



*Euphorbia lathyris*

WA – Monitor List

## Moleplant

Mole Spurge, Caper Spurge, Paper Spurge, Gopher Spurge

**Family:** Euphorbiaceae

**Origins:** Native to Asia and Europe, it is believed this species was initially introduced to the United States to repel rodents, namely moles and gophers.

**Range:** Found along the east and west coasts of the United States.

**Habitat:** Commonly grows in home landscapes, waste places, roadsides, and pastures. Moleplant is drought tolerant, prefers light, well-drained soils, but can grow in a wide range of soil types, and can grow in full sun to partial shade.

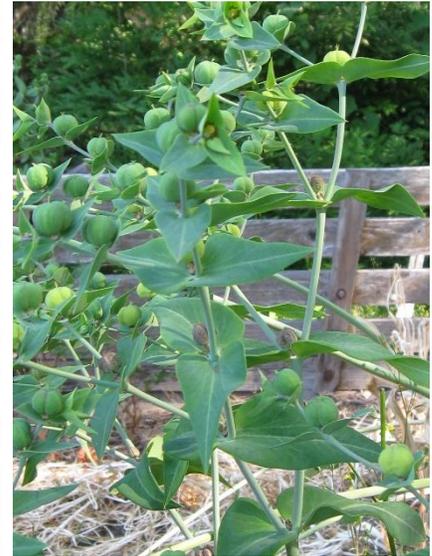
**Impact:** Moleplant has the ability to form colonies that dominate native ecosystems and limit forage species for wildlife. All parts of the plant are toxic to humans, horses, and cattle.

**Description:** Moleplant is a succulent garden annual or biennial herbaceous plant that grows up to 3 feet tall. Stems are blue-green, erect, fleshy, and exude a milky sap when cut. Leaves are in opposite pairs around the stem, lance-shaped, waxy, up to 6 inches long and 1 inch wide. Leaves also are a blue-green color with a white midrib.

At the top of the single, erect stem, many flowering branches spread up and outwards. The leaves on the flowering branches are broader than the stem leaves. Green to yellowish cup-shaped flowers are born near the tops of these branches. Flowers bloom from May to June and produce a green three-lobed seed capsule that ripens from July to August.

**Common Look-Alikes:** Leafy Spurge, Mediterranean Spurge.

*\* All parts of the plant are toxic to humans, horses, and cattle. If ingested, it can cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Goats are able to eat the plant with no ill effects, but the toxins can be passed through to their milk. Contact with the plant, especially the milky sap, can cause irritation to the skin, redness, swelling, and in some cases, severe blistering.*



## Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed's IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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## Non-Herbicide Control

<b>Mechanical</b> (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Dig 7 or more inches down in the soil, remove as much of the root system as possible. Place all plant parts in a sealed bag. <i>*Always wear proper protective equipment when handling Moleplant. All parts of the plant are toxic to humans and livestock; contact with skin may cause blistering.</i>
<b>Cultural</b>	Maintaining healthy, desirable vegetation can prevent Moleplant infestations. Do not introduce this plant to your landscape.
<b>Biological</b>	Biological agents are currently not available for Moleplant in Washington State.

## Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

<b>Glyphosate</b> (Rodeo, Killzall, Kleenup, Roundup)	<b>Timing:</b> Apply to actively growing plants before the flowering stage. <b>Remarks:</b> Spray complete uniform coverage, but not to the point of runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; Glyphosate is nonselective and may injure or kill any vegetation it contacts; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
<b>Imazapyr</b> (Imazapyr, Arsenal, Habitat)	<b>Timing:</b> Apply to actively growing plants before the flowering stage. <b>Remarks:</b> Spray complete uniform coverage, but not to the point of runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas; may be harmful to some tree species.

\* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), [nwcb.wa.gov](http://nwcb.wa.gov). Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.