

**Hoary
cress**



Hoary cress

[*Cardaria draba* (L.) Desv.]

Hoary cress (also called whitetop) is native to the Balkan Peninsula and southwest Asia. The plant is a deep-rooted perennial forb that grows up to 2 feet tall. Stems are erect and branching with dense pubescence on the lower half. Leaves are about 0.5 to 4 inches long, and 0.1 to 1.4 inches wide, with upper leaves clasping the stem. Flowers are white, four-petaled and borne on slender stalks. Plants flower from May to June and produce up to 4800 seeds in July. Seed capsules are shaped like an inverted heart and usually contain two seeds. Seedlings of hoary cress germinate in the fall and over-winter as rosettes. The plant also spreads by roots.

Hoary cress is very aggressive and can form dense monocultures on disturbed land. This plant contains glucosinolates that can be toxic to cattle, but animals only graze hoary cress in the spring if more palatable forage is not available.

