



# Common Weeds





### Garlic Mustard

- Biennial (lives 2 years)
- One of the most destructive weeds in the region
- One plant will produce 400-500 seeds that will germinate easily.
- **Removal:** Pull or dig so taproot is removed (long, thick root that shoots straight down). Make sure you bag the weeds and dispose.
  - Tip: If the ground is moist, weeds will come out easier.
- Fun Fact: Is edible and makes great pesto!



### Velvet Leaf

- In the genus *Abutilon*, family *Malvaceae*
- Annual
- Leaves Velvety heart-shaped leaves
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal; can remain viable for 50 years
- **Removal:** Hand pick; be sure to get roots.
- Fun fact: It's fiber is used to make ropes, cloth, paper, nets



### Dandelion

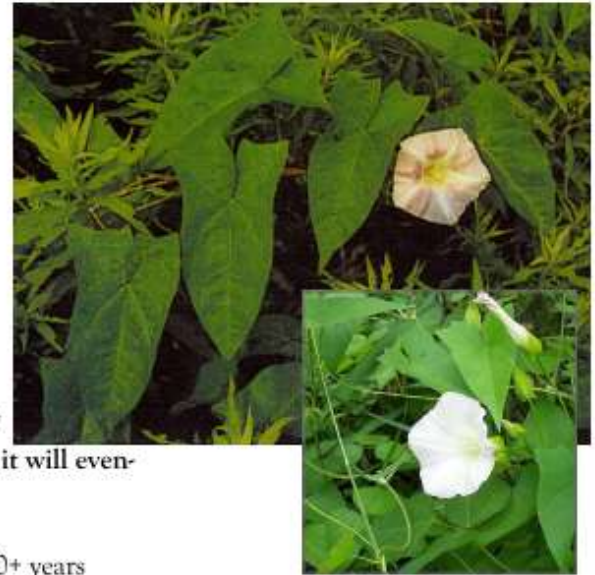
- In the *Taraxacum* genus, *Asteraceae* family
- Perennial
- Leaves: lobed leaves 2-8 inches long; grows in a basal rosette
- Flowers: Bright yellow
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal:** Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear; has a taproot
- Fun Fact: Many *Taraxacum* species produce seeds asexually by apomixis, where the seeds are produced without pollination, resulting in offspring that are genetically identical to the parent plant.<sup>[3]</sup>
- Leaves, flowers, and roots are edible





## Bindweed

- In the genus *Calystegia*, family *Convolvulaceae*
- Perennial; vining deep rooted aggressive plant
- Leaves: arrow-shaped leaves
- Flowers: Trumpet shaped
- Reproduction: Spreads through root system and seeds;
- To remove: Cut vine just below soil level; will need to continually cut vine back—the goal is to cut off photosynthesis to the plant and it will eventually die. Very persistent; difficult to remove.
- Not so Fun Fact: Roots can grow 20/ ft deep; seeds stay viable for 20+ years



1st year leaves



2nd year

## Purslane

- In the genus *Portulaca*, family *Portulacaceae*
- Annual: low growing
- Leaves: Fleshy, succulent paddle shaped leaves
- Stems: Succulent reddish in color
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal; can stay viable for up to 40 years
- Removal: Remove before it goes to seed; after pulled if will still go to seed so be sure to remove it from the garden area
- Fun Fact: Stem, leaves and flowers are all edible \*Be sure to not confuse Purslane and Spurge



## Burdock

- In the genus *Arctium*, family *Asteraceae*
- Biennial
- Leaves: Rosette of large leaves the first year; branched stem with many burrs the second year—up to 6 feet tall
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- Removal: Remove deep tap root with trowel or shovel
- Fun Fact: Prickly heads of these plants (burrs) can easily attach to clothing/ fur—a great way to disperse seeds in your garden! The hook-n-loop system of how the burrs attached was the inspiration for Velcro.



### Goldenrod

- In the genus *Solidago*, *Asteraceae* Family
- Perennial wildflower; a weed for some;
- Leaves: alternate leaves are linear to lanceolate; margins are finely to sharply serrated.
- Flowers: bright, golden yellow flower heads; late summer/ early fall
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and underground rhizomes; very aggressive
- **To remove: Pull by hand before they produce seeds**
- Fun Fact: For the Midwestern states, it was said that when the goldenrod bloomed, it would soon be time to go back to school—the blossoms appear in mid- to late August, shortly before the traditional start of school on the day after Labor Day.



Plantain



- In the *Plantago* genus, *Plantaginaceae* family
- Perennial; grows in a low lying rosette
- Leaves: Broad rounded to oval leaves
- Flowers: tall spike of inconspicuous flowers
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal: Pull by hand before it goes to seed**
- Fun Fact: leaves are edible; can be used in salads or steamed like spinach. For all edibles, please think about where they are growing before consuming.

### Ragweed

- In the genus *Ambrosia*, *Asteraceae* Family
- Annual
- Leaves: simple, dark green in color, hairy, coarsely toothed, can be opposite or alternate along the stem (hairy, green to a light pinkish, red)
- Flowers: Have separate male and female flowers on each plant
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal;
- **To remove: Pull by hand before they produce seeds;**
- Fact: Ragweed's pollen is the main cause of hay fever. The plant also has allelopathic properties that inhibit the growth and development of neighboring plants.





