

Lesser Celandine

Invasive Plant Fact Sheet

DESCRIPTION

Lesser Celandine (*Lat. Ficaria verna*) is an invasive spring ephemeral that is active from March to May in Massachusetts. By June, the above-ground part of the plant is typically dormant. It rapidly spreads via underground tubers that colonise lawns and wetlands. Removal requires complete excavation of the root system.

WHY IS IT BAD?

Crowding: It crowds out native flowers.

Starves pollinators: Native bees and bugs lose their main early food sources because the weed replaces essential native plants.

Causes soil erosion: The plant dies back and disappears by early summer, leaving patches of bare dirt that easily wash away during heavy spring rains.

Hard to kill: Mowing or pulling it apart makes it spread faster because tiny underground root pieces and tubers grow into brand-new plants.

Poisonous: The raw plant contains toxins that can cause liver damage and sickness in humans and grazing farm animals.

Lesser Celandine root bulbs



DISTRIBUTION & SPREAD

Management strategies should focus on preventing the spread of underground tubers and bulbils. Control efforts are limited to the active growing season as the plant is difficult to find after dormancy.



To learn more about invasives in Medford, scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/02155Invasives>

CONTROL METHODS

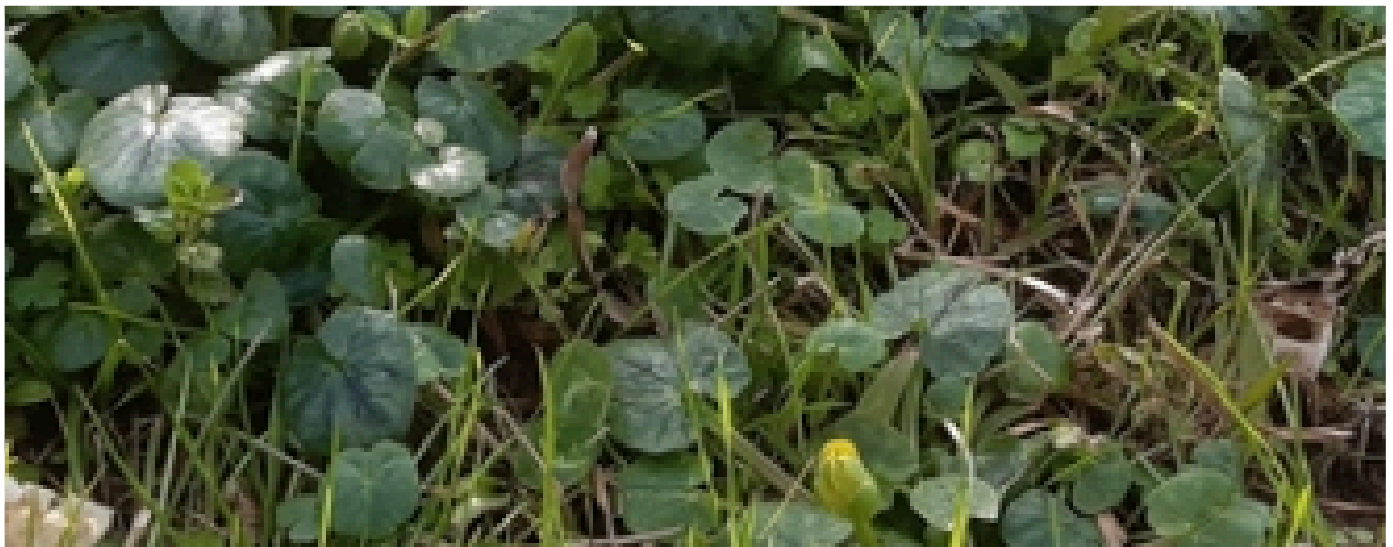
Manual Removal: Lesser celandine can be controlled by hand digging. Care must be taken to remove as much of the plant material (including all root material, bulblets, and tubers) as possible.

Mowing: Mowing is never effective at controlling Lesser Celendine.

Chemical: Carefully read the label; the label is the law. Systemic herbicides like glyphosate (most effective) or broadleaf-selective triclopyr (less effective but can be used without damaging turf grass) can be effective on heavy infestations when applied following the product label. Apply only on calm, dry days between March and April for maximum effect. Consult a professional pesticide applicator for advice or management.

PLANT DISPOSAL

Dispose of plant materials carefully. Seeds and live plant materials may be viable (meaning they could survive in municipal compost and spread). Dispose of viable material in sealed garbage bags in your municipal trash bin. Do NOT dispose of them with compost.



Keep Medford Beautiful is a community effort initiated by Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn to organize local volunteers to help clean up and beautify the city's streets and public spaces.



Learn more about the work we're doing and ways to get involved at www.medfordma.org/KMB or scan the QR code.

