

Stoneseed or gromwell

*Lithospermum
latifolium*
(L.) Schott



Stoneseed, or American gromwell, is an interesting-looking plant in the *Boraginaceae* family. It is native to the eastern United States and Canada, extending into the eastern part of the Great Plains. It prefers open shade to partial shade, usually growing about two feet tall. It is in the same genus as the hoary puccoon, *Lithospermum canescens*, but is not as showy. What gives this plant a somewhat striking appearance from afar is the distinctive branching pattern. The small yellow flowers are attractive but often overlooked, and they are followed by hard white seeds. This is not a common species in most places, and several states list it as a rare plant or plant at risk. It is hardy through at least zone 3.

Cultivation

This plant is not difficult to cultivate once established. Avoid placing it where the soil is either waterlogged or subject to prolonged drought.

Propagation

The seed of this plant has a reputation for being difficult to germinate. Be sure to stratify the seed for a lengthy period of time in cold temperatures. This can be accomplished by direct sowing of the seed in fall or early winter, or by cold storage in a moist medium. If the latter method is used, allow 90 days of stratification, alternating at least twice between freezer and refrigerator.

Conservation Seed
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