LEAFY SPURGE (*Euphorbia virgata)*

Family: Euphorbiaceae (Spurge)	Life Cycle: Perennial
Class: B - Control Required	AKA: N/A

LEAFY SPURGE

- Spreads vigorously via root system, forming dense monoculture
- Exudes milky sap when broken
- Toxic to cattle and horses
- Biological control agents (insects) in use
- Native to southern Europe

CONTROL METHODS

Mechanical: Mowing will reduce seed production, but not the spreading via roots. Frequent tilling can be effective. Always clean equipment thoroughly before removing from infested area to prevent spreading to new sites.

Cultural: Promoting healthy plant communities and reducing soil disturbance can help prevent invasions. Goats and sheep have been used in targeted grazing efforts. Grazing must be intensive and repeated for multiple seasons.

Biological: Leafy spurge flea beetles (*Apthona spp.*) and stemborers (*Oberea spp.*) have been released in Spokane County. They take several years to become established, and site conditions must be favorable. They have been effective at reducing spurge infestations in other states.

Chemical*: Most effective on young growing plants. Use a surfactant. See table below.

DESCRIPTION

Growth Traits: Perennial with extensive, rapidly spreading, root system. Plants begin growing from root crown in spring before competitors. When broken, stems, roots and leaves exude milky skin-irritating sap.

Leaves and Stems: Leaves are narrow, alternate, with smooth edges. Leaves near the flowers are heart-shaped and yellow-green, turning orange to red in the fall after the first frost. Stems are upright, growing up to three feet tall and branching near the tips.

Flowers: Blooms June - July, Flowers appear in clusters of many female and male flowers on the tips of branches. Greenish, with yellow bracts at the base of the flower. Bracts may look like petals from a distance.

Roots and Reproduction: Taproots may extend over twenty feet deep, plus a network of spreading roots create extensive reserves for future growth. Reproduces by seed, from root crown, and root buds. Seeds form in a capsule that pops open when dry, shooting seeds several feet away from the parent plant.

Habitat: Can adapt to a wide range of habitats, spreading quickly where there is little competition or soil disturbance leaves open ground. Habitats include cropland, rangeland, roadsides and pastures.

Toxicity: Toxic to cattle and horses, but sheep and goats may consume in quantity. Milky sap is a skin irritant in humans; avoid direct skin contact and protect eyes from sap.

***ALWAYS read herbicide labels and follow instructions for use and PPE.** The use of a surfactant (aka sticker) increases the efficacy of herbicide application, saving you time and money. If treating over multiple seasons, rotate using herbicides with different modes of action to reduce likelihood of herbicide resistance developing. Below are recommended herbicides based on stage of growth and time of year. All recommendations are supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Noxious Weed Board is implied. Trade names are used to simplify recommendations.

NOTE: There is no 'magic bullet' in noxious weed control, and control efforts must be repeated every season to stop their spread. Using a combination of methods (e.g. cultural and chemical) will lead to better control over time.

April - May Rosette, Seedling Stage	**June - July** Bolting, Bud, Bloom Stage	**August - October** Seeding, Fall Regrowth Stage
2,4-D	Tordon + 2,4-D	Tordon + 2,4-D
Banvel	Banvel	Method + Telar
Range Star	Method + Telar	Plateau + Hasten oil *(12 oz/ac applied in September)*
Prescott		
Tordon + 2,4-D		