

Invasive Species Management Guide

Lesser Celandine

Lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*) is an invasive herbaceous perennial plant which forms dense mats of short vegetation which cause severe disruption to the native environment. The plant spreads aggressively, completely out-competing any other spring ephemerals such as violets, trillium, bloodroot, marsh marigold, and others. Although the plants die back in late spring or early summer, the dense network of underground tubers will remain, which prevents the growth of native plants. When the plants die back, they leave the soil bare and subject to erosion. The plant has no ecological benefit. Lesser celandine reproduces by tubers, by seed, or by bulbils (which are aerial bulbs formed on the plants' stems).



If left unchecked, lesser celandine completely takes over a forest floor



Lesser celandine tubers



Lesser celandine bulbils

Control

Mechanical Control

Control of lesser celandine requires a multi-year effort. Lesser celandine should be dug out entirely. Effort should be made to remove all of the tubers along with the rest of the plant. Control should be undertaken in the spring while the plants are still flowering to prevent seeds and bulbils from forming. Plants must be bagged for disposal. Bagged plants should be left in the sun for one or two weeks to “solarize” to ensure that they die, then disposed of. The plants should not be composted.

Chemical Control

Treatment with herbicide is effective, but the timing is limited and critical. The plant should be treated in the spring before the flowers form. Treatment with glyphosate or triclopyr is effective. Consult product labeling for specific formulation recommendations.