



King County

Ron Sims
King County Executive

News Release

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Contact: Logan Harris, 206-263-6550

Garlic mustard, highly invasive noxious weed spotted in Seattle parks and neighborhoods; County seeks help to identify and eradicate

King County is asking Seattle residents, especially those who live near parks, to help identify and eradicate Garlic Mustard, a highly invasive noxious weed, recently spotted in local neighborhoods.

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) grows to nearly three feet tall and can start flowering in April. The small white flowers have four petals, four sepals and six stamens, which is typical of the mustard family. In early spring the roots and new leaves smell like garlic.

Discovered in Seattle in 1999, Garlic Mustard has not been found in other parts of Washington. Most sightings have occurred in and near Seattle Parks, Woodland Park Zoo and other areas with plant habitat such as the University of Washington.

Garlic mustard is one of the fastest spreading invasive plants in woodland habitats of North America. It is not only able to grow in a wide range of habitat, including shaded areas, but also has a short life cycle and can self-pollinate.

One plant can enter a stable plant area, quickly replace the existing vegetation and build a seed bank that lasts from five to 10 years. Long term and expensive control plan are required to battle garlic mustard and keep it from competing and replacing native plants.

This Class A noxious weed has a very limited distribution in the state. The King County noxious weed program and others are working to contain, control and eradicate the menacing weed in order to keep it from spreading and establishing throughout Seattle, King County and Western Washington.

IF YOU THINK YOU SPOT THE WEED – PLEASE CALL the noxious weed program (206-296-0290).

Known locations:

Carkeek, Ravenna, lower Woodland Park, Golden Gardens and nearby residential neighborhoods. Also areas near the Japanese Garden/Arboretum, Interlaken, Burke Gilman Trail near the University District Motor Pool, Thornton Creek at Jackson Park, Magnuson Park, Longfellow Creek and the Cheasty Greenspace.

Recent sightings: UW upper campus near the dorms, Greg Davis Park and West Seattle Golf course.

For more information on noxious weeds, please call the noxious weed program (206) 296-0290, email noxious.weeds@metrokc.gov or visit <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/weeds>.

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