

OPERATION ERADICATION:

A GARDENER AT WAR

Anyone who has ever felt besieged by an invasive plant probably can identify with another gardener who is on a personal mission to end the scourge of his or her garden nemesis. Call it elimination, eradication, extirpation, annihilation, the end result is supposed to be the final act of this garden plant thug. At Clark Botanic Garden, we continually fight the ivy around our trees; the poison ivy rampant in uncultivated areas, the trailing honeysuckle near the community garden, the houttuynia around the arbor, the Star-of-Bethlehem in the annual borders, the violet and the lesser celandine in the lawn, and the garlic mustard, among the other pesky undesirable plants. At various times and days in the garden, there is an intrepid volunteer who is on a quest to eliminate all the garlic mustard he can find. When he works, he diligently counts all the little seedlings he pulls. He knows their life cycle and their attributes, and he hates them! And lest you think this warrior-volunteer has no other garden to tend to, I happen to know he is also waging war on the devil's walking sticks on his own property. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and erstwhile volunteer working with us. Garlic mustard beware!