



(Photo by Joe McFarland.)

Pulling garlic mustard can help reduce the size of stands, but proper disposal of plant material is required to prevent accidentally establishing a new population.

The release of garlic mustard munching beetles is some time in the future, but the war on this invasive plant rages on. Do your part to combat the plant by pulling and properly disposing of plants before they set seeds. And, since these plants were originally brought to the United States as a food item, consider doing your part to beat the plant by eating it.



insect to attack and destroy all parts of garlic mustard—leaves, fruits, flowers, seeds, stems and roots.

A survey in Europe of natural enemies of garlic mustard identified 69 species of insects—but most fed on a variety of plants. Further research found five weevils and one flea beetle that

may eventually aid in controlling the plant. Studies are taking place to determine if the insects will feed on native or agricultural plants and how to rear them. Before any insect can be released, approvals must be obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other organizations.

William McClain retired from DNR, where he had served as manager of the Natural Areas Stewardship Program in the Division of Natural Heritage.

Harvest and eat it, but don't spread this mustard

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is notoriously easy to accidentally propagate and will quickly spread and overtake native plant communities. If you plan to bring home a few leaves to toss into a salad, keep the plants in a sealed container until you get home and properly dispose of any not consumed. Do not toss unused plant material onto a compost pile, or anywhere else outdoors. Never plant garlic mustard as a garden herb.

Gourmets can also lend a helping hand, or rather a knife and fork, in preventing the spread of garlic mustard. The leaves add an interesting zip to salads, soups, appetizers and entrees.

Garlic Mustard Pizza

- 1 package of ready-made pizza crust
- ½ jar white sauce (lite Alfredo or Parmesan-mozzarella)
- 2-3 cups chopped, cooked and drained garlic mustard leaves
- 6-8 ounces mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped bell pepper
- ½ cup chopped mushrooms

Prepare pizza crust. Top with sauce and layer with cheese and vegetables. Bake according to package directions.

Garlic Mustard Pesto

- 1½ cups fresh garlic mustard leaves
- 1 clove garlic
- ¼ cup pine nuts or walnuts
- ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¾ cup olive oil

In a food processor, finely chop the garlic mustard leaves, garlic and nuts. Slowly mix in the cheese and olive oil. Pesto may be eaten on bread or crackers, on spaghetti or frozen in ice cube trays and stored for future use in sauces.

