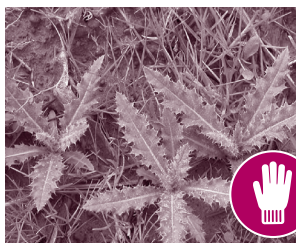
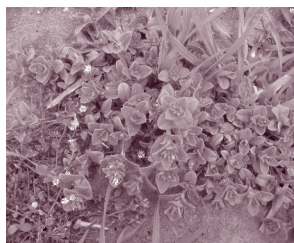


“Top Ten” Common Weeds

A non-exhaustive list of some of the most common—and notorious—weeds in the Mid-Atlantic.



THISTLE (BROADLEAF)



CHICKWEED (BROADLEAF)



POKEWEED (BROADLEAF)



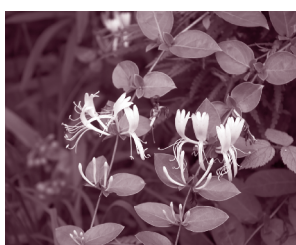
NUTSEGE (SEGE)



PORCELAIN BERRY (VINE)



BINDWEED (BROADLEAF VINE)



JAPANESE HONEYSUCKLE (VINE)



POISON IVY (BROADLEAF VINE)



WHITE MULBERRY
(BROADLEAF TREE)



AILANTHUS, AKA, TREE OF HEAVEN
(BROADLEAF TREE)

There are many plant characteristics involved in identification. The images show some of the more defining features for these species.



= This species has thorns and/or can irritate skin. Take extra care.

TIPS & FAQs

- ✓ **Why do I have weeds?** Weeds typically are great at producing many seeds; they have a root structure that is very strong; and they are able to survive in the harshest conditions. Poor soil health and cutting your grass too short are usually the reasons for a bumper crop of weeds.
- ✓ **Why is identification important?** Being able to identify weeds means you won't accidentally remove beautiful plants you want to keep. It will also help you figure out the best control method. We do not recommend using herbicides because of their risk to environmental, animal and human health. If you'd like more information, check out your state's Extension website.
- ✓ **Potential hazards.** Check to see if the weed is poisonous or has thorns before you start removing.
- ✓ **Be thorough.** When removing weeds, make sure you get as much of the root system as possible.
- ✓ **When should I weed?** Before the weeds develop seeds and the day after a nice, long rain are best. Seed development depends on the species and recent temperature and precipitation.
- ✓ **Think outside the (lunch) box.** Many weeds are actually edible. Look up your weed to see if it has an undiscovered virtue!
- ✓ **Learn!** See our website for a more detailed listing of weeds. www.ndc-md.org

RESOURCES

University of Maryland Extension
www.extension.umd.edu

National Invasive Species Information Center (USDA)
www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants

Edible Wild Foods
www.ediblewildfood.com/edible-weeds.aspx

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HOW DO I... IDENTIFY & REMOVE WEEDS?

In weed identification and removal, understanding the difference between weed, non-native and invasive species is very important. Weeds are plants that are considered “out of place” and a nuisance. There is a cultural understanding of what is considered a weed and what is not. This can vary from person to person and culture to culture. Non-natives are plants that were introduced to your area after Europeans settled and brought plants from abroad. Invasives are non-native plants that outgrow everything in their paths, pose a biological threat to the local ecosystem, and are listed as invasive species by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Most weeds are invasive species. This guide describes what you need to look for and learn about to identify weeds, as well as several methods for removal.

WHAT YOU NEED



ENTHUSIASM



LAWN MOWER



GLOVES
Thick leather for
spiny weeds



HAND TROWEL



PLASTIC BAG



TRASHCAN
Or bucket



MULCH
Or tarp

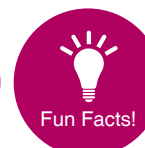


NEWSPAPERS
Optional

BENEFITS



Confidence



Fun Facts!



Beautify



Enjoy the
Outdoors

GETTING STARTED

1 KNOW YOUR WEED TYPE. Is it a grass, sedge or broadleaf? Grasses have parallel veins and round or flat hollow stems (e.g., crabgrass). Sedges have parallel veins but have triangular stems (e.g., nutsedge).

Roll the base of the blade between your fingers and you will feel the triangular form. Broadleaf weeds have one central vein from which many smaller veins branch off (e.g., dandelion).

2 KNOW YOUR WEED STRUCTURE. Is it a vine, herbaceous plant, shrub or tree? Herbaceous plants have parts that are fleshy. All shrubs and trees have woody parts.

3 KNOW YOUR WEED’S LIFE SPAN. Is the weed an annual, biennial or perennial? Annual plants complete their life span in 12 months. Biennials complete their life span in 2 years. Perennials live for more than 2 years. See “Weed life cycles.”

4 KNOW YOUR WEED’S SEASON. Does your weed pop up and flower in the winter, spring, summer or fall? Is the weed around all year? This information will help you control the weeds.

