

Weeds: Cardamine Hirsuta / Hairy bittercress / Lambs cress



Hairy bittercress as it is commonly known is an annual weed and also an edible if slightly bitter herb and a member of the mustard family.

Abundant throughout the UK, on bare ground, path-sides, walls, damp ground, tops of container plant pots. The seeds of which are so tiny they are often introduced into a garden unknowingly.

Hairy bittercress grows to just a few centimetres. It is not deep rooted and pulls out easily, the problem with it is the explosive seed dispersal mechanism.

Seeds can be spread up to 1 metre away, which is quite a distance given its small stature. As with any annual weeds, it is best if you can remove it before the seed is produced. It can survive the winter and will usually flower as it warms up in early spring. The life cycle is short but it will produce several generations in a season.



Control

Try to remove it before it sets seed, hand weeding with a fork or trowel or careful hoeing if between plants or vegetables.

If it has set seed (& it probably has somewhere in your garden) it will be a recurring problem.