

# Mustard Family

Brassica, Chorispora, Descurainia, Sisymbrium, Capsella, Thlaspi, and Lepidium species

**Other Common Names:** mustard, canola, rapeseed, tansy mustard, pennycress, peppergrass, tumble mustard, crossflower, garden rocket

**Species Affected:** Horses, cattle, sheep, goats, alpacas, llamas. Pregnant and young animals are at greater risk.

**Description:** Mustards differ by species, but typically have a strong odor and/or flavor. They typically grow upright with sparse branching from a basal leaf cluster/rosette. Leaves are alternate up the stem. Flowers have four sepals and four petals in a cross (or “cruciferous” shape) and are yellow, white, purple, or blue, and they have six stamens (four long and two short). Flowers produce seedpods which are two-chambered and either long and narrow (a “silique”) or short and squat (a “silicle”).

**Growing Location:** Mustards can be found in virtually all environments, depending on the species. They are generally terrestrial, though a few species live submerged in water.

**Toxin:** Mustards’ toxic principles include glucosinolates, thiocyanates, and unknown teratogens. Their toxicity potentially may be linked to an underlying selenium deficiency. Mustards may also be nitrate accumulators under certain conditions.

**Toxic Plant Parts:** All parts are toxic, but seeds are most toxic, especially when dried in hay

**Possible Effects on Livestock:** Possible symptoms can include diarrhea, abdominal pain, vomiting, colic, drooling, oral ulcers, photosensitivity, birth defects in horses, abortion, hydrocephalus, blindness, goiters, nitrate toxicosis, confused behavior.

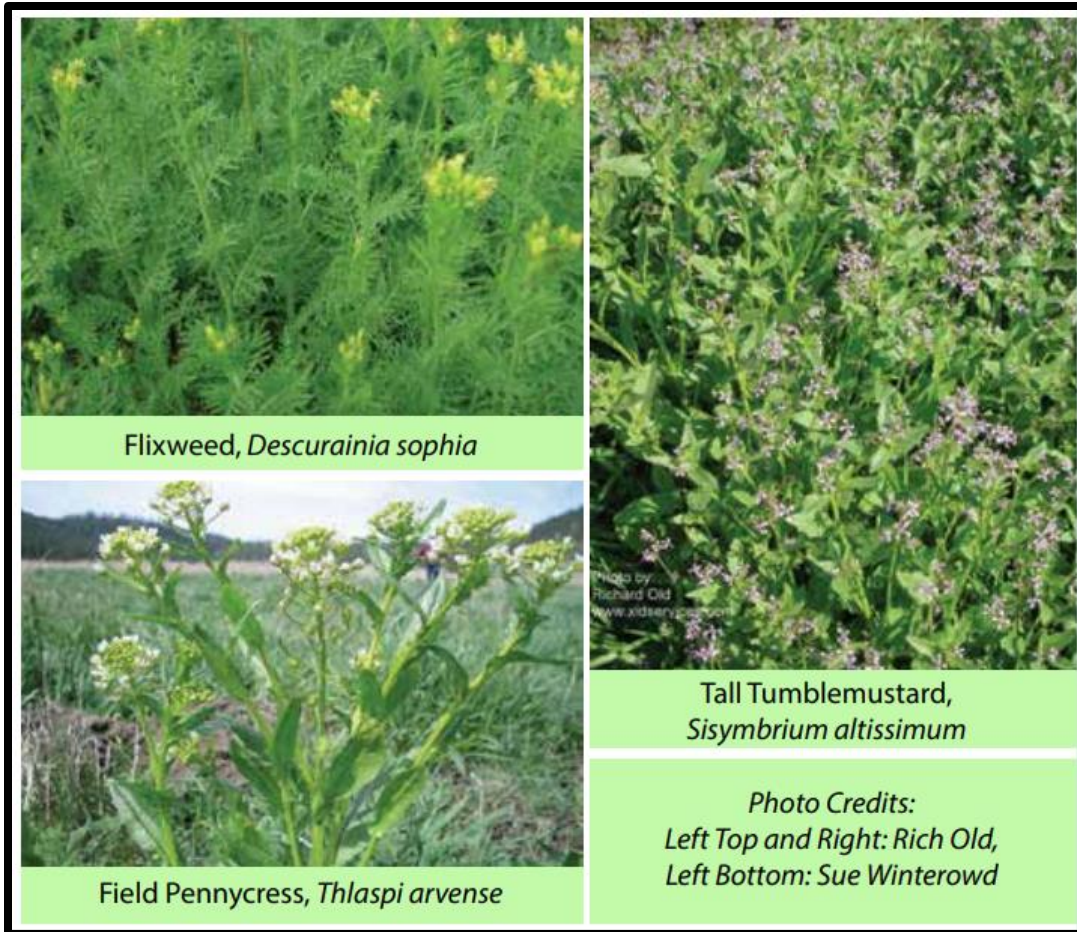
**Preventative Measures:** Avoid grazing animals in areas infested with mustards, particularly when pregnant or when other forage is unavailable. Manage pastures to encourage healthy grass growth and outcompete mustards.

