

## *Alliaria petiolata*, Garlic Mustard

Garlic mustard is native to Europe and parts of Asia, and is found in the undergrowth of forests. The dominance of Garlic Mustard in woodlands has greatly decreased the biodiversity on the herbaceous level. The density of the plant can crowd out native plants and use up resources such as light, water and nutrients. Research has suggested that Garlic Mustard is allelopathic, releasing chemicals that limit other species ability to grow (Michigan State University, 2008).



**Description:** Garlic Mustard leaves are scalloped and heart shaped. The leaf stalks of mature Garlic Mustard are hairy, and can grow up to 3.5 feet tall. There is a noticeable garlic-like odor produced from crushing the leaves.



**Control:** Herbivory of Garlic mustard is very low, thus is ineffective in controlling the plant. Manual removal of the plant is a reliable option as long as the top half of the root is removed (spring time is prime for this technique due to soft soil). Pulling the plants out manually would need to be done for five consecutive years in order to guarantee the end of the seed bank.

**Look-alikes:** Some plants with similar flowers include the Cut-leaved toothwort (*Cardamine concatenate*), Sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytonia* and *O. longistylis*), and Early saxifrage (*Saxifraga virginica*). The basal leaves of the Garlic Mustard may resemble those of the Creeping Charlie (*Glechoma hederacea*), Violets (*Viola spp.*), and Kidney-leaf buttercup (*Ranunculus abortivus*).

**Flower Time and Description:** Garlic Mustard starts flowering in April through June. Flowers have 4 small white petals.

