

Celebrating 20 Years!

# ask

the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

## Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest. Email or mail your questions to:

[info@sprigsandtwigs.net](mailto:info@sprigsandtwigs.net) or

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Thank you Readers for Voting Sprigs & Twigs

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**Question this Week:** *We seem to have these all over our yard. They cropped up a year or two ago and we don't know what they are or how to get rid of them! When you walk through them, they spray seeds everywhere. They're roughly 6 inches tall. Please help! ...Jackie*

This has been a popular question this week from a number of readers. What you have is a weed called "Shotweed", *Cardamine hirsute*, which also goes by a number of other common names: Hairy Bittercress, Western Bittercress, Pepperweed, Popweed and Snapweed. It is a broadleaf plant that came from Europe and is a member of the mustard family that grows in almost any place its seeds happen to land. It's a cute little thing that has tiny white flowers on flower stalks that can grow up to 17" tall and blooms in March and April. But that's where the cuteness ends. Shotweed has thin, slender, 1-2" seed pods that are called siliques. The seed pods actually dry on the plant and when you brush against them or attempt to pull out the weed, they explosively burst sending seeds flying in all directions. Shotweed is considered an early germinating fall/winter annual, meaning the seeds germinate in the fall and the tiny Shotweed plants are green throughout the winter months.



The best way to remove this weed is to pull it out in the fall when you first see it, before it flowers and goes to seed in the spring. Mulching will discourage seed germination and ground covers will help hinder its proliferation. It's easy to pull out, but realistically, you'll probably never get it all. Good luck!

*Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 20 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects.*

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