

Cardamine pratensis

COMMON NAME

cuckoo cress, lady's smock

FAMILY

Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY

Cardamine pratensis L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

CARPRA

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

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

DISTRIBUTION

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

HABITAT

Wet grass- or sedgeland.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

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

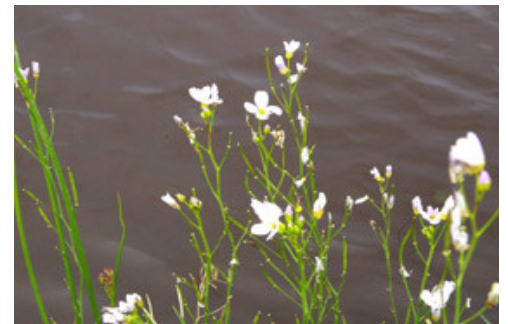
Unlike any other cresses this species has large pink (rarely white) flowers.

FLOWERING

Late spring to autumn



Hauraki swamp, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Hauraki swamp, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

Autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by contaminated machinery or footwear.

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

Europe, North America, northern Asia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, possibly an ornamental plant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

ETYMOLOGY

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

ATTRIBUTION

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

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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