

Birdsrape Mustard

Brassica rapa L.

Alternate Names

Turnip, turnip greens, field mustard, Chinese cabbage, seventop, shogun, turnip rape

Synonyms

Brassica campestris L.

Description

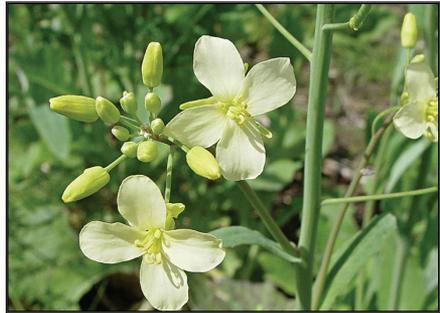
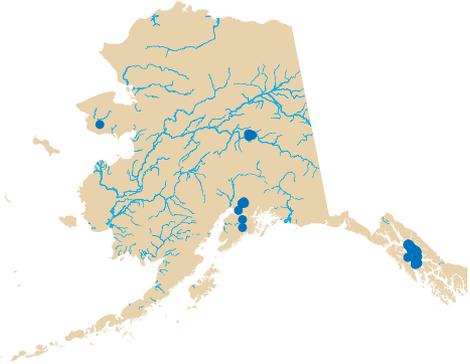
Birdsrape mustard is a biennial rootcrop (turnip) that functions as an annual plant when cultivated. This species has stems up to 4 feet tall growing from a taproot. The stems and foliage are smooth. Upper and lower leaves clasp the stem and lack stalks, and the lower leaves are deeply lobed and undivided. Each flower has 4 yellow petals. Seed pods are 1–4 inches long, and the seeds are $\frac{1}{32}$ – $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch in diameter and can be blackish, reddish-brown, or mottled yellow.

Similar Species

Canola (*Brassica napus* L.) is another cultivated plant that has yellowish-green rather than green leaves and flowering stems that do not lengthen during flowering, unlike birdsrape mustard, which can also be distinguished by its nearly hairless stems and clasping stem leaves.

Management

Birdsrape mustard can be controlled by hand-pulling.



KULAK photo by Paul Busselen



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Family: Brassicaceae

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Notes

Birdsrape mustard has been found growing in large and dense patches along beach fringes in southeast Alaska (AKEPIC Database 2004). It has been cultivated in Europe for over 4,000 years and is probably native to central and southern Europe; it now occurs throughout the world.



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