



Dame's Rocket produces a cluster of purple flowers.

BCK CISMA

March 2020

SPRING CHALLENGE!

This year we were fortunate enough to have an early spring. We have said bye to the snow and are counting all the fresh flowers popping up in our gardens. You may have also started to notice some less-desirable flowers trying to take over. One of these invaders is Dame's rocket.

Dame's rocket is a short-lived perennial brought over from Europe in wildflower mixes. In the winter its leaves stay close to the ground, but during its growing season it can reach heights or three feet tall.

Dame's rocket's narrowly pointed leaves have toothed edges and alternate on the stem. Its pink, purple or white flowers are made up of four petals and arranged in round clusters. Typically, Dame's rocket is in bloom between mid-May to July. Once the flowers die, long cylindrical seeds pods form in their place. Throughout the year, Dame's rocket can also be identified by its clove-like smell.

Although Dame's rocket prefers wet soils, you can find it invading in many disturbed areas. The most common areas include roadsides, woodlands, wetlands and old fields. With a single plant producing 20,000 seeds, Dame's rocket will quickly outcompete the

native species and form a monoculture.

You can manage Dame's rocket by pulling it, which is best done during flowering, before it sets seed. Typically, that will be in early June. It is important to get the whole root, so it does not re-sprout. Pull the stem from the base, where it meets the soil, with constant firm pressure. After pulling, place the Dame's rocket in a thick black plastic trash bag marked "invasive species". Set the bag in the sun to sterilize the plants prior to disposal. After a week or so, the bag can be sent to the landfill.

Weigh and track of how many pounds of invasives you pull this year! Then, see how you rank against others in the Stewardship Network's annual Spring Invasive Species Challenge by visiting <https://spring.stewardshipnetwork.org>

Dame's rocket is commonly mistaken for many species of phlox. It is important to verify the plant of concern is Dame's rocket before taking further action.

BCK CISMA this month in numbers

- 5** acres surveyed
- 4** canceled events
- 0** impressions
- 12** passive outreach efforts
- 200** impressions
- 2** publications with articles
- 30,000** impressions

Meeting Updates

The next BCK CISMA Meeting is Wednesday, April 29th from 1-3pm at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary Auditorium.

Shoreline Symposium

Friday, April 24th

New Date to be Determined
@ Paw Paw District Library



Dame's Rocket produces seed pods after flowers have died

BCK CISMA is dedicated to combating the threat of invasive species in Barry, Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties. If you have invasive species concerns within those counties, please contact Fallon Januska at fallon.januska@macd.org or 269-908-4136.



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BCKCISMA
Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area