

KEY IDENTIFIERS



Blue-green leaves with a white milky sap.

Yellow flowers with chartreuse bracts.



Multiple flowers per stem. Plants throw their seeds up to 15 feet.

Seed pod

FACTS ABOUT MYRTLE SPURGE

- **Myrtle spurge** (*Euphorbia myrsinites*) is also known as donkeytail, creeping, or blue spurge.
- All plant parts contain a **poisonous** white milky sap that can cause serious skin irritation.
- Plants **spread** by both **seed and root** fragments.
- Myrtle spurge is **out-competing** native plant communities in our local foothills and canyons.
- Myrtle spurge is a listed noxious weed in Salt Lake County. Therefore, it is illegal to sell it in Salt Lake County. Many nurseries and growers outside of Salt Lake are choosing **not to sell** it.
- Myrtle spurge may seem beneficial because it is drought tolerant and easy to care for; However, there are much **better alternatives** that are less harmful to our environment.



PLANTING ALTERNATIVES



PLANTING ALTERNATIVES

Myrtle spurge is known by **gardeners** for its unusual flowers and its ability to survive in hard-to-garden locations. However, because of its **invasive nature and poisonous sap**, it is being dug up by many concerned gardeners.



Good alternatives to myrtle spurge include **drought-tolerant** perennials, Utah **natives**, and other commonly found ornamentals that attract **beneficial insects and wildlife**. Some good choices include:

Utah Water-wise Natives:

- Sulphur flower *Erigeron umbellatum*
- Sundance Daisy *Hymenoxys acaulis*
- Fragrant evening primrose *Oenothera caespitosa*
- Desert Four-oclock *Mirabilis multiflora*

Other natives and ornamentals:

- Penstemon *Penstemon sp.*
- Sedums (such as Hen & Chicks)
- Heterotheca villosa

RECOGNIZE THIS PLANT?



Photo: Patrick Nelson, BCWMA

MYRTLE SPURGE

is an invasive ornamental plant popular in xeriscapes and rock gardens. Not only is this noxious weed threatening our foothills and national forests, but it is also a public health threat.



DETAILS INSIDE



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Photos: Tony Frates, UNPS

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MANAGEMENT OPTIONS



Caution must be taken to avoid skin and eye irritation from contact with the plant sap. To protect yourself always wear gloves, long sleeves, and eye protection.

Manual Control

- Control small infestations by digging. Try to dig up at least 4" of the root if possible.
- Dispose of all the plant parts in the garbage instead of composting.

Chemical Control

- Apply repeatedly with 2,4-D or glyphosate (brand names include Weed-B-Gon or Roundup), in the fall for greatest effect.
- Use caution when using herbicides and always follow the label.

Which ever method you choose, manual or chemical, **be consistent for multiple years to have success.**



Photos: Tony Frates, UNPS