*Resources:* [Guide to Poisonous Plants – College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences – Colorado State University \(colostate.edu\)](#)

[Biologically Active Compounds in Mustard Seeds: A Toxicological Perspective - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

[Brassicaceae - Wikipedia](#)

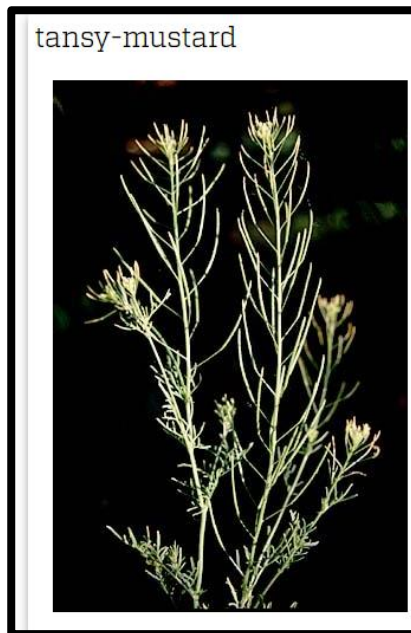
[Brassicaceae - Mustard Family \(plant-life.org\)](#)



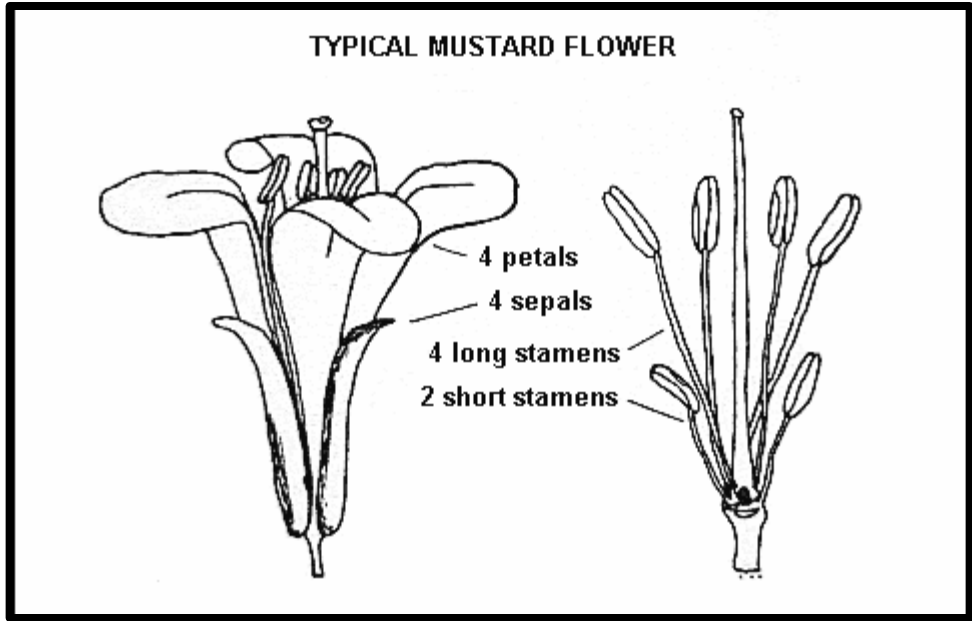
Picture source: State Noxious Weed Board publication



Picture source: Wikipedia



Picture source: Colorado State University



Picture source: [Montana.plant-life.org](http://Montana.plant-life.org)



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