

Narrowleaf bittercress

Cardamine impatiens

Description

Easily dispersed due to its seed shooting ability; can form dense stands, outcompeting native species.

Habit

Herbaceous annual or biennial with spreading leaves; grows up to 60 cm (2 ft) tall.

Leaves

Pinnately divided with numerous (6-20), sharply toothed leaflets; membrane-like, narrow, pointed auricles at the leaf base; basal leaves are arranged in a rosette and pinnately divided, 3-11 leaflets with rounded lobes.

Stems

Erect; glabrous.

Flowers



Small, white in color, up to 2.5 mm (0.1 in.) long,

petals lacking or shorter than the sepals; bloom

May through August.

Fruits and Seeds

Slender seedpods (siliques) on spreading-ascending to erect pedicels, 1.5-2 cm (0.6-0.8 in.) long, 10-24 seeds, ripen from May to September.

Habitat

Established in Michigan; found on banks, along thicket margins, shady woods and on moist limestone rocks and cliffs.

Reproduction

By seeds expelled from siliques.

Similar

Native sand bitter-cress (*C. parviflora*), Pennsylvania bitter-cress (*C. pensylvanica*), tansy-mustard (*Descurainia pinnata*) and common yellow-cress (*Rorippa palustris*) lack narrow-leaved bittercress? characteristic narrow, pointed auricle at the leaf base.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Monitor moist forested sites in spring and summer; can be identified by its sagittate-auriculate leaf bases. Hand pull and remove all plants before seed dispersal. As this species has a limited distribution in Michigan, it is important to document new occurrences. Please obtain flowering or fruiting specimens with the diagnostic leaf bases and submit to: Anton Reznicek, Curator (Vascular Plants), University of Michigan Herbarium, 3600 Varsity Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108-2287.

Credits

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