

White campion (white cockle)

Silene latifolia Poir.

Life cycle: Annual, biennial or short-lived perennial.

Leaves: Seedling leaves initially develop from a basal rosette. Basal leaves are attached to the stem by petioles; stem leaves are without petioles. Leaves are opposite, softly hairy with a grayish tinge, and lance-shaped to oval with a pointed tip and smooth to slightly wavy leaf margins.

Stems: Soft, hairy stems are erect or semierect at maturity, and up to 3 feet tall. Stems have swollen nodes and often branch at the base.

Flowers and fruit: Male and female flowers are produced on separate plants. Flowers have five showy, white petals, each with a deep V-shaped notch at the tip. Just below the petals are fused and inflated sepals that create a balloonlike appearance. Fruit are light brown, vase-shaped capsules with 10 teeth at the open end. Each capsule contains numerous brown to gray, kidney-shaped seeds.

Reproduction: Seeds and root fragmentation.



White campion rosette.



Opposite leaves of white campion.

White campion (white cockle) *continued...*



Balloonlike sepals of white campion.

Deeply notched petals of white campion.



All photos this page: Steven A. Gower



Bladder campion flower.

Similar weeds

Bladder campion [*S. vulgaris* (Moench) Garcke]. Differs by having a strong perennial nature, hairless stems and leaves, and globe-shaped fruiting capsules.

Nightflowering catchfly (*S. noctiflora* L.). Differs by having an annual habit, sticky hairs on the stems and leaves, flowers containing both male and female organs, and fruiting capsules with six teeth at the open end.