- a. Cool season weed seeds like to germinate when they feel the coolness in the air, which will typically be in the late fall through early spring. Warm season weeds like to germinate when they feel the warmth in the air, which will typically be from late spring through early fall.

When you watch the garden area over a few years, you will actually start to notice and probably predict which weeds will pop up depending on the season!

5 CONTROLLING YOUR WEEDS. Typical methods for control are mowing, hand pulling or using a hand trowel, and mulching and/or smothering.

Some weeds have thorns or skin irritants—always err on the side of wearing good gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face until after you’ve washed your hands (even if you wore gloves—plant oils can transfer to other areas of the body and clothing).

- a. Proper mowing is one of the easiest ways to control weeds. When you cut the grass, the blades should be 3-4 inches tall.

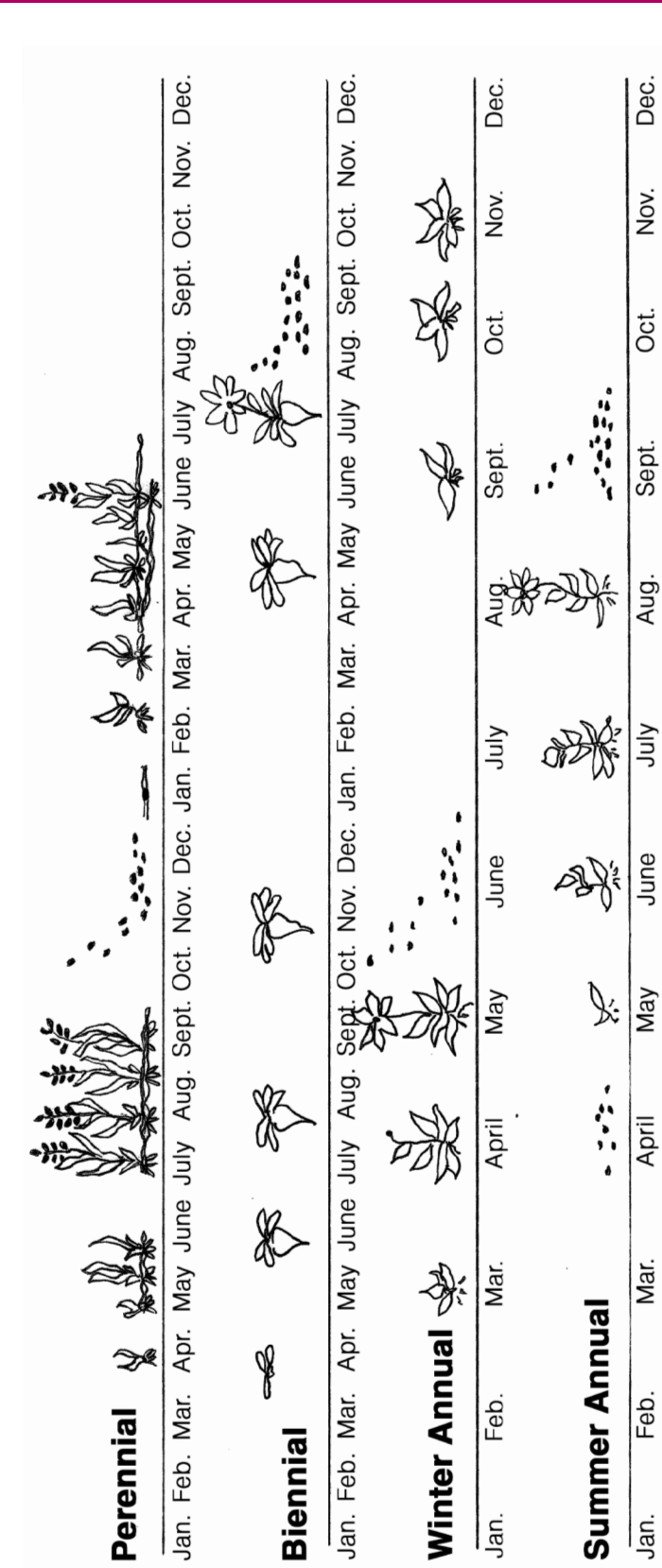
This will require more frequent mowing but will allow your grass to become healthy and strong. When the grass blades are taller, the weeds have a harder time competing for sunlight and water.
- b. For hand pulling, knowing your weed’s life span is important because if you remove the weed right as it begins to flower, chances are the weed will be gone for good.

The tricky part is that some weeds have seeds that can last in the soil for years so even if you see more weeds, they may be from last year’s seeds. Remember to remove that plant before it sets seed!

- c. Mulching and/or smothering are also great ways to keep weeds under control. If you are trying to get rid of a large area of weeds, you can place a tarp or large black plastic sheet over the area to smother out the weeds.

The weeds need consistent sunlight to survive and the cover method will block sunlight. Newspaper or lasagna mulching is where you cover pre-mowed weeds or grass with 8-10 sheets of newspaper. Top off it off with 2-3 inches of hardwood mulch to beautify.

WEED LIFE CYCLES



Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension Bulletin, *Weed Control for the Home Garden*