Cardamine forsteri

COMMON NAME
Bittercress

SYNONYMS
Was once included under the name of C debilis as Cardamine “Narrow Petal”.

FAMILY
Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY
Cardamine forsteri Govaerts

FLORA CATEGORY
Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Dicotyledonous Herbs other than Composites

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2018 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION
An erect perennial herb arising from single rosette or several rosettes with short lateral branches. Leaves deeply lobed; moderately hairy to hairless. hairs, if present, retrorse; Inflorescence a simple raceme or branched, each raceme being 3–6-flowered. Petals narrow (cf. many other Cardamine species), 3.0–4.5 × 0.7–1.4 mm, white. Siliques (‘seed pods’) hairless to moderately hairy; hairs retrorse.

DISTRIBUTION
Widespread in New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA
Many Cardamine species are superficially similar. Heenan (2017) notes “The presence of axillary leaflet hydathodes is an important character of C. forsteri. However, their presence can vary as they are caducous and so careful searching of the leaf axils is often needed to locate persistent hydathodes, especially on older leaves.” C. forsteri also resembles the exotic C. hirsuta and can grow with it in disturbed sites. C. hirsuta flowers usually have 4 stamens rather than 6.

FLOWER COLOURS
White

ETYMOLOGY
cardamine: From the Greek name kárdamon, referring to an Indian spice

ATTRIBUTION
Heenan, P.B. 2017 A taxonomic revision of Cardamine L. (Brassicaceae) in New Zealand (Phytotaxa 330)
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