

# Invasive Species Alert

## Garlic Mustard

(*Alliaria petiolata*)

\*Established in Michigan\*

### Identification:

- An herbaceous, flowering plant that smells like garlic when crushed
- Heart-shaped basal rosettes (leaves) appear in year one at ground level
- In the second year, stems shoot up (1-4 feet) and develop flowers and seeds
- Leaves become more toothed and triangular in shape
- Clusters of tiny, white, 4-petaled flowers bloom in early spring
- Seed pods are green, long and narrow and look like stems – turning brown in fall.

**Habitat:** Garlic mustard thrives in wooded areas and can tolerate deep shade, partly because it emerges and blooms before trees develop leaves in spring.

**Native Range:** Europe

**U. S. Distribution:** Northeast, Midwest and Northwest.



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**Local Concern:** This invasive plant spreads quickly through woodlots, outcompeting understory plants including tree seedlings. Tiny seeds can be transported or blown around by vehicles. Garlic mustard produces allelopathic compounds that can limit seed germination in other species.



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