Onion weed

*Allium triquetum*

**Family**
Liliaceae (lily)

**Also known as**
Three-cornered garlic

**Where is it originally from?**
Mediterranean

**What does it look like?**
Grass-like perennial (<60 cm) with a strong garlic smell, growing from main bulbs (<10-15 mm diameter) and producing offset bulbs. Fleshy, straight leaves (2-5, each 20-60 cm long), with white papery sheaths, usually die back in late Spring. Fleshy, soft, 3-sided flower stalk (20-60 cm high) is surrounded by leaves at the base, and supports bell-shaped flowers (10-15 mm long, Oct-Nov) that are 5-petalled and are white with green stripes on each petal. Seed capsules (7 mm diameter) contain black seeds.

**Are there any similar species?**
Wild onion (*A. vineale*) has rush-like stems. Snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*) and *Nothoscordum inodorum* lack garlic odour.

**Why is it weedy?**
Seeds and offset bulbs ensure distribution. Tolerates hot and cold, wind, semi-shade, damp heavy soils. Intolerant of strong competition for space, heavy shade.

**How does it spread?**
Seed and bulbs are spread via water and soil movement, dumped vegetation, contaminated machinery and nursery plants. Sources include wasteland, roadsides, sprayed areas, hedgerows, gardens.

**What damage does it do?**
Forms dense mats in Winter/Spring in disturbed sites, discourages native species from establishing.

**Which habitats is it likely to invade?**
Disturbed forest and shrubland, streamsides, herbfield, bare land, especially after spraying or other clearance to bare land.

**What can I do to get rid of it?**
1. Dig out small patches (all year round): dispose of at refuse transfer station, burn or bury.
2. Overall spray: metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (3g/10L).

**What can I do to stop it coming back?**
Spraying with glyphosate only gives plant more room to expand. Better to overplant with taller spp. In regenerating habitats, often better to leave altogether to minimise disturbance.