



## Yachats Weed of the Month - May

### Spurge laurel (*Daphne laureola*)

**Identification:** Spurge laurel is a shrub that grows up to about 4 ft in height. The upright plants have spreading limbs with thick, glossy, dark green leaves. The flowers are light green and grow in inconspicuous clusters at the base of the leaves. Flowering occurs in early spring, followed by blue to black, oval berries in early summer. Like all parts of the plant, the berries are toxic.

**Impact:** This shrub thrives in full to partial shade in the Pacific Northwest. It was once used as an ornamental, but has escaped from cultivation and established itself in local forest ecosystems. The seeds are spread by birds. If left unchecked spurge laurel can form dense stands to the exclusion of native vegetation. All parts of the plant are toxic to humans, cats and dogs. The sap can cause dermatitis. In Yachats, spurge laurel occurs mainly along the straight section of Kings Road that runs south from the cemetery. Isolated plants are found elsewhere in town.

**Management:** Be sure to wear good gloves when dealing with these plants and avoid contact with the sap. Small plants can be hand pulled. Cutting young plants at ground level will likely kill most of them. Larger plants should be pulled with a weed wrench or dug out. Be sure to remove plenty of root material, otherwise the plants will regrow. Please inform Don Niskanen (541 961 6695) or Wally (number below) if you discover spurge laurel anywhere in Yachats.

**Contact information:** Call Wally at 541 547 5474 if you have any weed questions. For our web page, go to [www.yachats.info](http://www.yachats.info)