## Crabgrass

- In the genus *Digitaria*, family *Poaceae*
- Annual; low growing, flattened grass
- Leaves: flat, rolled in the bud
- Flowers: Spike like branches;
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal:** hand remove plant and fibrous root; best to remove before it in flowers in July
- **Fun Fact:** In the Southern U.S. Crabgrass is used as forage in grazing or haying systems for livestock. It is a staple grain in parts of Africa.



## Nightshade

- In the genus *Solanum*, family *Solanaceae*
- Perennial; can become vining
- Leaves: dark-green to purplish with one or two earlike lobes near the base
- Fruit: Fruits turn from green to red to a dark purple. Berries are **TOXIC**.
- Flowers: Star-shaped purple, backward pointing petals and stamens are fused in a yellow cone
- **Removal:** Try to remove before it fruits; birds can transport seeds. Be sure to remove all of roots.
- **Fact:** Is in the same family as other *Solanaceae* plants; such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, etc.

## Virginia Creeper

- In the genus *Parthenocissus*
- An aggressive woody, perennial vine
- Leaves: Has 5 leaflets; sometimes confused with poison ivy (3 leaflets) Turns reddish brown to burgundy in fall.
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and rooting at the stem nodes
- **Removal:** Spreads by rhizomes, therefore it is best to continually cut it back to the ground to prevent photosynthesis from occurring and ultimately killing. Some people to acquire a rash when removing
- **Fact:** Gets confused with Poison Ivy (leaves of there). Has tendrils that are very strong; will climb on walls, difficult to remove





### Thistle

- Common name for flowering plants characterized by leaves and stems with sharp prickles on the margins, mostly in the *Asteraceae* family
- Flowers: Purple to pink
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and root rhizomes
- Removal: Important: You may need special gloves, or multiple pair because thistle *hurts!* Pull by hand to remove tap root; remove before going to seed.
- Fun Fact: thistle plants saved the Scottish Countrymen from attack by Norseman, who stepped on the prickly plants, screamed in anguish and alerted the Scottish people of their presence



### Spurge



- In the genus *Euphorbia*, family Euphorbiaceae
- Low-growing, creeping annual; growing outward in a wagon wheel form
- Leaves: Oval green leaves. Spotted spurge has a red spot in the center
- To remove: Pull by hand before they produce seeds; wear gloves-sap can be an irritant to some
- Toxic
- Fun Fact: There are approximately 2008 species in the Euphorbia genus. Their main characteristic is the milky sap that appears when a leaf or stem is broken. Did you know that a Poinsettia is a spurge?

### Yellow Nut sedge

- In the genus *Cyperus*, family *Cyperaceae*
- Leaves: yellowish green; produce in groups of three at the base
- Flowers: flat, narrow straw colored clusters
- Reproduction: Spread through seed dispersal, root rhizomes, and tubers
- To remove: Pull by hand when very young; will need to continue weeding and removing every week to prevent tubers from developing (tubers will develop if plant is let to grow 5-6 leaves)
- Fun Fact: Pigs tend to be fond of the starchy tubers





## Lambsquarter

- In the genus *Chenopodium*, *Chenopodiaceae* Family
- Annual
- Leaves: triangular or diamond shaped; have a white mealy substance usually on the underside
- Stems: usually have a red streak
- To remove: Pull by hand before they produce seeds;
- Fact: Leaves and stems are edible; used in place of spinach. Can grow up to 6 feet tall



## False Dandelion, Catsear

- In the *Hypochaeris* genus, *Asteraceae* family
- Perennial
- Leaves: lobed hairy leaves 2-8 inches long; grows in a basal rosette
- Flowers: Bright yellow; similar to common dandelion
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- Removal: Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear; taproot
- False dandelion and common dandelion look very similar. The difference is: 1) dandelion flowers are borne singly on unbranched, hairless and leafless, hollow stems, while catsear flowering stems are branched, solid and carry bracts and the leaves of dandelions are smooth or glabrous, whereas those of catsears are coarsely hairy.



## Creeping Charlie or Ground Ivy

- In the *Glechoma* genus, *Lamiaceae* family (mint family)
- Perennial with creeping square stems and round leaves
- Leaves: opposite; rounded, fan shaped leaves
- Flowers: Blue or blue-ish violet to lavender
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and through its roots.
- Removal: Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear; need to get all of root.
- Fun Fact: Part of the mint family which explains why it is aggressive





## Chicory

- In the Linum genus, Linaceae family
- Perennial
- Leaves: very small narrow leaves
- Flowers: pale blue
- **Removal:** Dig root out
- High in Vitamin A
- **Fun Fact:** Used in coffee in New Orleans

Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

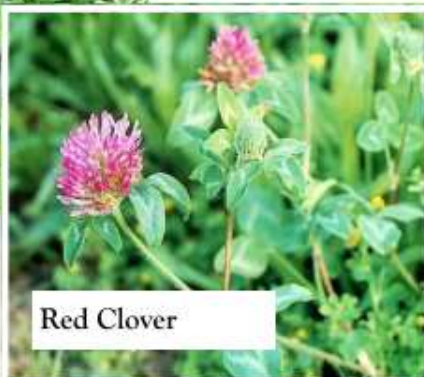


## Clover

- In the Trifolium genus, Fabaceae (legume) family
- Can be annual, biennial, or a perennial.



