

LEAFY SPURGE

Euphorbia esula

Leafy Spurge is considered among the most ‘unwanted’ invasive plant in BC. It is a unique competitive plant because it produces a compound that actively inhibits the growth of other plants nearby. It spreads quickly with an extensive root system and the seed capsules open explosively, dispersing seed up to 5 m (16ft) from the parent plant. It has clusters of petite, yellowish-green flowers supported by distinctive heart-shaped leaves just below the flowers. It is a bushy plant that grows to 1 m (3ft) tall with narrow leaves that spiral around the stem.

HOW TO REMOVE:

- Wear proper clothing. It is important to cover up before removing leafy spurge. The entire plant contains white, milky latex that can irritate the skin of humans resulting in blisters and swelling. Durable gloves, long sleeves, long pants and proper shoes are recommended.
- Digging or hand pulling is impractical and ineffective unless in a small patch. If you use this method, remove the plant before it reaches 5 cm (2ins) in height and dig up the entire root.
- Multi-species continuous grazing by sheep and goats will give the quickest reduction. The repetitive nature of the grazing eventually kills leafy spurge. The animals may graze it as a portion of their diet without suffering any health issues.
- If timed properly, mowing can be used to prevent leafy spurge from seeding. Repeat mowing every 2-4 weeks and only during the early flowering stage. Avoid mowing during July/August.
- Place in heavy trash bags until rotted and then burn when and where permitted or transport to a proper green waste disposal facility. DO NOT COMPOST fresh cut green plants or roots. Disposal facilities: Pender Harbour Transfer Station, Sechelt Landfill.
- Alternative plants: Broad Leaf Stonecrop, Common Rockrose, Red Hot Poker, Yellow Ice Plant.
- Additional info: <http://bcinvasives.ca/invasive-species/identify/invasive-plants/leafy-spurge>



www.penderharbourwildlife.com