

GARLIC MUSTARD

(*ALLIARA PETIOLATA*)

2019 Status in Maine:

Localized. Severely invasive. Biennial herb. Originates from Europe.

Identify

Leaves: First year leaves are toothed, kidney shaped, and form a basal rosette. Second year leaves are triangular, toothed, and alternate. Leaves smell like garlic when crushed. May be green to purple in color.

Flowers: Second year plants produce small, 4-petaled, white flowers. Occur in clusters. Bloom from April-June.

Fruits: Second year plants produce skinny seed capsules that split in mid-late summer to release hundreds of thousands of tiny black seeds.

Location

This plant is shade tolerant and can tolerate a variety of soil conditions. Can be found in forests, forest edges, and floodplains.

Parks of concern: Greenbelt, Hinckley Park.

Problem

Grows in dense colonies, outcompeting native herbaceous plants. It is tolerant of a wide variety of growing conditions and produces very high quantities of seeds, which have a high germination rate and may remain viable for up to 6-10 years. It also begins growing earlier in the season than native plants and has been shown to change levels of nutrients and mycorrhizal fungi on the soil.

How it spreads: Second year plants release seeds from seed pods and are dispersed via water, gravity, mud or animal fur. Seeds can remain viable for 6 years.

Management

Small colonies can be cut, but must be done repeatedly during the growing season for several years as it can re-sprout. Take care to dry or burn all plant parts before disposal. Larger stands can be difficult to control without persistent, reliable labor force.



CITY OF
**SOUTH
PORTLAND**
Parks, Recreation
& Waterfront