

Lepidium virginicum L. subsp. *menziesii* (DC) Thell., POOR MAN'S PEPPER. Annual, taprooted, not rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, with ascending branches, erect, in range 12–35 cm tall; shoots green, puberulent with unbranched arching hairs. **Stems:** cylindric, to 1.5 mm diameter at base, densely puberulent. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, appearing sessile, without stipules; blade oblanceolate to narrowly obovate, 10–40 × 2–8 mm, long-tapered at base, entire, with 1–several teeth, or with 2 teeth and 2 lobes below midpoint and 2 teeth above midpoint, the 2 lobes and upper 2 teeth often opposite, broadly acute to obtuse at tip, faintly pinnately veined with midrib slightly raised on lower surface, dull, puberulent with widely spaced hairs on margins. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal, many-flowered, with open flowers level with buds and developing fruits never overtopping buds, lacking bracts, puberulent on axes; bract subtending peduncle leaflike, oblanceolate, to 15 mm long, entire or with an inconspicuous tooth on margin above midpoint; peduncle cylindric, 15–35 mm long, green; bractlet subtending a lower pedicel (rare), leaflike; pedicel at anthesis ascending, 1.5–2 mm long increasing to 2× and spreading in fruit, purple on upper side. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 1.3–1.5 mm across; **sepals** 4, somewhat dimorphic, ± elliptic, yellowish green below midpoint and purplish above with white margins and tip, the pair opposite stamens cupped and in range 0.9–1 × 0.5 mm, the pair appressed to ovary edges keeled and 0.7–0.8 mm long, both forms commonly with some hairs above midpoint, deciduous but the 2 along immature fruit edges tardily so; **petals** 4, narrowly oblanceolate, ca. 0.5 × 0.1 mm, white; **stamens** 2, free; filaments erect, 1 mm long, white; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 0.25 mm long, yellowish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **nectaries** 4, = a pair at the base of each stamen, minute, translucent yellowish green, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellowish green; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, circular in outline and flattened, ± 0.8 mm long, minutely notched at tip, compressed ⊥ to septum, 2-chambered with 1 ovule per chamber; style 0.1 mm long, included in notch on ovary; stigma at level of ovary tip, discoid, densely papillate, the papillae short, colorless or translucent-white. **Fruit:** siliqua (silicle), dehiscent by 2 valves, 2-seeded, circular with notch at tip, in range 2.5–3 mm, somewhat glossy and green with faint purplish margin, ± flat to slightly concave on upper surface and slightly convex on the lower surface, with a conspicuous midline (septum), notch 0.2 mm deep and vertical, with seeds attached at the top to an elliptic, translucent septum, not veiny, glabrous; not beaked; pedicel in fruit slightly flattened. **Seed:** compressed-ovoid with folded embryo evident, in range 1.3–1.8 × 0.7–0.9 mm, dull pale greenish yellow to light orange or cinnamon brown; very gelatinous when wetted. Early March–late April.

Naturalized. Annual occasionally observed along trails in isolated populations, but each population does not spread from the initial spot where introduced. *Lepidium virginicum* subsp. *menziesii* formerly was treated as *L. virginicum* var. *pubescens*. This is a species of peppergrass that has only two stamens, and our plants have very short petals, which in some descriptions would be called “rudimentary.”

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