



Daphne laurel

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Spurge Laurel

Daphne, Daphne Spurge, Daphne-Laurel, Laurel-Leaved Daphne, Olive Spurge, Wood Laurel, Copse Laurel

Family: Thymelaeaceae

Origins: Native to Europe and Northern Africa, it was introduced to the Pacific Northwest as a landscape plant.

Range: Spurge Laurel has been documented west of the Cascades in Washington and Oregon and is spreading north to Canada.

Habitat: Commonly found in forest understories, Spurge Laurel tolerates a wide range of conditions but prefers full shade and well-drained soils.



Impact: Spurge Laurel can rapidly colonize, form monotypic stands, outcompete native plants, alter natural succession, and potentially change soil chemistry. All parts of the plant, especially the berries, are toxic to humans, cats, and dogs. Birds are not affected by the berries' toxicity and are among the largest culprits for spreading seeds. In addition to seeds, plants can reproduce from root sprouts.



Description: Spurge Laurel is a slow-growing, shade-tolerant, long-lived evergreen shrub growing up to 5 feet tall. Stems are upright or arching near the base before spreading upwards. Alternating leaves are abundant at branch tips appearing as a whorl. They are narrowly oval, broader above the middle, and 1 to 5 inches long. Smooth, dark green leaves are shiny on the top and lighter underneath. Young branches are green, turning to gray with a yellow hue when the bark matures. Small, inconspicuous, yellow-green flowers cluster at the base of leaves. Flowers are very fragrant and bloom from late winter to early spring. Small, poisonous berries are black, containing one seed

Common Look-Alikes: Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel.

** All parts of the plant are highly toxic to humans, cats, and dogs. Contact with the sap can cause skin irritation, while ingestion of the seeds can cause poisoning, especially in young children.*

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

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Hand pulling small infestations is effective. Larger shrubs that are too big to pull can be cut below the soil or wrenched out. Watch the area for sprouts and recut as needed. <i>* Wear gloves and other protective gear when handling Spurge Laurel to avoid exposure to toxins in the sap, stem, leaves, and fruits.</i>
Cultural	After removing the plant and roots, cover the area with a thick layer of mulch to prevent re-sprouting.
Biological	Biological agents are currently not available for Spurge Laurel in Washington State.

Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

Triclopyr +2,4-D (Crossbow, Brush Killer, Crossroad)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plant from bud to bloom stage. For best results, apply before flowering. Cut and bag any berries present before herbicidal application. Remarks: Observe all grazing and harvesting restrictions; avoid drift to sensitive crops; 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.
Imazapyr (Imazapyr, Arsenal, Habitat)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plant from bud to bloom stage. For best results, apply before flowering. Cut and bag any berries present before herbicidal application. Remarks: Spray complete uniform coverage, but not to the point of runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; do not apply near water; may be harmful to some tree species; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.

Herbicide Control: Cut Stump Treatment

Triclopyr +2,4-D (Crossbow, Brush Killer, Crossroad)	Timing: Treat actively growing plants in late winter or early spring before flowering. Remarks: Cut the trunk at the base and immediately apply concentrated herbicide to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Imazapyr (Imazapyr, Arsenal, Habitat)	Timing: Treat actively growing plants in late winter or early spring before flowering. Remarks: Cut the trunk at the base and immediately apply concentrated herbicide to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Aminopyralid (Milestone)	Timing: Treat actively growing plants in late winter or early spring before flowering. Remarks: Cut the trunk at the base and immediately apply concentrated herbicide to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas. Many desirable plants can be seriously injured or killed; do not compost plant material that has been sprayed by this product; do not use manure from fields that have been sprayed with this product; do not apply near water.
Glyphosate (Rodeo, Killzall, Kleenup, Roundup)	Timing: Treat actively growing plants in late winter or early spring before flowering. Remarks: Cut the trunk at the base and immediately apply concentrated Glyphosate to the freshly cut surface; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.

* 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. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.