



Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia escula*)



Leafy spurge	
General	Family: Spurge (Euphorbiaceae) Native to Europe and Asia Colorado List B - Control required
Habitat	Deep rooted, long lived perennial Very invasive. Extremely difficult to control Has plant toxins that may displace other plants Found in disturbed sites, meadows, pastures, abandoned fields, roadside areas. Prefers dry locations but can tolerate moisture. Will grow in many soil types
PLANT	
Vegetation	Mature plants are 1½-3½ feet tall Contains a milky latex sap Grows in dense patches Stems are light green, hairless, turn reddish in the fall Shoots develop from numerous stem and root buds and from seed Leaves are ¼ - ½ inch wide and 1-4 inches long Plants will regrow after grazing or mechanical treatments
Roots	Vertical and horizontal. Vertical roots to 26 feet deep. Horizontal roots - may grow 15 feet a year Withstands periods of drought, grazing, and herbicides. Contain large food reserves.
Flower	April - May but may continue until fall Yellowish-green Enclosed in two heart shaped bracts Dried seed pods explode and expel seeds up to 15 feet Seeds are dispersed 4-6 weeks after flowering. Flowers produce seed 45-55 days after bolting
Seed	Each stalk can produce 140-250 seeds. Can remain viable for 8 years or more

Seedling	Germinate in early spring - Peak germination is in May Produces vegetative buds 10 - 12 days after germination Can produce roots 3 feet deep and spread 40 inches laterally in 4 months Rarely flowers the first year
Reproduction	Seed Vegetative - Can reproduce from root fragments 1/2 inch long

CONTROL			
BIOLOGICAL	<i>Works best as part of a IPM plan (May-Aug)</i> <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		
CHEMICAL	<i>Stage</i>	<i>Herbicide</i>	<i>Timing</i>
	When actively growing	Aminocyclopyrachlor + chlorsulfuron (Perspective) Dicamba (Banvel, Veteran) Glyphosate - Spot treatment only (RoundUp, many) Imazapic (Plateau) Picloram (Tordon - <i>Restricted Use</i>) Quinclorac (Paramount)	Spring or Fall
CULTURAL	Prevention Promotion of healthy grass Reseeding Removal - Not effective unless within the first year of growth and prior to seed formation		
MECHANICAL	<i>Stage</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Timing</i>
Burning		Ineffective if used alone. May provide uniform regrowth for more effective herbicide treatment. May allow grasses to germinate and provide competition.	
Grazing	Actively growing	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.	Spring - Summer
Mowing	Prior to seed set	Mow every 3-4 weeks. Works best when combined with fall herbicide treatments.	Mow monthly May-Aug

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.

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