

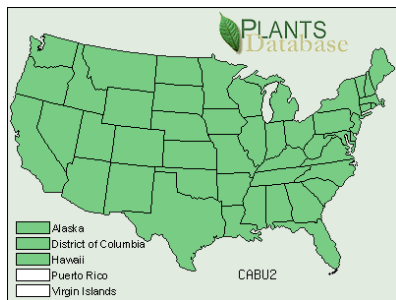


## Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (L.) Medik.

**Common Name:** shepardspurse, shepherd's-purse, shepherdspurse

**Native Origin:** Europe

**Description:** Shepherd's purse is an erect annual to biennial forb in the mustard family (*Brassicaceae*) growing 4–26 inches in height. Stems are simple to branched, with short, star-shaped hairs. Leaves are basal clustered or in a rosette, lance-shaped, broadest toward tip, 1–2.5 inches long, stalked, almost entire to pinnately lobed with larger lobe at tip. Stem leaves are smaller, alternate, stalkless and clasping, lance-shaped to oblong, mostly with shallow, sharp teeth. The small obovate to spoon-shaped flowers are white to pink in color. Flowers appear on slender spreading stalks from May to July and form round clusters that give way to elongated fruits. Fruit pods are triangular to heart-shaped, strongly flattened, and long-stalked. Each pod produces numerous minute dull orange seeds (approximately 20). The number of seeds per plant varies with habitat. Shepherd's purse reproduces entirely by seeds.



**Habitat:** It is found as a common weed growing in disturbed areas, gardens, farmland, fallow land, roadsides, trails and old homesites throughout North America. Small and light seeds are dispersed by wind, water, animals and vehicle tires. Shepherd's purse seeds require open soil and disturbance to germinate. It may establish best in drier soil and is adapted to moderate droughts, but if established in moist soils, it survives. It is found mainly on clay to sandy loam soils with pH ranging from 5.0 to 8.0.

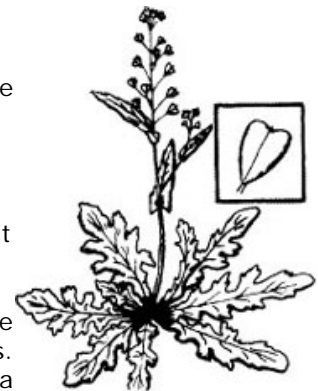
**Distribution:** This species is reported from states shaded on Plants

Database map. It is considered invasive in AZ, CA, HI, MD, NV, UT, and VA.

**Ecological Impacts:** Shepherd's purse colonizes open ground and may inhibit the establishment of native species.

### Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Plants can be easily pulled by hand in moist soils however, in drier soil, it can be difficult to pull until the inflorescence is well along.
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate. Follow label and state requirements. USDA research stated that shepherd's purse can be controlled organically with a 10 to 20% acetic acid concentration of vinegar applied in pre-seed applications for results of over 80% control.



### References:

<http://plants.usda.gov>, [www.nps.gov/plants/alien/map/eucy1.htm](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/map/eucy1.htm), [www.forestimages.org](http://www.forestimages.org), [http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/get\\_JM\\_treatment.pl?2240,2340,2341](http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/get_JM_treatment.pl?2240,2340,2341), [http://montana.plant-life.org/species/capse\\_bur.htm](http://montana.plant-life.org/species/capse_bur.htm), <http://wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/links.asp?spCode=CAPBUR>, [http://akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu/pdfs/species\\_bios\\_pdfs/Species\\_bios\\_CABU.pdf](http://akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu/pdfs/species_bios_pdfs/Species_bios_CABU.pdf), [http://www.organicmatters.ca/pdfs/sci\\_posters/OM\\_11\\_spring\\_wheat\\_broadleaf\\_weed\\_control.pdf](http://www.organicmatters.ca/pdfs/sci_posters/OM_11_spring_wheat_broadleaf_weed_control.pdf), <http://images.google.com/images?q=Shepherd%27s+Purse>