

# GARLIC MUSTARD

*Alliaria petiolata*

(This has been adapted from information provided by The Nature Conservancy.)

Garlic mustard is one of the most damaging invasive plants to invade forests. A fast growing biennial herb, it was brought to the U.S. by settlers. Without rapid eradication, it can densely carpet the forest floor, creating a monoculture. It is allelopathic, and produces a chemical from its roots that makes it difficult for other plants to absorb the nutrients they need.

## Identification:

- Year 1: a rosette of rounded, scallop edged leaves; the leaves smell sharply of garlic and stay green through the winter
- Year 2: plants have alternate, triangular, coarsely toothed leaves; grow 1' - 3' high and produce four petaled white flowers.
- Seeds: contained in erect, slender pods known as siliques.

## Treatment:

Pull plants up in the spring by hand. Put all plants in garbage bags. Let bags sit until rotted, and then take to the landfill. **DO NOT COMPOST. DO NOT LEAVE IN FOREST.** Even once they are removed from the ground, the flowers still have enough energy to turn to fruit. Seeds can remain viable for 5 years. Compost piles do not get hot enough to kill the seed. Fire and herbicide are other treatment options to consider.

## Prevention:

- Put up a sign discouraging people and dogs from walking through an infested area.
- Wipe off shoes, bike tires, and thoroughly shake out clothing after being in an infested area.
- Educate your neighbors. Visit [www.nature.org/vermont/weeds](http://www.nature.org/vermont/weeds) or <http://garlicmustardeducationalvideo.blogspot.com/>.

# GARLIC MUSTARD PESTO

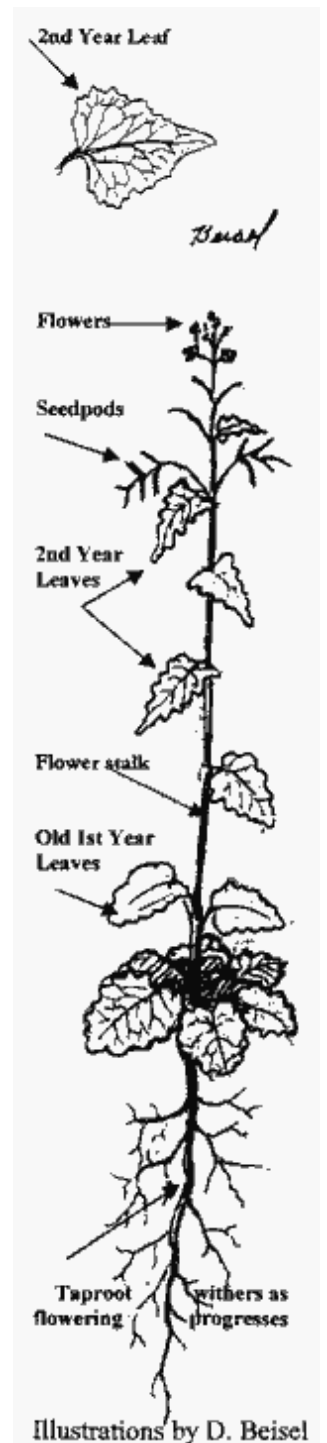
(Find this recipe online at: <http://www.ma-eppc.org/morerecipes.html>.)

3 cups garlic mustard leaves, washed, patted dry, & packed in measuring cup  
2 large garlic cloves, peeled and chopped  
1 cup walnuts  
1 cup olive oil  
1 cup grated parmesan cheese  
¼ cup grated Romano cheese (or just use more parmesan)  
Salt & pepper to taste

Combine garlic mustard leaves, garlic and walnuts in a food processor and chop. Or, you can divide the recipe in a half and use a blender. With motor running, add olive oil slowly. Shut off motor. Add cheese, salt & pepper, and process briefly to combine. Scrape into refrigerator container and cover. It can be frozen, although the garlic taste will diminish in the freezer.

This makes 2 cups, enough to use as sauce for 2 lbs. of pasta. It's good on crackers as an appetizer. It is also super on baked fish. Just spread some on your filets before you bake them. Yum!

If you make this pesto with basil as it is usually made, use 3 cups of basil leaves and 4 cloves of garlic.



Illustrations by D. Beisel