

Despite intensive control efforts, garlic mustard is the most invasive species in the ground layer of Minnetonka's woodlands and openings.

Two-year life cycle

- In the first year, garlic mustard grows as a rosette of leaves close to the ground.
- In its second year, the plant bolts upward and then flowers.
- Long, slender seedpods form at the top of the plant.
- In mid- to late summer, the pods split open to release hundreds of small seeds.



Did you know?

- Garlic mustard displaces native plants.
- The seeds remain viable in soil for many years.
- Plants grow large after disturbance.
- Seeds spread to new locations by clinging to clothing, shoes and fur



Remove it!

- DO pull garlic mustard in May or June—before seeds disperse.
- DO remove plants when the soil is moist.
- DO get all of the plant, including the roots. Grasp the lower stem or the exposed taproot at soil level and pull slowly. Dig out branched roots with a hand trowel.
- DON'T pull plants and leave them on the ground. Garlic mustard can use stored energy to mature and disperse seeds, even if uprooted.
- DON'T weed-whack or mow when seedpods are ripening. This disperses the seed.
- DON'T apply herbicide during the active growing season—it could impact native plants and pollinators. Spray only in early spring or late fall, while garlic mustard is in the rosette stage and native plants are dormant.



Compost it!

Bagged plants spread seed to the compost facility, so it's best to pile and compost at home.

1. Choose an isolated spot (not on a slope or drainage area) to isolate garlic mustard from other compost or plants.
2. Pile plants with seedpods at the center.
3. Cover the pile with landscape fabric and anchor with rocks, logs or landscape staples to prevent animals from spreading the seed.
4. Home compost piles don't get hot enough to kill seeds, so monitor the pile each year for seedlings and plants.
5. Every year remove the fabric, add more plants and replace the cover. The pile will shrink.
6. Garlic mustard compost should not be used as mulch on the ground surface, but can be added to improve the soil at a depth greater than two inches.

