

CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

Narrowleaf Bittercress (*Cardamine impatiens*)

Also called: Bushy rock-cress



Family name: Mustard family (*Brassicaceae*)

Native range: Europe

General: Herbaceous annual or biennial reaching about 2 feet tall.

Leaves: Alternate. Basal leaves are pinnately compound with individual leaflets having rounded lobes. Leaves on the flowering stems are also pinnately compound. Leaflets are elliptical.

Flowers: White, four-petaled, 0.1 inch across, appearing in May.

Fruit: Small seeds are contained within slender pods. Seeds are ejected from the pods. Ripening from May through August. After bearing seed, the plant dies.

Look-alikes: Sand bittercress (*C. parviflora*) is found on dry slopes and Pennsylvania bittercress (*C. pensylvanica*) is found on wet ground and stream banks; both are native.

Hairy bittercress (*C. hirsuta*), a nonnative is commonly found in lawns and along stream banks.

Habitat: Forest, forest edge, forested slopes, floodplain forest, stream sides, roadsides, and gardens. Narrowleaf bittercress prefers part-shade to shade and moist soil, but can tolerate a variety of conditions.

Threats to native habitats: Narrowleaf bittercress produces abundant, projectile seeds and can form dense stands on forest floors, displacing native herbs.

NJ Status: Narrowleaf bittercress is common and spreading rapidly. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. All newly detected occurrences should be eradicated.



Commercial Availability: None, but may be contained in soil of purchased landscape plants.

Sources:

<http://nbiin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specied=44>
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2nd ed.
University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 684-8.



Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST) is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, www.fohvos.org or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, www.urwa.org.

