

Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)

Description

A biennial or short-lived perennial with several stems per plant. Can grow to 1 m tall or more. The upper stems are often branched. Leaves are alternate, lance shaped, to 4 cm wide and to 15 cm long. They are dark green, hairy on both sides, and have serrated edges. Lower leaves have short stems. Basal leaves will wither by flowering. Flowers can be white, lavender-pink or purple with four petals. Flowers are borne in loose clusters at tops of stems. Seed pods (resemble canola pods) are long (6-10 cm), constricted between seeds and become papery as they mature. Seeds are black, within.

Key Identifiers

- ✓ Flowers are very fragrant
- ✓ Alternate leaves
- ✓ 4 petals, white to purple in color
- ✓ Quickly form infestations through seed production

Location in Canada

Dame's Rocket is located in every southern Canadian province from BC to Newfoundland.

Resources

<http://www.invasiveplants.ab.ca/Downloads/FS-DamesRocket.pdf>

<http://ontariowildflowers.com/main/species.php?id=208>

Similar species

Garden Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) has very similar flowers but has 5 petals and opposite leaves, both characteristics differentiate it from Dame's Rocket.

