

## April 2013 *Guess that Plant*



Hairy Bittercress

***Cardamine hirsuta* L.**

The April *Guess that Plant* was one of our common early spring herbs, hairy bittercress. Hairy bittercress is state-wide. It is widespread and is found in moist to dry habitat that has some disturbance component. Lawns, roadside and side walk cracks have this plant in abundance. Many know it not from its taxonomic features but from the way it disperses its seeds. This plant produces a silique (a seed capsule of the mustard family, the Cruciferae or Brassicaceae). As the capsule dries and it stores a significant amount of energy in dry tissue that is released when touched. It throws its seed far and wide, creating small explosions as one walks through its mature seed heads. The hairy bittercress is an upland plant (U) restricted to human manipulated habitat. It is a non-native species that spread from Europe early during our colonization.

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