

(revision date:4/7/2021)

## **Weeds: Bittercress (Shotweed, Hairy bittercress)(*Cardamine hirsuta*)**

family: Brassicaceae (Cruciferae)

cycle Winter annual

plant type: Broadleaf

**Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.**

### ***Biology***

Little bittercress is a fall/winter-germinating annual species growing to less than five inches tall. Leaves are compound with one large terminal leaflet and several pairs of smaller lateral leaflets. Each leaflet is smooth and circular to slightly heart-shaped in outline. Leaves initially form a flat rosette, followed by a flower stem ranging from 2 inches to a foot tall. Little bittercress blooms in early spring only, typically mid-March to mid-April. Its flowers are tiny and white, borne at the top of the plant. Fruits are slender, thin, and one to two inches long. When mature pods are touched, they split apart explosively, giving rise to the common name "shotweed."

### ***Habitat***

Little bittercress is commonly found west of the Cascades in yards, gardens, roadsides, waste areas, and perennial plantings. It is native to Europe, and has become a serious problem in the nursery industry.

### ***Management Options***

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ Maintaining a healthy planting or turf area to provide competition will prevent weed establishment.
- ~ Reduce weed infestation by handpulling weeds.
- ~ Apply organic mulches, such as bark, compost, grass clippings, straw, and other materials, in a layer from two to several inches thick for effective weed management.

***Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!***

#### **Chemical Management**

***IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides***

Seeds remain viable in the soil for several years. Preventing seed production is crucial for effective control. Apply according to label instructions. Glyphosate products are used as spot treatments only! NOTE: Some ingredients listed here are only available in combination. Read the label carefully on combination products to make sure the product is suitable for your specific situation.

#### **Landscape Areas**

- glyphosate
- products containing 2,4-D

#### **Turf Areas**

- products containing 2,4-D

#### **Bare Ground Areas**

- glyphosate
- products containing 2,4-D

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**Images**



~ Caption: *Hairy bittercress rosette*  
~ Photo by: C.R. Foss



~ Caption: *Hairy bittercress fruits*  
~ Photo by: T. W. Miller



~ Caption: *Hairy bittercress rosette*  
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~ Caption: *Hairy bittercress*  
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