



TETON COUNTY WEED AND PEST DISTRICT

## Myrtle Spurge *Euphorbia myrsinites* L.

Myrtle spurge is a member of the Euphorbiaceae or spurge family and related to the notoriously invasive leafy spurge. It is a perennial that grows along the ground and the stems grow anywhere from 8-12 inches. The leaves and stems of this succulent plant have a blue grey appearance due to the presence of a very waxy cuticle. Leaves are densely arranged in an alternate pattern along the stem. The flowers appear in spring, are showy, yellow, and occur in clusters at the end of a stem. Reproduction is thought to be mainly caused by seed spread, but may spread from fragmented roots caused by disturbance. Like most spurges it contains a milky sap that can be an irritant. Myrtle spurge infestations can often be attributed to an escaped ornamental planting. This plant has been seen invading prairies in Colorado.

Myrtle spurge is a concern in Teton County due to its aggressive ability to escape ornamental plantings. This plant was cultivated for ornamental plantings in drier, rocky soils. It has since been seen to spread via exploding seed capsules to open native systems crowding native vegetation out. It has little nutrient value for wildlife and the milky latex may even be an irritant to wildlife. It has been said to be a deer resistant species which may be why it was favorable for ornamental gardens in some regions.

**If you find this weed on your property or around Teton County, please report it immediately at 733-8419.**



Flowers



Escaping Ornamental in Sedona, AZ



Escaping Ornamental in a Jackson Flower Bed