

Mustard Family + Similar Species

SUMMARY

Members of the mustard family (*Brassicaceae*) are **herbaceous biennials and perennials** with **alternate stem leaves** and **basal rosettes** of leaves. **Flowers are four-parted** and arranged in **terminal clusters**. **Fruits are two-parted** with rows of seeds divided by a thin septum.

LOOK ALIKES

- While **four-parted flowers** and **two-parted fruits** are characteristics of the mustard family, other species share these characteristics, including greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), a member of the poppy family included in this group of invasive plants.
- Individual species may have look-alikes, which can be differentiated based on characteristics like leaf shape and size, bloom time, and flower color.



Scientific Name	Common Name	NR 40
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic mustard	R
<i>Bunias orientalis</i>	Hill mustard	P/R
<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>	Narrow leaf bittercress	P
<i>Chelidonium majus</i> *	Greater celandine	R
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's rocket	R
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Perennial pepperweed	P

* Not in mustard family, but shares many characteristics

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Leaves	Flowers	Fruit/Seeds
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic mustard	Kidney-shaped basal leaves, more triangular up the stem; scalloped edges; smell like garlic	Cluster of small (1/3") white flowers; May - June	Slender seed pods, up to 2" long
<i>Bunias orientalis</i>	Hill mustard	Highly lobed, lance-shaped leaves similar to dandelions; smaller up stem; sometimes warty	Dense clusters of yellow, fragrant 2" flowers; May - June	Oval-shaped pods covered with warty bumps
<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>	Narrow leaf bittercress	Basal leaves compound with 3-11 lobed leaflets; stem leaves compound with 13+ lance-shaped leaflets	1/2" rounded clusters of tiny white to green flowers; May - July	Slender seed pod, up to 1" long
<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	Greater celandine	Compound leaves with 5-9 lobed leaflets with rounded teeth; blue-green to green in color; broken stem exudes yellow to orange sap	Cluster of 3-8 yellow flowers, each about 3/4", May - Aug.	Slender seed pod, 3/4 - 2" long
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's rocket	Densely hairy toothed leaves, round at base and tapering to pointed tip	Clusters of flowers 3/4 - 1", ranging from white to pink to purple; May - July	Slender seed pod up to 4" long
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Perennial pepperweed	Basal leaves up to 12" with serrated edges; stem leaves waxy, gray-green, 1-2" wide	Dense clusters of small, white flowers; late spring	Oval, hairy capsule, <0.1"