



# Rare Plants of New Hampshire

## Sickle-Pod

*Arabis canadensis* L.

**Mustard family** (Brassicaceae or Cruciferae)

### What Does It Look Like?

This woodland plant is a stout biennial herb. The first year plant consists of a basal rosette of leaves; second year plants have leafy flowering stems up to 1 meter (40 inches) tall. The stem is slightly hairy at base.

**Leaves:** Basal leaves are long stalked and often withered at flowering time. Upper leaves are alternate along the stem, longer than broad (with parallel sides) or lance shaped and narrowed at the base. All leaves are more or less hairy.

**Flower:** The flowers are all at the top of the plant and have petals that are 3-5 mm (0.1 inch) long, creamy white, and on slender stalks. Flowers are present from late June to mid September.

**Fruit:** The 7-11 cm (2.5-4.5 inch) long, downward-pointing pods are flat and heavily veined, somewhat curved (sickle-shaped), and spread out from the stem.

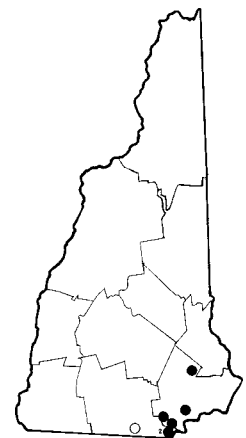
**Similar species:** Other rock cresses have ascending fruit, or stem leaves that are completely hairless and/or flared out at the base, like the base of an arrowhead. Only sickle-pod has downward pointing pods and stem leaves that are narrowed at the base.



### Where Is It Found?

**Habitat:** Across its range, sickle-pod grows in rich woods (moist or dry), often on slopes. In New Hampshire, likely natural communities include rich oak talus slopes and oak-hickory forests (usually enriched) in south and central parts of the state below 1200' elevation.

**Associated species:** Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), oaks (*Quercus* spp.), shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*), round-leaved dogwood (*Cornus rugosa*), eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), hepatica (*Hepatica americana*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), bristly sarsaparilla (*Aralia hispida*), flat-leaved sedge (*Carex platyphylla*), tick trefoils (*Desmodium* spp.).



**Sickle-Pod in New Hampshire**

○ Historic Locations

● Verified since 1980



## Rare Plants of New Hampshire

**Distribution:** Maine to Minnesota, south to Georgia and Texas.

### What Is Its Status?

#### Conservation

**status:** Populations of sicklepod are more secure farther south, but it is critically imperiled in New Hampshire where it approaches the northern edge of its range. It is state listed as threatened due to its rarity (only 6 of 7 known occurrences for the state have been confirmed since 1980).

**Management:** As a plant adapted to natural forest and woodland ecosystems, sicklepod is intolerant of completely open conditions, and may not respond well to significant canopy removals. Large alterations of natural habitats may be detrimental by increasing light and favoring species more competitive in open conditions. Single tree selection would likely have less impact than clear cutting.

### What Should You Do If You Find This Plant?

Please report sightings of this or other rare species to the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory. Documentation should include: (1) location of the sighting on USGS topographic map or road map, with written directions for relocating the plant; (2) a photo of the plant; and (3) descriptive information including how many plants there are, whether any plants are flowering or fruiting, and comments about the surrounding vegetation. Information may be sent to NHHI/DRED, PO Box 1856, Concord, NH 03302-1856. If you have any questions, please call the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory Program at (603) 271-3623.

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