

# Euphorbia lathyrus

## COMMON NAMES

caper spurge

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A hairless, bluish-green biennial plant growing to a height of 1 - 1.5 metres.

## GENUS

Euphorbia

## FAMILY

Euphorbiaceae

## AUTHORITY

Euphorbia lathyrus L.

## SYNONYMS

Euphorbia lathyrus L.

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

Summer months

## YEAR NATURALISED

1870

## ORIGIN

E. and C. Mediterranean but widely naturalised in Western Europe.

## POISONOUS PLANT

All species of Euphorbia are poisonous especially this which can cause blindness in people removing it by hand from the garden and then rubbing their eyes.

## ETYMOLOGY

**euphorbia**: After Euphorbus, a Greek physician who served King Juba of Numidia in 12BC. Juba named a cactus to honour Euphorbus and later Linnaeus named the entire genus after the physician.

## NVS CODE

EUPLAT



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**MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/euphorbia-lathyrus/>

**PDF DATE**

25 May 2026