

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

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | 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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan PB. 2017. A taxonomic revision of *Cardamine* L. (Brassicaceae) in New Zealand. *Phytotaxa* 330(1): 1–154. <https://doi.org/10.11646/phytotaxa.330.1>.



Cobb Valley. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 18/03/2016, Licence: CC BY.



Hydathodes in leaflet axils (circled) are tiny and often caducous (falling off at an early stage). Cobb Valley. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 18/03/2016, Licence: CC BY.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cardamine-forsteri/>