



LEAFY SPURGE

Euphorbia esula
Origin: Eurasia

INVASIVE RANKING, NYS

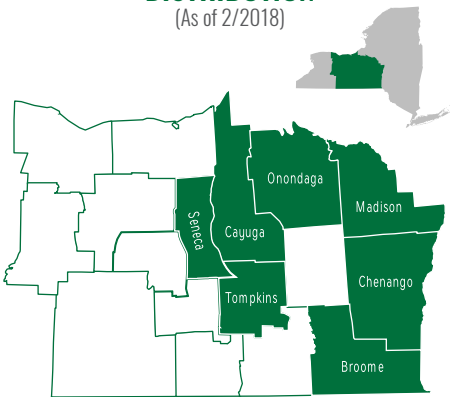
High

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Chemical
Mechanical
Biocontrol
Prevention

DISTRIBUTION

(As of 2/2018)



www.fingerlakesinvasives.org

Leafy spurge is a deep-rooted perennial. It propagates by seed and extensive roots, which can grow as deep as 9 m. Smooth, pale green stems grow up to 1 m tall in thick clusters. Narrow, linear leaves are alternately arranged and 2-10 cm long. Small, yellow-green flowers are enclosed by visible yellowish-green, heart-shaped bracts. The entire plant contains white, milky sap that can damage eyes and sensitive skin.

HABITAT

Leafy spurge is found in a wide variety of habitats, ranging from streambanks to dry, upland sites. It can invade disturbed and undisturbed areas, including roadsides, woodlands, riparian zones, grasslands, mountain ridges, and land used for agriculture.

THREAT

Leafy spurge can displace native vegetation, is toxic to cattle and horses, and can damage skin. It can be difficult to control once it has established in an area.

MANAGEMENT

Hand pulling this plant is not a viable option due to its extensive root system. Mowing will reduce seed production if repeated every two to four weeks during the growing season. Herbicides alone have limited effectiveness because of a waxy layer on the leaves and stems. They are most effective during the fall, after flowering. Some biological controls are available in areas where this species has invaded and can be effective, especially when combined with herbicide treatment and/or grazing by sheep or goats.

REFERENCE - Leafy spurge Identification and Management. 2015. Colorado State University. <https://www.colorado.gov/agconservation/Factsheets/LeafySpurgeFactSheet.pdf>
USDA, NRCS. 2010. The PLANTS Database. National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA, USA. <https://www.invasive.org/browse/subinfo.cfm?sub=3405>. June 12, 2017.



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