

Please call 1-866-invader if you suspect you have found this species

Oblong spurge
Euphorbia oblongata

Other common names: egg leaf spurge

USDA symbol: EUOB4
ODA rating: A and T



Introduction: It is suspected that oblong spurge was introduced from California into Oregon in contaminated flax or machinery that was used at the Oregon State Penitentiary flax mill in the early part of the 1900's. Since then it has slowly expanded on the penitentiary property. It has also occasionally been used as an ornamental plant, which is where new sittings are being located.

Distribution in Oregon: Oblong spurge was first identified in Salem, Oregon in 1991 at an old flax-soaking pond and along a drainage ditch on the state penitentiary grounds. The ditch leads into the Mill Creek drainage, and several small sites have been found downstream. Two ornamental plantings have also been located.

Description: Oblong spurge is a showy Euphorbia species that has become weedy in California and to a lesser degree in Oregon. As a perennial herb it produces up to 20 stems on a woody rootstalk, attaining nearly three feet of growth, then dying back in the winter. Leaves are alternate, smooth and hairless with finely toothed margins. All plant parts exude a caustic milky sap when cut, therefore, skin contact should be avoided. Numerous bright yellowish-green bracts are produced enclosing tiny flowers at terminal tips. Seedpods have a waxy appearance, and when mature, ripened pods forcefully eject their seeds for localized dispersal.

Impacts: In western Oregon the plant thrives in moist grassy bottomlands even with significant plant competition. In other states, infestations appear to be spreading more aggressively, perhaps by establishing on drier sites with little competition. Oblong spurge has the potential to infest pastures, natural areas and sunny riparian areas in Washington and Oregon. It is well adapted to a wide range of shrub and pine forest environments also. In California it has been found associated with French broom, blackberry and in dry drainages along roadsides.

Biological controls: Biological control agents are not used on "A" listed weeds in Oregon. This weed is being targeted for eradication or containment.

