**Euphorbia amygdaloides** L.  
*Wood Spurge*  
(Characias amygdaloides, Euphorbia heldreichii, Euphorbia semiperfoliata, Tithymalus amygdaloides)  
- Native to Europe, Western Asia, and Northern Africa, *Euphorbia amygdaloides* inhabits moist woodlands; cultivars of this species, or hybrids with it as a significant parental species, have become popular in our regional nursery trade as winter or transition annuals; although these taxa are evergreen herbaceous perennials in milder climates (USDA zones 6 to 7 or 8a), summers are often too hot for them to thrive in most of Texas, where they severely decline or die in summer's heat; due to the hybrid nature of most cultivars, they vary in both cold and heat tolerance.  
- With proper selection, cultivars can be used that will provide both handsome cool season foliage and spring flowering effects; cultivars with bright spring green, dark green, blue-green, red-green, to reddish purple foliage are available; plants are typically 12” to 18” (24”) tall with a similar spread in our region where the growth form consists of mostly erect stems with radially arranged narrowly obovate to oblanceolate simple leaves; leaves have entire margins and pinnate venation; as with many *Euphorbia* spp., a some people may have a dermal reaction to the milky latex in the sap; most cultivars grown in the Texas nursery trade are clump forming, while *Euphorbia amygdaloides* L. var. *robbiae* (Turrill) A. Radcliffe-Smith (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* subsp. *robbiae*), the Turkish Wood Spurge, spreads to form colonies from rhizomes and is more of a weeping vine-like shrub; performance of Turkish Wood Spurge in our region is unknown.  
- Although *E. amygdaloides* can be grown as bedding plants, and are sometimes used as groundcovers in Europe, they are much better as winter patio or container plants in our region; bloom occurs from late winter to late spring depending upon the genetic background of the cultivar and location of use; the inflorescence (cyathium) is chartreuse in color with large fused subtending bracts forming a circular disk, that is larger than the individual cup-shaped floral structures above the disk.  
- Moist well drained soils and an acidic to mildly alkaline soil pH are best; avoid overwatering; early pinching will encourage development of basal branches and result in a denser canopy; partial to light shade will prolong effectiveness into summer, but Wood Spurge will tolerate full winter sun; the potential to survive summers is much greater in North Texas than in South Texas.  
- Many of the cultivars currently popular in the trade are grouped in the hybrid species, *Euphorbia × martini* (*Euphorbia amygdaloides* × *Euphorbia characias* L.), including: 'Ascot Rainbow', 'Waleutiny' marketed as Tiny Tim, 'Waleuphrud' marketed as Rudolph, and 'Nothowlee' marketed as Black Bird; however, some cultivars from the parental species are also popular including *E. amygdaloides* 'Purpurea' and *Euphorbia characias* L. subsp. *wulfenii* (Hoppe ex W.D.J. Koch) A. Radcliffe-Smith 'Waleuphgl' marketed as Ruby Glow and *E. characias* subsp. *wulfenii* 'Glacier Blue'.

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