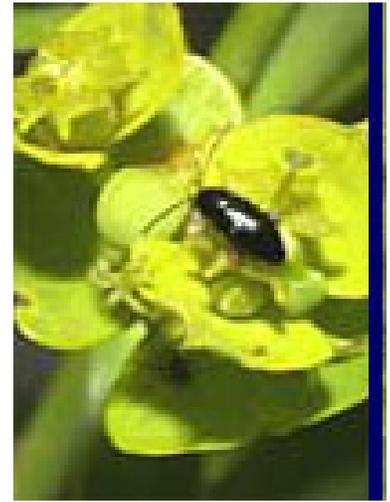


Leafy Spurge

(*Euphorbia esula* L.)



Quick Facts...

- Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula* L.) is a creeping perennial that reproduces from seed and vegetative root buds.
- It can reduce cattle carrying capacity of rangeland or pastures by 50 to 75 percent.
- Leafy spurge is difficult to control. Its extensive root system has vast nutrient stores that let it recover from control attempts.

Biological Control...

Aphthona flea beetles are very host-specific and feed only on a narrow range of hosts restricted to the spurge family. Their larvae feed on root hairs and young roots, compromising the plant's ability to take up moisture and nutrients. Adults feed on the foliage in the summer.

The Bureau of Land Management-Glasgow Field Station and the Valley County Weed District has been using biological control since the early 1990's. Since 1996, the *Aphthona lacertosa* beetle (a.k.a a black beetle) has become readily available and we have released over 10 million beetles in the last 10 years. The black beetles are very effective, the most active of the beetles and are suitable to our area. We are seeing the significant results in controlling leafy spurge in sensitive or riparian areas where herbicides are not suitable. The before and after picture below depict the success we are seeing with the beetles.

Below Hose Reservoir –T33N R37E Sec. 17

The pictures were taken below Hose Reservoir. The original pictures were taken in 1996, the initial release of the *A. Lacertosa* flea beetles. As you can see the flea beetle are controlling the leafy spurge, allowing the native grass species to compete thus return it back to its native plant community.



Below Hose Reservoir –T33N R37E Sec. 17



Ash Coulee – T33N R37E Sec. 33

This was a super release site established in 2001 (top picture). The bottom picture was taken in 2005; the beetles are starting to control the spurge in the side drainages.



Near Emery Reservoir – T33N R37E Sec. 15

Bugs were released in 2003 and have made excellent progress in a short time period. The bottom picture was taken in 2005.



Burnett Coulee - T33N R36E Sec. 1

Biological control agents were released in 2000 (top picture), the bottom picture was taken in 2005.



Cashe Creek

Several thousand beetles were released in 2000 (top picture). The bottom picture was taken in 2005.

