

## CENTRAL JERSEY INVASIVE SPECIES STRIKE TEAM

### *Invasive Plant Fact Sheet*

#### **White watercress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* syn. *Nasturtium nasturtium-aquaticum*, *Nasturtium officinale*, *Sisymbrium nasturtium-aquaticum*)**



**Family name:** Mustard family (Brassicaceae)

**Native range:** Europe

**General:** Aquatic or semiaquatic perennial. White watercress can grow while submerged or prostrate on wet soil. The stems root from the nodes. Stems hollow.

**Leaves:** Alternate, nearly toothless, pinnately lobed with 3 to 9 leaflets. The terminal leaflet is larger than the side ones. Leaflets oval shaped.

**Flowers:** White, small, 0.2 inches wide, 4 petalled flowers borne on long stems, appearing April through September.

**Fruit:** Slender pods are about 0.4 to 0.6 inches long. The seeds within the pod are small and are contained in two rows.

**Look-alikes:** Onerow yellowcress (*Rorippa microphylla*), a non-native, is very difficult to distinguish from white watercress in the field. They both occur in moist soils and behave similarly. Onerow yellowcress seed appear in one row in the pod and a slightly larger and more prolific than white watercress seeds.



**Habitat:** Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, springs, moist ground

**Threats to native habitats:** White watercress rapidly forms dense stands that exclude native plants.

**NJ Status:** White watercress is uncommon but spreading rapidly. It is highly threatening to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.

**Commercial Availability:** White watercress is an edible green that is widely cultivated.

Sources: <http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/ipane/icat/browse.do?specieid=91>  
Rhoads, A.F. and T. Block. 2007. *Plants of Pennsylvania*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. p. 684.



**Central Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team (CJISST)** is a regional cooperative effort to detect, map, and manage emerging populations of invasive species. This initiative is a partnership of state, county, and municipal agencies, conservation groups, and private citizens. To learn more, please contact us: **Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**, (609) 730-1560, [www.fohvos.org](http://www.fohvos.org) or **Upper Raritan Watershed Association**, (908) 234-1852, [www.urwa.org](http://www.urwa.org).

