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Noxious Weed Threatens Local Gardens, Parks

Does your garden smell like garlic?

If so, you could accidentally be growing a noxious weed called "garlic mustard."

King County experts warned if garlic mustard is not destroyed, it could kill all the other plants in your yard.

Garlic mustard is a non-native plant brought to the U.S. from Europe in the early 1900's. With no native enemies, there's nothing to stop its spread.

The concern surrounding the seemingly harmless plant is that if it's not pulled before the tiny, white flowers go to seed, each self-pollinating garlic mustard can produce as many as 1,000.

It can eventually cover hundreds of acres, said King County Noxious weed expert Karen Peterson.

"The problem is, it chokes out all desirable under plants, native plants, and if there are any endangered plants, it would choke those out," Peterson said. "It's a threat to habitat."

If you see garlic mustard, yank it and call the parks department. The experts say it's important not to compost garlic mustard or put it in your clean green can for recycling because it can still seed. Just bag it up, and throw it in the garbage.

MORE ON GARLIC MUSTARD

Call the Noxious Weed Program at (206) 296-0290

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