

Alliaria petiolata

Invasive to Maine

Garlic Mustard
Garlic Root

Upland
Forests, Fields, and Developed Areas

Leaves



Wiki Commons user Frank Vincentz



Look for coarsely toothed leaves. Bottom leaves grow in a rosette (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.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 DELTOID	 TOOTHED
 ROSETTE	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

Plant



Leslie Mehrhoff, IPANE



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



Leslie Mehrhoff, IPANE



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.

Seasonal Change



Leslie Mehrhoff, IPANE



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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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.