Entry Form at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/483977>.

#### **If you live in Unincorporated West Multnomah County:**

- Learn about WMSWCD’s Garlic Mustard Containment Program at <https://wmswcd.org/projects/garlic-mustard-eradication/>
- Download Permission Form from West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District at [https://wmswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WMSWCD-Permission-to-Access-and-Control-Form\\_2020updated.pdf](https://wmswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WMSWCD-Permission-to-Access-and-Control-Form_2020updated.pdf)

### **Web Sources of Information, Video, & Photos:**

- King County Best Management Practices for Garlic Mustard: [https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/images/weeds/Garlic-Mustard-Control\\_King.pdf](https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/images/weeds/Garlic-Mustard-Control_King.pdf)
- West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District’s Video “Dealing with Garlic Mustard”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwqSo10\\_53M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwqSo10_53M)
- Michigan Dept of Natural Resources: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/invasives/BCPs\\_Garlic\\_Mustard\\_3-1-18\\_627482\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/invasives/BCPs_Garlic_Mustard_3-1-18_627482_7.pdf)
- Portland Bureau of Environmental Services: “Impacts and Treatment of Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*): Application of Research to Populations in the Portland, Oregon Metro Area” at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/626708>