White Clover



Red Clover

### Red Clover

- Leaves: 3 leaflets with a pale "V"; Hairy
- Flowers: reddish, purple
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal:** Pull
- Tall thick stemmed; 36" tall
- **Fun Fact:** Grown to attract wildlife. Beekeepers grow red clover for their bees to make

### White Clover

- Leaves: 3-5 leaflets with pale crescent; not hairy
- Flowers: White, yellowish
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and creeping stems
- Low growing; 6"
- **Removal:** Pull
- **Fun Fact:** used as forage because it tolerates heavy

## Venice Mallow

- In the Hibiscus genus, Malvacea family
- An annual
- Leaves: alternate; all have at least 3 distinct lobes, can have up to 7; toothed margins; leaves on long petioles
- Flowers: 5 petals that are pale yellow to white in color with a purple base
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal; can remain viable for up to 50 years!
- **Removal:** Pull by hand; because of seed longevity, it is vital to remove before it seeds.
- **Fun Fact:** nicknamed "flower-of-an-hour" because flowers will only last several hours before the petals drop.





## Common Violet

- In the *Viola* genus, *Violaceae* family
- Can be an annual or perennial
- Leaves: kidney-shaped to broadly oval with heart shaped bases
- Flowers: Pansy-like, white to blue to purple, and yellow. Spring blooming.
- Reproduction: All types-seed dispersal; perennials also by rhizomes
- **Removal: Pull by hand**
- Fun Fact: Common blue-violet is Illinois State Flower. It is also Wisconsin's, New Jersey's, and Rhode Island's state flower. Illinois was the first state to adopt the flower in 1908 after school children voted in 1907.



## Giant Ragweed

- In the *Ambrosia* genus, *Asteraceae* family (the sunflower family)
- Summer annual
- Leaves: alternate; divided into 3 lobes
- Flowers: Small and green, found on the end of the branches; produce a lot of pollen
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal: Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear;**
- Fun Fact: This plant's pollen is the main cause of Hay Fever



## Field Pennycress

- In the *Thlaspi* genus, *Brassicaceae* family (mustard family)
- Winter annual
- Leaves: Lanceolate to ovate
- Flowers: White, four-petaled
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal: Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear;**
- Fun fact: Being developed for use as a renewable fuel





## Horseweed or Maretail (*Erigeron canadensis*)

- Grows up to 5 ft tall and if allowed, produces 200,000 seeds
- A weed that's native to North America but has spread to Europe, Asia and Australia.
- Very adaptable and is common in soils



*Young Horseweed*

- The leaves are unstalked, slender, 2–10 centimeters long, and up to 1 cm wide. They grow in an alternate spiral up the stem, and the lower ones wither early
- **Removal** by hand dig once leaves appear; if the woody stem develops it can be pulled out grabbing about 4-6 inches above the ground



*Full grown Horseweed*



*Flowering Horseweed*



## Honey Locust

- In the *Gleditsia* genus, *Fabaceae* family (the pea family)
- Deciduous, fast growing tree
- Leaves: alternate; compound and double compound; leaflets are opposite
- Thorns: older twigs, branches, and trunk are armed with thorns. Pods: 15-20 cm in length
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- Removal: Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear;
- Fun Fact: White tail deer love the seed pods; this fact has been advantageous for deer hunters.



## Tree of Heaven

- In the *Ailanthus* genus, *Quassia* family
- Deciduous, fast growing tree
- Leaves: alternate; pinnately compound; 1-4 feet in length; composed of 10-41 smaller leaflets
- Flowers: occur in large terminal clusters; yellowish-green
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal and root sprouts
- **Removal:** Remove as soon as you can; be sure to get all of root.
- Fun Fact: One study has shown that an individual tree can produce up to 325, 000 in one year. When the leaves are crushed, they have a strong peanut butter odor.



## Pennsylvania Smartweed

- In the *Polygonum* genus, *Polygonaceae* family (buckwheat family)
- Annual
- Leaves: alternate, lance-shaped
- Flowers: five-parted pink or rose colored
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal:** Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear;
- **Fun Fact:** Native American groups had various medicinal uses, including treatment for epilepsy, horse colic, and postpartum healing



## Shepherd's Purse

- In the *Capsella* genus, *Brassicaceae* family (mustard family)
- Annual
- Leaves: Rosette of lobed leaves at the base
- Flowers: small and white in loose racemes; flowers all year-round
- Reproduction: Seed dispersal
- **Removal:** Remove by digging as soon as leaves appear;
- **Fun Fact:** Commonly used in China for food, and is stir-fried with rice cakes

