

CAPPARACEAE – CAPER FAMILY

Plant: herbs, shrubs and trees and rarely woody vines

Stem:

Root:

Leaves: simple or palmate, alternate; small stipules usually present

Flowers: bisexual or unisexual; radially or bilaterally symmetrical; 4 sepals (up to 8); 4 petals (or none to many), often 2 larger than others; 4 stamens (or more); ovary superior, pistil often elevated; 2 carpels (or 4), 1-chambered ovary

Fruit: usually a capsule, sometimes a berry or a nut; seeds reniform (kidney-shaped)

Other: family not well defined at this time; most common in tropics but some occur in warmer temperate areas (some put *Polanisia* and *Cleome* in the Cleomaceae family); Dicotyledons Group

Genera: 24+/- genera; locally *Polanisia* (clammyweed), *Cleome* (spider flower)

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Spider Flower [Pink Queen]; *Cleome hassleriana* Chod. (Introduced)
Redwhisker Clammyweed; *Polanisia dodecandra* (L.) DC. (Introduced)

Spider Flower [Pink Queen]

Cleome hassleriana Chod. (Introduced)

Capparaceae (Caper Family)

Mackinac Island, Mackinac County, Michigan

Notes: 4-petaled flower on slender stalks, white to pink, stamens very long;
leaves mostly palmate with 5-7 leaflets; stem with sticky hairs; garden
escapee; mid to late summer

[V Max Brown, 2008]



Redwhisker

Clammyweed



Polanisia dodecandra (L.) DC.

(Introduced)

Capparaceae (Caper Family)

Maumee Bay State Park, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: 4-petaled flower, white to pink, narrowed at base, notched at top; stamens purplish to red; leaves with 3 leaflets, entire; fruit a pea-like pod; plant hairy; common on shores; bad odor; summer to fall (subspecies present)

[V Max Brown, 2006]

