

Purple Loosestrife - Scattered around our watershed

Impact - Spreads quickly by seeds and crowds out native wetland vegetations such as cattails, grasses, sedges and rushes. Older plants can produce up to 2 million seeds. Impact on native wetland has been disastrous with PL stands virtually eliminating all other plants affecting the entire ecosystem.

What is Purple Loosestrife - An erect, hardy invasive herbaceous biennial averaging 3 + feet preferring open sun and moist soil conditions. Grows along roadside ditches, marshes, river banks, edges of ponds. Spreads by seeds.

How to identify - It is typically found along roadside ditches or marshy areas and can grow 3 to 7 ft. tall. It has five or six petaled magenta flowers arranged close to the stem emerging in July and remain thru Sept. Leaves are lance-shaped, typically opposite or whorled with smooth edge. Stems are square / four sided and rigid. As many as 30-40 stiff 4 to 6 sided stems may arise from one root system forming a large bushy cluster of stems.



(36)



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Control - Small infestations can be managed by hand-pulling. All root material must be removed, bagged and solarized* for two weeks before disposal in waste stream. Treatment should be before seed production which is in July.

Foliar sprays such as 1 to 3 % Glyphosate or Triclopyr for larger or dense infestations **but not near wetlands** and before seed production & before September.

Manual and chemical means of removal are costly in terms of time and manpower and further disturb the environment.

ESSLA began a program to remove that continues today. Loosestrife Beetles which can be purchased on-line (Galerucella) come from the natural range of purple loosestrife and feed solely on PL. WCS&W also has a management program.

* solarize-bag in plastic bags and leave in sun for two weeks. and burn or dispose in sanitary landfill. Contact ESSLA. We have active program for releasing beetles on affected areas.