Other common names: Tansy mustard, herb sophia

Scientific name: *Descurainia sophia*

Family: Brassicaceae

Description: A bushy, much-branched plant that grows up to 2 or more feet tall, flixweed blooms early in the spring.

**Leaves:** The leaves are finely divided and hairy. The hairs are branched.

**Stems:** Stems are upright and branched. Plants grow in a rosette (ground-hugging form, see photo below right) until the flowering stems start growing.

**Flowers:** Tiny and yellow with four petals; arranged in branched structures. Blooms from early spring to summer.

**Seeds:** Produces narrow seed pods ½ to 1¼ inches long.

**Roots:** Has a short taproot.

Native to: Europe; naturalized in much of the United States

Where it grows: Gardens, landscaped areas, rangeland, vacant lots, roadsides and other disturbed or unmanaged sites

Life cycle: Winter annual (sprouts in fall or early winter), summer annual (sprouts in spring or summer), sometimes biennial (flowers and dies in the second year of growth)

Reproduction: Reproduces by seed
Control methods: Flixweed is a prolific seed-producer, and can build up a reserve of seed in the soil. The seeds survive for years in the soil. Plants are most easily removed when they are small rosettes (ground-hugging forms). Control relies on preventing the production of seed.

Mechanical: Dig, hoe or pull young plants. Use mechanical control methods prior to formation of flowers and seeds. Mow to prevent flowering and production of seed.

Cultural: Plant desirable vegetation to compete with tumble mustard; minimize soil disturbance.

Biological: Do not graze. Eating large quantities of flowers can be toxic to livestock, and can result in death.

Chemical: Apply broadleaf-selective herbicides on young plants.

References:


