

Hoary Cress (*Cardaria draba*)

HC CARD DRA

Erect, perennial herb up to 0.6 metres tall. Has a flat-topped appearance. Introduced from Eurasia, most likely in contaminated alfalfa seed. Also known as *Lepidium draba*.



Distribution

Limited distribution in the Southern Interior.

Quick ID

White flowers with 4 petals, approx. 6 mm across.

Dense flower clusters give a flat topped appearance.

Lower leaves are stalked and hairy while upper leaves clasp the stem and are usually hairless.

Inflated, upside down, heart-shaped seedpods.

“Look-Alike” Species

Common Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*, has a similar white, flat-topped flower cluster. The leaves are easily distinguished as they are very finely pinnately-divided, appearing feather like, and have a fragrant aroma when crushed.



Interesting Facts:

Above ground parts are high in vitamin C.

Manual Treatment: Mowing 2–3 times a year for several years may slow the spread and reduce seed production. Mowing should be conducted during the bud stage and repeated when the plants re-bud.



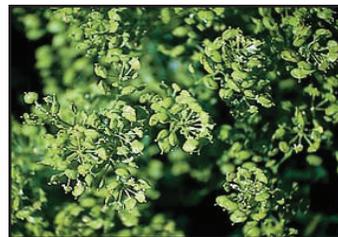
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Flowers: White flowers with 4 petals, approximately 6mm across. These dense flower clusters give the weed a flat-topped appearance early in the season, but this is lost as the stem elongates.



Leaves and Stems: Leaves on mature plants are shaped like arrowheads, alternately arranged, and have finely toothed edges. Basal rosettes have bluish-green, lance shaped leaves. A single stem, often branched near the top, has one flower cluster.

Seeds: Inflated seedpods are shaped like an upside down heart. Seedpods contain two reddish brown, egg-shaped seeds separated by a narrow partition. Viable for up to three years.



Roots: Rhizomatous, with vigorous creeping root system. Below ground buds develop new shoots. Root system comprises over 75% of the plants total biomass; can grow up to 9 metres.

Reproduction and Dispersal: Primarily by rhizomes and root fragments; can form dense patches of clones over an area of 3.6 metres. Also reproduces by seed. Can produce two crops of seeds per year.



Habitat Preference: Meadows, fields, roadsides, ditches, waterways, cultivated lands and rangelands. Particularly adapted to sub-irrigated pastures with alkaline soils.