

# African Mustard (aka Sahara Mustard) Fact Sheet

*Brassica tournefortii*

Brassicaceae Family



Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org



Released by 'Stickpen', via wikipedia



Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org

## Distinguishing Features:

- ❶ **Flowers:** Dull yellow in color and inconspicuous. Individual flowers are approximately 1.5 cm in width. They are also self-pollinating, which rapidly accelerates seed production and spread.
- ❷ **Seeds:** Seeds are viable for up to 3 years.
- ❸ **Leaves:** The leaves are green and usually situated on a moderately well-developed basal rosette. The leaves also have serrated margins.
- ❹ **Flowering Time:** The seed stalk appears in early spring and grows to approximately 3 feet tall.
- ❺ **Life cycle:** African Mustard is a rapid growth annual which germinates in the fall, flowers in winter, and dies in spring.

## Impacts:

- Its ability to spread extremely rapidly allows African Mustard to outcompete most native wildflowers, decreasing biodiversity.
- African Mustard biomass greatly increases the fuel available to wildfires.
- Because it blooms early in the season (as early as December, setting seeds as early as February), African Mustard can monopolize soil moisture before native wildflowers appear.

## Control:

- Early detection and proactive management are key, as well-established infestations are extremely difficult to control.
- Small infestations of African Mustard can be effectively controlled by manually pulling and disposing in the trash.
- Chemical applications can effectively control African Mustard year-round. Care must be taken to avoid killing surrounding plants, as a healthy population of native plants can slow its spread.
- African Mustard is best treated at the beginning of its life cycle before flower bolt (late autumn).



Richard Old, XID Services, Inc., Bugwood.org

\*Please visit our website for references sourcing this information.



Salt Lake County Weed  
Control Program  
[www.slco.org/weeds/](http://www.slco.org/weeds/)  
385-468-4035  
noxiousweeds@slco.org