



Spotted Spurge

O & T Guide W-16

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Cooperative Extension Service College of Agriculture and Home Economics October 2006

Spotted spurge, *Euphorbia maculata*, is a native creeping annual plant that has oval-shaped leaves and reddish stems that are filled with milky sap. The sap can cause minor skin and eye irritation in humans and may be toxic to animals if ingested. It is also known as spotted sandmat, milk purslane, milk spurge, and spotted pusley.

The stems are spreading and can grow to about 20 in. long. They are reddish, often covered with long hairs, and filled with milky sap. The leaves are 0.15-0.65 in. long, oval or oblong in shape, grow opposite from each other along the stem, and are often hairy. They are green to dark green in color with a single purple or maroon spot or blotch in the center, and have toothed edges.



The flowers are found at leaf axils. The plant produces both male and female flowers. Male flowers are very small, white to pink, and bell-shaped. Female flowers consist of a three chambered, round ovary that is green to red in color, with several tiny bracts at the top; the female ovaries are often larger than the male flowers. The plant produces a taproot and reproduces through seed only.



Management:

- Physically remove plants before seed production
- Vigorous, healthy turf can compete with spotted spurge and reduce infestations
- Herbicides are effective

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