

New Watershed Invasive Plant

Perennial Pepperweed *Lepidium latifolium*



Native to Eurasia, perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) was introduced to the west coast of the United States through a shipment of sugar beet seeds in the 1930's. Pepperweed is now present in all states west of the Rocky Mountains and is serious noxious weed problem infiltrating roadsides, riversides and pasture lands.

Although pepperweed was first recorded in Peabody, Massachusetts in 1924 and Norton, Connecticut in 1933, it has only recently been observed spreading rapidly in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Most coastal communities remain unaware of pepperweed and its invasive potential to colonize upper wetland edges and riparian areas as well as disturbed areas and roadways. It often occurs above the high tide line at the upper edges of salt marshes and rocky pocket beaches.

Perennial pepperweed spreads both by rhizomes and by seed. Root fragments as small as 2.5 cm are able to re-sprout and grow into a multi-stemmed plant. Salt tolerant, both seeds and roots remain viable in salt water and thus may be dispersed by tidal currents, as well as by animals, humans or vehicles.