

Myrtle spurge

Euphorbia myrsinites

Spurge Family

Key identifying traits

- ❑ Fleshy, blue-green leaves form tight spirals around spreading, prostrate stems
- ❑ Bright yellow-green, showy bracts surround inconspicuous flowers in early spring
- ❑ Stems branch out from a central taproot, growing up to 18" long; plant height is only 4-6"
- ❑ White, milky sap (latex) is found when any part of the plant is broken



Biology and ecology

- A herbaceous perennial reproducing primarily and readily from seed; it has been noted that roots broken by cultivation can form new plants
- The latex is toxic and may cause severe dermatitis, burns and/or blisters in sensitive people
- This plant is a native to the Mediterranean region and was introduced to the US as an ornamental
- Prefers dry, well-drained soils in part to full sun; it is a popular rock garden ornamental
- Other names: donkey-tail and creeping spurge



Control

Prevention - Learn to identify plants; choose alternate plants for landscaping; do not allow ornamentals to escape

Biological - No known biological control

Cultural - Keeping desirable vegetation healthy and thick will help keep invaders out; don't let plants go to seed

Mechanical - Pulling/digging small patches can work; important to get the root; wear protective clothing

Chemical - Due to the waxy cuticle, must use an appropriate surfactant with the chosen herbicide; 2,4-D, dicamba and glyphosate should be effective



Where found - No "wild/escaped" sites are known to be in Stevens County at this time, but it has been seen in many ornamental landscapes.