

Weed of The Week

3-1-2021

Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolate*)

Thought to have traveled from Europe to be used as a medicinal herb in the mid 1800's, Garlic Mustard has spread across 30 states and throughout Ohio. Garlic Mustard is a biennial which means that there is two main years of growth. The first year is establishment and creation of a rosette, the second year the plant will bolt and flower producing a seed for the next generation. Garlic Mustard prefers shaded wet areas and is often found in wooded areas along streams. Recently Garlic Mustard has been found creeping out of the shade and tolerating more sunlight, it has even been found growing in no-till crop fields and pastures. Early March to May is when seeds will germinate and form a rosette through the summertime and into early fall. The rosette is winter hard and will then start growing an elongated stem in March of the second year of growth. Young seedling will produce a very strong garlic smell when leaves are crushed. Flowering will begin in April through May of the second year. Producing seed, each plant can produce up to 20,000 seeds that can stay viable for 5-6 years. Garlic Mustard is an invasive species that threatens native woodland flora. The best means of controlling Garlic Mustard is preventing seed dispersal by pulling the plant and destroying. Herbicide applications should be made in the fall of the first year of growth or early Spring of the second year of growth before flowering. Herbicides that work well are glyphosate (roundup), Basigran is also an option that will control garlic mustard and serve a less risk to other species. 2-4-D and Triclopyr herbicides work very well too.

