

Please Don't Plant A Problem!

Invasive Weed to Watch for:

Oblong spurge



Oblong spurge (*Euphorbia oblongata*)

What is a Noxious Weed?

A noxious weed is a category of invasive plants. Invasive plants are not native to the area, and tend to be very aggressive by out-competing native plants for nutrients and water. By crowding out native plants, noxious weed infestations result in decreased plant diversity and decreased forage and habitat for native animals. Noxious weeds degrade fish and wildlife habitat, clog waterways, turn pastures into wastelands, disrupt forest regeneration, and overrun our forest and park areas. Although usually brought in accidentally, sometimes noxious weeds are introduced intentionally, especially when homeowners are looking for new and exotic landscaping specimens.

Did you know? Noxious weeds are the second greatest threat to species conservation -second only to land development!

Oblong spurge:

- ▶ If ingested it can be toxic to humans, horses and cattle.
- ▶ The milky sap is a strong skin irritant to some people.
- ▶ Bracts are bright yellow to green.
- ▶ Plants can reach 1 to 4 feet in height.
- ▶ Seeds can remain viable in the soil for eight years.
- ▶ Spreads with creeping, deep roots.

Oblong spurge (*Euphorbia oblongata*) aggressively displaces native vegetation in many habitats, including rangelands and riparian environments. Often thought of as an easy keeper with a pretty flower, this plant is gradually taking over natural landscapes. The "blooms" of Oblong spurge are actually specialized leaves called bracts. Bracts can be bright yellow to green. Leaves are oblong in shape and stems are covered with fine white hairs. Caution should be taken as Oblong spurge's milky white sap can be a very strong skin irritant to some people. This plant typically blooms spring/summer, but if the weather is warm enough it can bloom year round. Shoots die back with the onset of the cold season, with leaves turning reddish just before dropping. Oblong spurge reproduces by seeds and an underground root system which makes this plant extremely difficult to control. Hand pulling this weed species only encourages more growth, consequently chemical control is the best treatment method. Seeds fall near the parent plant, and some can disperse to greater distances with human activities, vehicles, heavy machinery, water, soil movement, and by clinging to shoes, clothing, tires, and feet, fur, or feathers of animals. Oblong spurge displays vigorous growth that displaces native vegetation, promotes erosion (i.e. cloudy water, lower water quality and silted spawning beds for native fish) and reduces ecological diversity in our own front yards, our parks and other recreation areas.

Oblong Spurge in your neighborhood



► Oblong Spurge seedlings are small and can easily go unnoticed.



► Oblong Spurge flowers and seed pods. Note the milky white sap at the base of the middle leaf.

Photo by Bob Case

Oblong Spurge in your neighborhood



► Oblong Spurge plant in full bloom.

Photo by Bob Case



► An unchecked Oblong Spurge population.

Invasive weeds displace native plants and destroy healthy forests and parks.

Please

Help protect our native forest and park lands from weed invasion and preserve wildlife habitats.

What You Can Do:

- Become familiar with local noxious weeds.
- Report any weed sightings.
- Do not plant invasive plants in gardens where they potentially could become a problem.
- If traveling from a weed infested area remove seeds and plant parts on clothing, pets, car/bike tires etc. before returning to an un-infested area to prevent weed spread.

To report suspected noxious invasive weeds in your area, please call:

**El Dorado/Alpine County
Agriculture Department
311 Fair Lane
Placerville, Ca
(530)621-5520**

***EVERYONE MUST DO
THEIR PART TO STOP THE
SPREAD OF NOXIOUS
WEEDS***