

The biology and non-chemical control of Sticky Mouse-ear (*Cerastium glomeratum* Thuill.)

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Sticky mouse-ear

(*C. viscosum*)

***Cerastium glomeratum* Thuill.**

Occurrence

Sticky mouse-ear is a native annual or overwintering plant found in open places in natural and artificial habitats (Clapham *et al.*, 1987; Stace, 1997). It is common on cultivated ground throughout the UK. It occurs in waste places, on walls, banks and sand dunes. It is recorded up to 1,600 ft in Britain (Salisbury, 1961).

Biology

Sticky mouse-ear flowers from April to September and is automatically self-pollinated (Clapham *et al.*, 1987). There may be 16,500 seeds per plant but in a winter cereal crop this is reduced to 3,000 seeds (Clarke *et al.*, 1995).

A few of the seeds sown in a 75 mm layer of soil in open cylinders in the field and stirred periodically emerged soon after sowing in autumn (Roberts, 1986). In the following year the seedlings emerged from April to November with the main emergence period from August to October. A decreasing number of seedlings emerged in subsequent years and viable seeds still remained after 5 years.

The seedlings are frost tolerant (Salisbury, 1962).

Persistence and Spread

Sticky mouse-ear seeds persisted for more than 5 years in cultivated soil (Roberts, 1986).

There is no obvious dispersal mechanism but the wind can blow seed across the soil surface after shedding.

Management

Sticky mouse-ear seedlings are controlled by hoeing and other surface cultivations.

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