

Eggleaf Spurge

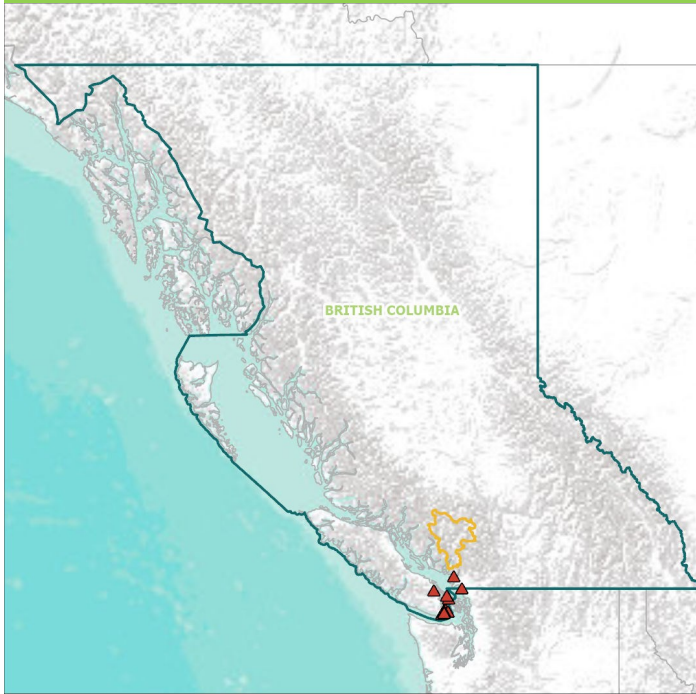
Euphorbia oblongata

(AKA Oblong spurge, Balkan spurge)

FACT SHEET

Squamish: Prevent | Whistler: Prevent | Pemberton: Prevent

DISTRIBUTION



Origin: Eggleaf Spurge is native to Turkey and Southeast Europe. It was introduced to North America as a garden ornamental, but it has since escaped cultivation.

Habitat: Eggleaf Spurge is drought-tolerant, though it grows best in moist conditions. It typically grows in damp meadows, streambanks, shady woodlands, dry hillsides or waste areas.

Reproduction: Eggleaf Spurge reproduces both by seed and vegetatively. Its root crown can produce new stems, roots and buds.

IDENTIFICATION



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Eggleaf Spurge is a perennial herb in the spurge (euphorbiaceae) family.

Flowers: Yellow bracts with a whorl of green leaves underneath. There are several male flowers and one female flower which grow in clusters at the end of stems.

Leaves: Are about 6 cm long, smooth, egg-shaped and finely toothed. The leaves have a prominent midvein, and are green to yellow-green.

Stems: Eggleaf Spurge grows up to 1 m tall and can produce up to 20 stems. The stems are covered in fine white hairs, and turn red as the plant matures (July to October)

Roots: Woody, branched and large taproot.

Fruits: Seed pods are three-lobed capsules, which are green and sticky. They will eject the seeds when ripe.

Seeds: 2.5 mm long, brown, smooth and shiny.

Similar Species:

Invasive:

Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) has narrow, waxy leaves and its flowers are supported by two leaf like bracts.

Cypress Spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*) has short, narrow leaves and does not grow as tall as Eggleaf Spurge.

Vectors of Spread: Eggleaf Spurge seedpods will eject their seeds when ripe. The seeds are covered in a tacky substance that helps them stick onto clothing, pets, equipment and vehicles. The seeds are spread mainly by wildlife, humans and machinery. Eggleaf Spurge is also sometimes sold as an ornamental, despite being designated as a provincially noxious weed on the *BC Weed Control Act*.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Eggleaf Spurge is not yet found in communities the Sea to Sky Region, so PREVENTION of further spread is key:

- Regularly monitor properties for weed infestations.
- Ensure soil and gravel are uncontaminated before transport.
- Don't unload, park, or store equipment or vehicles in infested areas; remove plant material from any equipment, vehicles, or clothing used in such areas and wash equipment and vehicles at designated cleaning sites before leaving infested areas.
- Minimize soil disturbances (e.g. use grazing plans that prevent soil exposure from overgrazing), and use seed mixes with dense, early colonization (e.g. alfalfa or barley) to re-vegetate exposed soil and resist invasion.
- Ensure plants (particularly flowering heads or root fragments) are bagged or covered to prevent spread during transport to designated disposal sites (e.g. landfill). **Do NOT compost.**

This is a high-priority invasive species for the Province of BC, and it is included in the Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) program.

If you suspect you have found Eggleaf Spurge anywhere in the Sea to Sky region:

Please report it to the Provincial government (gov.bc.ca/invasivespecies) or to SSISC (ssisc.ca/report)

IMPACTS

San Juan County NWCB

Ecological:

- Outcompetes native species.
- Depletes available water and nutrients, limiting resources for native species and inhibiting the growth of nearby plants.
- Eggleaf Spurge is inedible for native animals in BC, therefore reducing food source available for wildlife.

Health:

- Contains a milky sap that is toxic to humans and livestock.



G.D. Carr



San Juan County NWCB



NPS

References: BC Government, Frasier Valley Invasive Species Society, Jepson herbarium at UC Berkeley, Pierce County Weed Board, San Juan County Noxious Weed Control Board, Washing State Noxious Weed Control Board.

Updated December 2023