

Lesser Celandine

Ranunculus ficaria

**Invasive
Plant
Alert**



Lesser Celandine - Leslie J. Mehrhoff
University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

One of the biggest threats to natural ecosystems in Saanich is the spread of invasive non-native plants. The District of Saanich appreciates the cooperation of all residents in removing Lesser Celandine from private property.

For assistance, see contacts on reverse.

**An early blooming
invasive buttercup that
forms dense mats.**



Why is Lesser Celandine a problem?

- Dense groundcover infestations eliminate native plants and impact wildlife habitat.
- This species establishes and spreads quickly through very early seasonal growth and dense networks of roots, tubers and bulblets.
- Toxic to most mammals, causing sickness in livestock and rare deaths.

Habitat and biology:

- Perennial, low growing, early spring herb.
- Flowers in late winter/early spring and seeds ripen early; dormant in summer (as soon as temperatures reach 20°C) through early winter.
- Reproduces by seed and vegetatively (except *R. ficaria bulbilifer* subspecies that does not produce viable seed); extensive roots/tubers and bulblets.
- In its native range, this species is associated with moist, deciduous forests. It can be found in a variety of locations including both disturbed and undisturbed sites, in lawns and horticultural areas and urban sites including ditches and in stream banks.

What does it look like?

- Low growing, herbaceous perennial from the buttercup family.
- Yellow flowers 2-3 cm wide with 8-12 petals. Thick, shiny, dark-green leaves; kidney or heart-shaped; stalked and densely packed.
- Double-flowered variety with many petals.

Could be confused with:

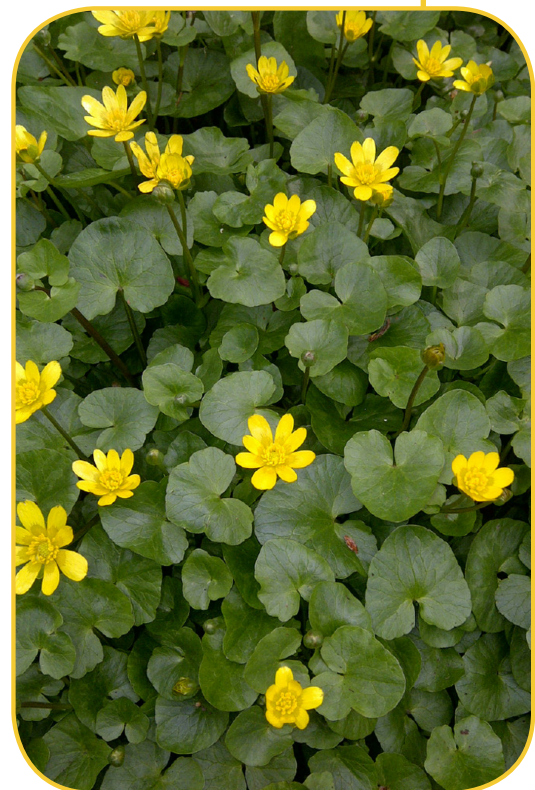
- Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris* var. *radicans*, native to BC and *C. palustris* var. *palustris*, introduced from Eastern North America), found in wetter environments.
- Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*).

Distribution:

- Native to Northern Africa, temperate Asia and most of Europe.
- Reported invasions are in limited areas of southwestern BC.



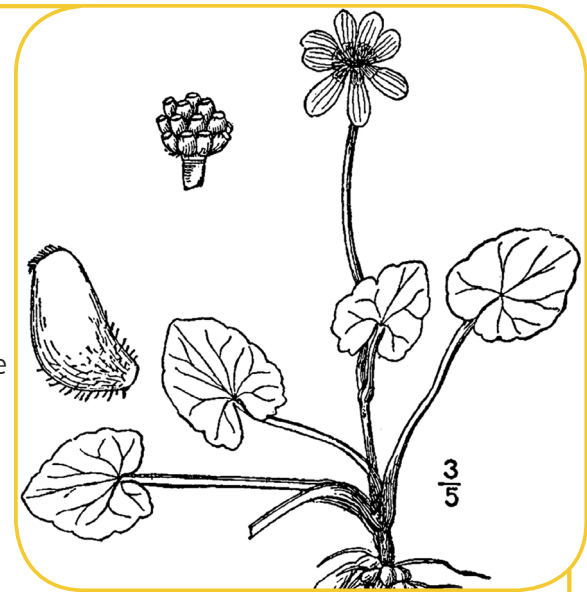
Lesser Celandine tubers - Leslie J. Mehrhoff
University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Invasive Plant Alert

What should you do?

- **Spread the word, not the plant:** don't buy or plant Lesser Celandine.
- **Inform:** please contact Saanich (as below) to report locations.
- **Stop seed spread:** brush/clean off clothing, tires and equipment before leaving the infested area.
- **Remove:** if you have properly identified Lesser Celandine on your property, use the best control methods (below) to eliminate it on your property.
- **Monitor:** annually return to the site in the spring for several years to continue treatment.
- **Replant:** after effectively eliminating this species over time, replant with non-invasive plants (such as appropriate native species).
- **Volunteer:** find out more about volunteering to control priority invasive species with Saanich at www.saanich.ca/pullingtogether.



Lesser Celandine illustration - USDA PLANTS Database, USDA NRCS PLANTS Database Bugwood.org

Small infestations (Approximately 1m² or less)

- Ideally, remove plants before flowering/going to seed in late winter/ early spring.
- Dig out plants and remove all the roots/tubers and bulblets.
- Persistence, care and annual management needed to control this species.
- Properly dispose of all plant parts (see below).
- Mowing is not recommended as it is likely to cause further spread.
- Monitor and manage sites annually until clear.
- Be sure to not move soil out of the contaminated area.

Large infestations

- Please contact Saanich Parks for assistance to treat large infestations.

Proper Disposal

- The District of Saanich is in the process of developing options for invasive species disposal. Please call Environmental Services or check the website for updates www.invasives.saanich.ca.
- Currently, the best option is to place all plant parts in garbage bags labelled "invasive species" and take to Hartland Landfill.
- **DO NOT COMPOST!** Home composting is likely to increase the spread of this species.

Who do you call?

For Lesser Celandine please contact Saanich Parks (information below).
For other invasive Species please contact Saanich for assistance.

Other resources

Invasive Species Council of BC
Coastal Invasive Species
Committee
King County Noxious Weed
Program
Report-a-Weed BC

On Private Land:

Saanich Environmental Services:
250-475-5471 or planning@saanich.ca

On Public Lands:

Saanich Parks:
250-475-5522 or parcs@saanich.ca

www.invasives.saanich.ca

Noxious Weeds Bylaw No. 8080:

The District of Saanich requires all landowners clear their property of any noxious weeds and other vegetation that could spread or become a nuisance