

Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)



- Deep-rooted perennial with milky sap, narrow, bluish leaves and yellow-green flowers
- Habitats it invades:
 - Grasslands
 - Roadsides
- Status
 - Wisconsin: Restricted
 - Regulated in: IN, IA, MI, MN, OH





Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)

Leaves alternate, simple

- 1-3" long, narrow leaves with pointed tips
- Leaves waxy/bluish with milky sap
- Often forms large patches



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Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)

Flower/fruit

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- Flowers are very tiny, surrounded by yellowish-green, crescent-shaped glands; May-Sept.
- Below the flowers sit two rounded, yellowish bracts that resemble petals
- Fruit is a plump capsule



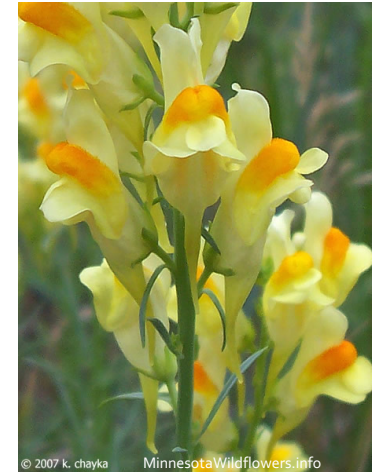
Cypress spurge and leafy spurge look alike

Cypress spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*) and leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) may be confused with other plants that have linear leaves, including butter and eggs (*Linaria vulgaris*) and whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*).



Leafy spurge (top left) and **cypress spurge** (bottom left) are characterized by **alternate, linear bluish-green leaves with milky sap and round clusters of greenish-yellow flowers**. Cypress spurge is overall smaller than leafy spurge.

Butter and eggs (N-N) has alternate linear leaves with **no milky sap**. Its **spikes of pale yellow flowers** make it easy to distinguish from cypress and leafy spurge when in bloom.



Whorled milkweed (N) has whorls of **3-6 linear leaves with milky sap**. The stem has **fine hairy lines** that extend down from the base of leaves, which sets it apart from the **hairless stems of the spurges**.



Clusters of **5-petaled white flowers** are distinct from spurge flowers.



Cypress spurge and leafy spurge

Cypress spurge (*Euphorbia cyparissias*) has leaves less than 2.5 mm wide. The floral bracts are 3-6 mm wide. The lateral branches overtop the flowers later in the season and the plants are usually less than a foot tall.



Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) has leaves 3.2-10 mm wide. The floral bracts are 8-16 mm wide or wider. The lateral branches don't overtop the flowers and the plants are taller than 1 foot.

