Alliaria petiolata

Invasive to Maine

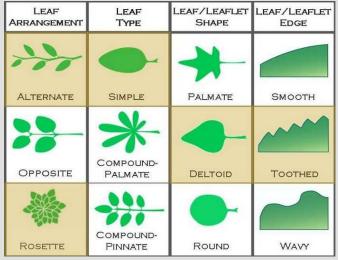
Garlic Mustard Garlic Root

Upland Forests, Fields, and Developed Areas

Leaves



Look for coarsely toothed leaves. Bottom leaves grow in a rossette (a circular arrangement at the same height), are 6-10 cm long, and kidney-shaped. Stem leaves are alternate, triangular, and 3-8 cm long.





In early spring look for clusters of flowers with four white petals. Starting in May slender, elongated, upright seedpods ripen from green to pale brown.

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Species Card Courtesy Of: Rebecca Martin

Plant



Garlic mustard is a leafy biennial (2-year life cycle). In the first year just the rosette of leaves grows close to the ground. In the second year plants grow up to 1 m.

Stem



The stems are green, round, and flexible. Flowers grow at the top of the long stalk with seed pods growing out from the stem just below the flowers.

Similar Species

Some members of the mustard family are similar to A. petiolata in shape and size, but none share A. petiolata's long stalks, triangular leaves with coarse teeth, and white flowers. A. petiolata also has a unique garlic/onion smell when leaves/stems are crushed.

Fun Fact

This plant threatens native butterfly species by outcompeting the butterflies' native host plants, such as, spring wildflowers known as "toothworts" (also in the mustard family). When the butterflies lay their eggs on Alliaria petiolata the larvae do not survive as well.



