

Cardamine oligosperma Nutt., LITTLE WESTERN BITTERCRESS, NUTTALL'S BITTERCRESS.

Annual, taprooted, rosetted, 1–many-stemmed at base, erect to ascending, 8–35 cm tall; shoots tender with thin leaves, glabrescent to sparsely short-villous, the hairs unbranched.

Stems: ± conspicuously ridged and angled, to 2 mm in diameter, green or radish-red when young. **Leaves:** helically alternate, odd-1-pinnately compound with 1–9 leaflets, petiolate, without stipules; petiole < blade, lower petiole channeled, with several hairs along edges, somewhat sheathing at base or not sheathing, upper petiole and rachis winged; blade oblong-ob lanceolate, of basal leaves 15–120 mm long with ± subopposite lateral leaflets, of cauline leaves < 60 mm long, leaflets short-stalked; axis channeled; petiolules < 4 mm long; blades of basal leaf leaflets obovate to oblong or roundish, 3–20 mm long, leaflets of cauline leaves elliptic or narrowly oblanceolate to linear, lateral leaflets entire or with a pair of short lobes, terminal leaflet the largest, typically asymmetric, entire or shallowly to obscurely lobed on margins and often sparsely short-ciliate, the lobes rounded, slightly notched at tip, palmately veined at base, upper surface sometimes with scattered hairs. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal, many-flowered, open flowers overtopping flower buds; main axis angled to ridged, lacking bracts; pedicel ascending, slightly ridged to compressed, at anthesis 2.5–4 mm long increasing 2–3× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 3–4 mm across; **sepals** 4, ovate-lanceolate, ± 1.5 mm long, glabrous or with several hairs above midpoint, green with narrow membranous margins, deciduous; **petals** 4, clawed, obovate to oblanceolate, (2–)2.3–4 mm long; claw greenish to pale yellow or white; limb white to pale pink; **stamens** 4–6, monomorphic or dimorphic with outer 0–2 short and inner 4 longer; filaments ± 0.5 mm long (short stamens) and 0.9–2 mm long (long stamens) increasing slightly after dehiscing, green aging white; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 0.3 mm long, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **nectaries** 4, at inside base of each sepal, minute, green, persistent at fruit base; **pistil** 1, at anthesis ≥ long stamens; ovary superior, compressed-cylindric with 2 slightly raised valves, ca. 2 mm long, yellowish green to green, 2-chambered, each chamber with numerous ovules attached along 2 placentae; style < 0.5 mm; stigma capitate, 2-lobed, papillate. **Fruit:** siliqua (silique), dehiscent via 2 valves, to 30-seeded, ascending to erect, cylindric but slightly flattened, straight, linear, 10–25 × ± 1.3 mm, valves flattened parallel with septum, opening elastically by coiling upward from base, with seeds aligned in 1 row per chamber but attached along 2 placentae; style < 0.5 mm long. **Seed:** lenticular-ovoid, ± 1 mm long, black, narrowly margined. Mid-January–early April.

Native. Annual, typically appearing weedy, found occasionally in moist, often shady locations throughout the range with other tender herbs, such as miner's lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*). *Cardamine oligosperma* has small, white to pinkish flowers, which are difficult to study without proper magnification.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson