

Invasive Plant Species in Chester, CT

Common Name: Lesser Celandine, Fig buttercup

Scientific Name: *Ficaria verna* (formerly *Ranunculus ficaria*)

Origin: Europe

General Information: Lesser Celandine was introduced as an ornamental plant for its yellow flowers. It is an herbaceous perennial found mostly in moist, forested flood plains and other wet areas. The plants typically emerge in early spring before other plants. Spreading vigorously by bulblets and tubers, it creates dense mats that block out other emerging spring ephemerals. Virginia Bluebells, Trout Lily, Dutchman's Breeches and Bloodroot are some of native plants threatened by Lesser Celandine invasion.

Identification: Lesser Celandine grows to a height of 5 inches, has dark green, shiny kidney to heart shaped leaves, bright yellow flowers with 8 petals and resembles Yellow Marsh Marigold (which grows to 24 inches and does not produce dense mats).



Lesser Celandine Leaves and Flowers. Photo credit: Leslie Merhrhoff, Bugwood.org

Lesser Celandine Tubers. Photo credit Leslie Mehrhoff, Bugwood.org





Lesser Celandine infestation. Photo Credit: Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org

Control: For small infestations remove the entire plant and try to take out as many tubers as possible from the soil. For dense mat areas, a systemic herbicide should be applied in late winter-early spring as the plants emerge.

References:

Controlling Backyard Invaders, Delaware Nature Society, Plants for a Livable Delaware. <https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/fact-sheets/controlling-backyard-invaders/>

Mistaken Identity? Invasive Plants and Their Native Look-alikes, Published by Delaware Department of Agriculture. <https://delawareinvasives.net/>.

Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna* Huds.) Identification and Management Fact Sheet, CT Agricultural Experiment Station, https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CAES/DOCUMENTS/Publications/Fact_Sheets/Valley_Laboratory/Lesser-celandine_Factsheet.pdf