

Buttercups

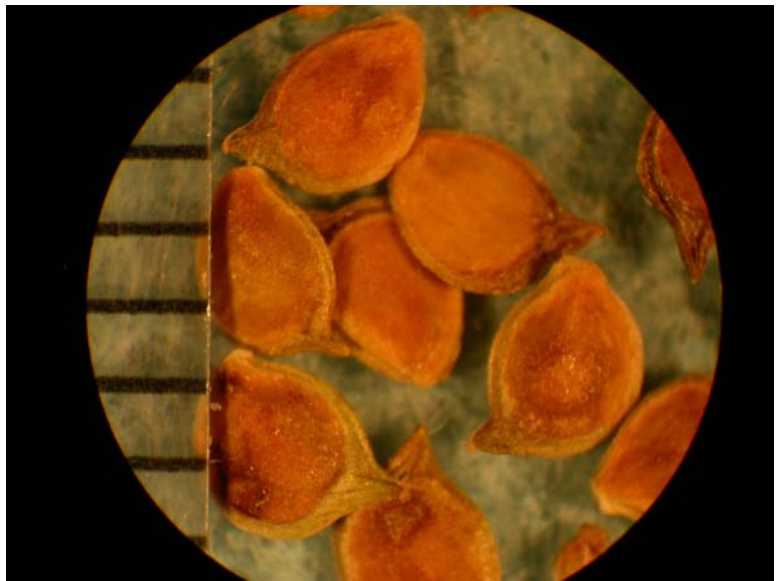




There are several species of buttercups that commonly occur in Missouri. Depending upon species, some behave as winter annuals while others, such as bulbous buttercup, are perennials. Leaves are generally 3-parted in the basal rosette portion of the plant (left) in some species, giving it a "crowfoot" appearance. In others (center and right), leaves are not lobed. In the upper portions of the plant, leaves are deeply cut (left).



Flower. Flowers are yellow with 5 to 7 petals.



Seed. Seed of bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) are reddish-brown with a yellow margin. Each seed has a hook-like protrusion.

Life cycle: perennial or winter annual, dependent upon species.

Toxic Plant: buttercups contain a toxic substance, ranunculin, that is toxic to livestock; however, animals generally avoid grazing buttercups. Ranunculin volatilizes during the hay drying process and is therefore not a problem with feeding dry hay to animals. Symptoms include oral and gastrointestinal irritation such as salivation, abdominal pain, and diarrhea which may be bloody.