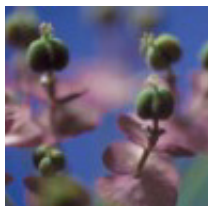
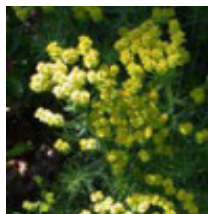


# Cypress Spurge

Colorado Dept. of  
Agriculture,  
Conservation  
Services Division  
700 Kipling Street  
Suite 4000  
Lakewood, CO 80215  
303-239-4100



## Key ID Points

1. Flowers are yellowish-green in color.
2. There are many branched stems that are covered with numerous narrow leaves.

## Cypress Spurge Identification and Management



### Identification and Impacts

Cypress spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*) is a low growing perennial that overwinters as root and crown tissue. Cypress spurge reproduces by seed and lateral root buds. Leaves are linear, approximately 1/2 to 1 1/4 inches long and 1 to 2 mm wide. Upper stem leaves that occur near the inflorescence are yellow or yellowish green in color. Leaves are stalkless, alternate, narrow, linear to lance-shaped. Stems are without hairs and green to yellowish green in color, branching in the upper portions and are 4 to 32 inches high. The leaves and stems emit a milky, toxic sap when broken. Flowers are yellowish-green usually turning reddish green towards maturity and are clustered in bunches at the ends of stems.

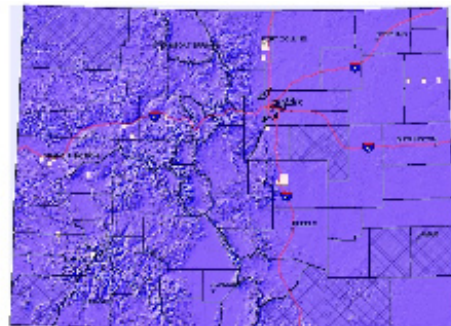
The plants milky sap is an irritant and may cause dermatitis or rashes. Although sheep may eat it, the plant is toxic to horses and cattle. Animals should not be pastured where spurges grow. Humans should be careful and avoid contacting the plant with bare skin as it can cause skin irritation for some people.

Cypress spurge is an invasive ornamental plant that is native to Eurasia. It prefers direct sunlight, but is tolerant to the shade. It commonly occurs in dry to moderately moist

meadows, pastures, forest edges, roadsides, rights-of-way, cemeteries, and gardens. Cypress spurge is popular in xeriscaping and rock gardens and generally does not occur on intensively cultivated soils. The soil seed reserve is estimated to be at least 8 years.

The key to effective control of Cypress spurge is preventing the establishment of viable plant communities. When establishment has occurred, there are different control methods to consider. Like most perennial plants, exhausting the nutrient reserves in the root system is important in controlling Cypress spurge. Using a combination of mechanical and herbicide treatments in combination can achieve eradication over time. Details on the back of this sheet can help to create a management plan compatible with your site ecology.

Cypress spurge is designated as a "List A" species in the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. It is required to be eradicated wherever found in the State. For more information visit [www.colorado.gov/ag/csd](http://www.colorado.gov/ag/csd) and click on the Noxious Weed Management Program link. Or call the State Weed Coordinator at the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, 303-239-4100.



Map of Colorado showing the distribution of Cypress Spurge. The map is color-coded by county, with red dots indicating infested areas. The legend at the bottom indicates the following: 1. Infested (Red), 2. Not Infested (Blue), 3. Not Determined (Grey), 4. Not Mapped (White). The map is titled 'CYPRESS SPURGE' and 'EUPHORBIA CYPARISSIAS'.

Clockwise, from lower left, photos: Unknown, Richard Casagrande, University of Rhode Island; Stacey Leicht, University of Connecticut; Steve Dewey, Utah State University; and Kelly Uhing, Colorado Department of Agriculture.. Map by Crystal Andrews, CDA.

*Euphorbia Cyparissias*

**CULTURAL**

Keeping desirable vegetation healthy and thick will help keep invaders out. Prevent the establishment of new infestations by minimizing disturbance and seed dispersal. Survey your land regularly to detect new invaders and eradicate any new populations quickly.

**BIOLOGICAL**

Biocontrol agents are not included in the prescribed management plans by the State for List A Species. Eradication is the management objective of all List A's. No biocontrol agent for Cypress spurge is available. For more information on biocontrol in Colorado, please contact the Palisade Insectary of the Colorado Department of Agriculture at 970-464-7916.

**MECHANICAL**

Hand pulling or digging is not a viable option when dealing with Cypress spurge. Tillage may simply encourage its spread. Handpulling or digging can be used for new, small infestations - be sure soil is moist and extract the entire root system. When handling plants be careful and wear rubber gloves and eye protection to protect yourself from the irritating milky sap.

*Integrated Weed Management:*

*Since Cypress spurge has been identified in small quantities around Colorado, preventing the populations from spreading is important in management of the weed. Using a combination of control methods proves to be the most effective way to control populations. Using mechanical and herbicide control methods together proves to be key in eradicating established infestations.*

**HERBICIDES**

**NOTE:** The following are recommendations for herbicides that can be applied to range and pasturelands. Not all products listed are for use near homes. Please read label for exact rates. **Always read, understand, and follow the label directions. The herbicide label is the LAW!**

HERBICIDE	RATE	APPLICATION TIMING
Paramount (quinclorac)	16 oz product/A + 2 pt/A methylated seed oil or crop oil concentrate	Apply at the flowering stage.
Tordon 22K	1 qt/A + 0.25% v/v non-ionic surfactant (0.25% v/v is equivalent to 1 qt per 100 gallons of total spray solution)	Apply at the flowering stage.
2,4-D + dicamba (e.g. Rangestar)	2 qt. 2,4-D (2.0 lb/ai) + 1 qt dicamba/A (1 lb ai)	Apply at the flowering stage.
Picloram (Tordon-restricted use)	2-4 pints product/acre + 0.25% v/v non-ionic surfactant	Apply in spring at full bloom, or in the fall.

Top photo, © Kelly Uhing, Colorado Department of Agriculture; Bottom photo Todd Pfeiffer Klamath County.

## Cypress Spurge

