

MUSTARD SPECIES

Black mustard (*Brassica nigra*)

Field mustard (*Brassica rapa*)

Mustard Family (Brassicaceae)

DESCRIPTION

Black mustard and field mustard are annual or biennial herbs that can reach up to 6 feet tall. The leaves are slightly hairy. The taproot is white and fleshy in maturity.

REPRODUCTION

Mustards produce bright yellow, 4-petaled flowers from March to June. The small seeds are brown to black.

IMPACT

Mustards grow profusely and reportedly produce allelopathic chemicals that inhibit germination of native plants.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

See wild radish, below.

Note: Mowing is reported to be ineffective at eradicating mustard.

INTERESTING FACTS

Both mustard species are thought to be native to Eurasia, where they have been in cultivation for thousands of years. Black mustard may have been introduced to the US as a contaminant of cereal grain. Field mustard is the wild ancestor of turnip, and its roots are often fed to livestock. Mustard greens are highly nutritious, and have been used in traditional medicine for cancer. The flowers are edible but may be allergenic to some people.



Brassica rapa