



Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia escula*)



Leafy Spurge	
General	<p>Family: Euphorbiaceae</p> <p>Native Range: Europe and Asia</p> <p>Deep rooted, long lived perennial</p> <p>Extremely difficult to control</p> <p>Has plant toxins that may displace other plants</p>
Habitat	<p>Found in disturbed sites, meadows, pastures, abandoned fields, roadside areas. Prefers dry locations but can tolerate moisture. Will grow in many soil types.</p> <p>Displaces native vegetation.</p> <p>Found in hot and cold climates.</p> <p>Elevation: 5000-6000 ft</p>
PLANT	
Vegetation	<p>Mature plants are 1.5-3.5 ft tall</p> <p>Contains a milky latex sap</p> <p>Grows in dense patches</p> <p>Stems are light green, hairless, turn reddish in the fall</p> <p>Shoots develop from numerous stem and root buds and from seed</p> <p>Leaves are ¼ - ½ inch wide and 1-4 inches long</p>
Roots	<p>Vertical and horizontal. Vertical roots -to depths of 26 feet.</p> <p>Horizontal roots - may grow 15 feet a year.</p> <p>Withstand periods of drought, grazing, and herbicides. Contain large food reserves.</p> <p>Plants will regrow after grazing or mechanical treatments.</p>

Flower	<p>Color: Yellowish-green Enclosed in two heart shaped bracts. Dried seed pods explode and expel seeds up to 15 feet. April to May but may continue until fall. Seeds are dispersed 4-6 weeks after flowering. Flowers produce seed 45-55 days after bolting.</p>		
Seed	<p>Can remain viable for 8 years or more Each stalk can produce 140-250 seeds</p>		
Seedling	<p>Germinate in early spring - Peak germination is in May Produces vegetative buds 10 to 12 days after germination Can produce roots 3 feet deep and spread 40 inches laterally in 4 months Rarely flowers the first year</p>		
Reproduction	<p>Seed and vegetative. Can reproduce from root fragments 1/2 inch long</p>		
CONTROL			
BIOLOGICAL	<p>Works best as part of a IPM plan (May-Aug) <i>Aphthona sp.</i> - flea beetles <i>Hyles euphorbiae</i> - Leafy spurge hawkmoth <i>Oberea erythrocephala</i> - Red-headed leafy spurge stem borer <i>Spurgia esulae</i> - Leafy spurge tip gall midge</p>		
CHEMICAL	When actively growing	Plateau Dicamba (Banvel, Veteran) Tordon* (Restricted Use) Glyphosate - Spot treatment only (RoundUp, Rodeo)	Spring or Fall
CULTURAL	<p>Prevention Intensive tilling. Promotion of healthy grass. Reseeding. Removal - Not effective unless within the first year of growth and prior to seed formation.</p>		
MECHANICAL			
Burning	<p>Ineffective if used alone. May provide uniform regrowth for more effective herbicide treatment. May allow grasses to germinate and provide competition.</p>		
Grazing	<p>Goats and sheep - Short term intensive grazing is most successful. Must be repeated as plants regrow. Cattle will not graze. Causes lesions around the eyes and mouth. Is a digestive tract irritant.</p>		
Mowing	<p>Ineffective if used alone. May provide regrowth for more effective herbicide treatment. May allow grasses to germinate and provide competition.</p>		
Other Info	<p>www.ext.colostate.edu/PUBS/NATRES/03107.pdf www.team.ars.usda.gov/</p>		
<p>Use all chemicals according to the manufacturer's label. No specific recommendation or endorsement is made or implied by listing the above methods or products.</p>			