

FIELD MUSTARD

Brassica rapa



This is the showy mustard with the large clusters of small yellow flowers that brighten our fields in early spring. The plant is erect and sparingly branched, 1 to 6 feet tall. Large, edible leaves grow near the base of the plant. The slender upper branches have few small leaves, often lending the impression, when viewed from a distance, that the flowers are floating in the air.

As the flowers grow upward on the stem, they leave thin linear seed pods. Oily seeds of this plant are often fed to caged birds. Songbirds and game birds feed upon them in the wild.

Information excerpted from *The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region: A Field Guide to Plants, Birds, Mammals, Insects, Fish, Reptiles and Amphibians*, Page 32. Co-edited by Jo Smith and Peter J. Hayes. Copyright © 2004. American River Natural History Association