

Lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album* L.)



Figure 1. Seedling



Figure 2. Mature plant with white granules



Figure 3. Flower head.

Lambsquarters is an annual weed. It emerges throughout the summer and peaks in mid to late spring. It grows well in rich, fertile soil. Some people consider this to be an edible plant but it's not advisable to consume it raw in large quantities because of its oxalic acid content (the same chemical in spinach that some perceive as gritty or metallic in taste). If growing as an edible, maintain control so it doesn't spread to others' gardens.

Identification

Seedlings have oval opposite leaves. As the plant matures, the leaves become alternate and triangular shaped with irregular, shallow-toothed margins. Beginning with the seedling phase, the leaves can become covered with white granules giving the *album* part of its scientific name (Latin for white) and a fuzzy appearance. The stems are grooved and hairless and can be green or reddish. Mature plants can reach 2 to 6 foot in height with very small green flowers tightly clustered at the tips of the stems and branches. The clustered compact flowers develop into seeds with a thin, papery covering.

Control Methods

In a garden, hoeing or digging out lambsquarters is highly effective. Since most of the seedlings have emerged by late spring, planting in mid-May after tilling the garden reduces the amount of lambsquarters. Mulching prevents sprouting of seedlings.

Additional Information/Resource

- Michigan State University Weed Science [Common Lambsquarters](#)