

Cardamine pratensis

COMMON NAMES

cuckoo cress, lady's smock

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Upright perennial herb up to 60 cm tall, with divided, watercress-like leaves and groups of pink flowers, c. 1 cm across.

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb. Rhizomes present. Stems erect, straight, glabrous, purplish or green, (15)-30-60-(80) cm tall. Lvs thin, green, glabrous, or rarely cauline lvs ciliate. Basal lvs many, pinnate, petiolate; terminal leaflet broadly elliptic, entire, lobed or toothed, shallowly cordate, larger than laterals; lateral leaflets in (3)-4-5-(6) pairs, broadly ovate, lobed or entire, shallowly cordate at base; petiolules < leaflets. Cauline lvs pinnate, shortly petiolate; terminal leaflet larger than laterals, entire, becoming narrow-elliptic to linear, cuneate at base; lateral leaflets in (3)-4-5-(6) pairs, entire, narrow-obovate to linear, cuneate at base, subsessile. Infl. racemose, straight, glabrous, 15-35 cm long. Pedicels glabrous, erecto-patent, 10-20-(30) mm long at fruiting. Sepals glabrous, green or pinkish, with scarious margins, 2.5-4 × 1-1.5-(2) mm. Petals pink (sometimes white), spreading, clawed, 8-11 × 4-6 mm. Stamens 6. Silique pale yellowish green or with purple valves, erect, (10)-15-18-(25) × 1-1.5 mm; valves glabrous; style 1-2 mm long. Seeds reddish brown, elliptic-oblong, not winged, c. 1.5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Unlike any other cresses this species has large pink (rarely white) flowers.

DISTRIBUTION

Local in North Island, also collected in two South Island localities in Westland and Southland.

HABITAT

Wet grass- or sedgeland.

GENUS

Cardamine

FAMILY

Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY

Cardamine pratensis L.



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Freshwater swamp by Whenuakura Estuary, S Taranaki. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 01/12/2013, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Late spring to autumn

FRUITING

Autumn

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

Europe, North America, northern Asia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, possibly an ornamental plant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by contaminated machinery or footwear.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

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

NVS CODE

CARPRA

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Clapham, A.R.; Tutin, T.G.; Warburg, E.F. (1962). Flora of the British Isles. Cambridge University Press, Second Edition. 1269pp.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (1988). Flora of New Zealand Volume 4: Naturalised pteridophytes, gymnosperms, dicotyledons. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Webb et al., (1998).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026