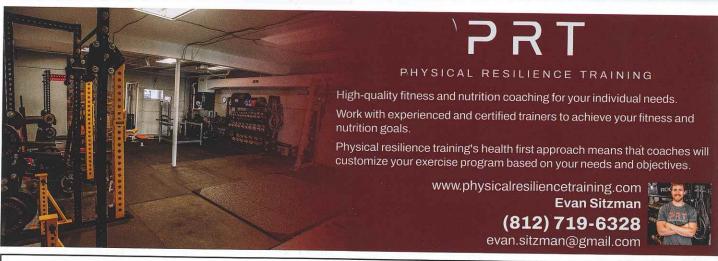
## Garlic Mustard, the Edible Invasive

David Mow, Invasive Species Specialist | Photo Credit: David Mow

Brought here as food by the early pioneers and escaped into our fields and forests, garlic mustard plants have been shown to cause harm to the environment. It is close enough to our native mustards that our butterflies will lay their eggs on it, but when they hatch and the caterpillar starts to feed, they die from the chemicals in it. It also produces chemicals in its roots that suppress the growth of fungi. Ninety percent of plants need fungi to help them grow. Trees use fungi to extend the reach of their roots and communicate with other trees. Our native orchids need fungi to germinate their seeds. This means that in areas with garlic mustard growing, you will probably not find morel mushrooms or wild orchids. Trees may grow slower or have very little new sprouts taking off and growing.

This plant is a biannual, which means it lives for two years. The first year, the seed germinates and produces a rosette of leaves that are rounded with deeply incised venation with scalloped edges. This rosette can be found in the fall and winter and can be pulled if the ground is not frozen. Early the second year, (March-May) it will send up a flower stalk that has simple, alternate, triangular leaves that are toothed. It then flowers and produces seed. Garlic mustard's shallow root system makes it an easy plant to pull. Hand pulling is the easiest and most effective method to control it. If







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pulled in the rosette stage, it can be left to dry in place. If in the flowering stage, bag it and remove it because it can still produce seed if left in place and we want to prevent seed production. The seeds have been shown to stay viable in the soil for eight to ten years. Once it has established in an area, you need to go back every year to prevent seed production for at least eight

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years. If you miss a year or miss some plants, it may take longer to eradicate it.

The Morgan County Native and Invasive Plant Partnership will be conducting **Weed Wrangles®** at Burkhart Creek Park, **April 9th 9:00-12:00 and** Jimmy Nash Park, **April 22nd 9:00-12:00** to pull garlic mustard. Feel free to come out and join us.

Garlic mustard that is foraged from the wild can be eaten but should never be intentionally planted since it is illegal to do so. Here are some recipes for Garlic mustard that you can use if you have pulled some up! https://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/LandConservation/Brochures/Garlic%20Mustard%20Recipes.pdf

March is the time to start thinking about a new year in the garden. The Morgan County Master Gardeners will be having their Garden Fest on March 25th at Hoosier Harvest Church in Martinsville. Admission is free. There will be pansies for sale, expert speakers, vendors, garden demonstrations and giveaways. Pansy sales help to fund the Master Gardener Program in Morgan County. For more information on Garlic Mustard or the event, contact invasivesmorgancounty@gmail.com









