

LEAFY SPURGE

Euphorbia esula



Photo by Terry Glase

Mature Height	2 1/2 to 3 feet.	Soil Type	Moist to dry
Mature Spread	Large Colonies	Flower Color	Greenish— Yellow
Mature Form	Erect stems	Foliage Color	Green
Growth Rate	Rapid	Fall Color	Green till late fall
Sun Exposure	Prefers full sun		
Soil Moisture	Tolerate very dry conditions		

Leafy Spurge is a highly invasive plant in Western Range country but has been found in Marion and Vermillion Counties in the West Central Indiana CWMA. It is a native plant of western and southern Europe and is an erect, branching, perennial herb 2 to 3 1/2 feet tall.. The plant has a taproot that extends several feet underground. The small greenish flowers grow inside large showy yellow bracts. Leafy Spurge displaces native plants and with aid of chemicals it secretes preventing the growth of other plants and can overtake large areas of open land. It tolerates moist to dry conditions but is most aggressive in dry conditions where it saps moisture away from native plants. It reproduces rapidly from seed and its extensive underground root system. It is capable of invading disturbed sites including prairies, savannas, roadsides, streambanks, pastures and abandoned fields. Because of its ability to regenerate from pieces of roots, its deep root system, its extensive seed production and the long term viability of seed in the soil (up to seven years), leafy spurge is very difficult to control.. Six natural enemies of the plant from its native Europe are proving to be successful in the US. Several systemic herbicides are effective when applied during flowering and seed set or early fall when nutrients are moving downward. Multiple treatments are necessary every year and for several years in a row. Missing a year of treatment results in rapid recovery.



University of Idaho



Minnesota Wildflowers—K. Chayka

National Park Service Photo

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This fact sheet was developed by the West Central Indiana Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) with funding by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. The CWMA consists of 27 western and central Indiana counties and strives to help land users identify and control invasive terrestrial plants through workshops, field days and other educational activities.

