



© Ken Davis

common name	Spokepod
scientific name	<i>Thysanocarpus radicans</i>
family	Brassicaceae (mustard)
habitat	grassland
size	plants up to 15 inches tall; flower 1 to 2 mm, pod 0.5 to 1.0 cm
fun facts	The common name comes from the spoke-like pattern of veins on the seed pod.

description Member of the mustard family. The tiny flowers have four petals and are white. The seed pods are flat disks hanging from delicate stems along the stalk. The pods are cream colored with green and sometimes pink lines.

Lacepod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*) is similar to Spokepod, but the pods have perforations (holes) like a doily along the edges between the spoke-like pattern of veins.

life cycle Spokepod is an annual. It blooms in early March. Most people do not notice the flowers because they are so tiny. The seed pods begin to grow in late March.

ecology Members of the mustard family usually have a bitter flavor caused by mustard oils. This helps to protect the plant from some **herbivores**. Some insects and **mammals** eat the mustard plants anyway. Broccoli is also a member of the mustard family.

investigate

The seed pods of Spokepod split in half and drop the single seed which is in the center of the pod. Can you find pods that have already dropped their seeds? Can you find any flowers?

