

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE



ECOLOGICAL THREAT

Purple loosestrife invades marshes and lake-shores, replacing cattails and other wetland plants. The plant can form dense, impenetrable stands which are unsuitable as cover, food, or nesting sites for a wide range of native wetland animals including ducks, geese, rails, bitterns, muskrats, frogs, toads, and turtles. Many rare and endangered wetland plants and animals are also at risk.

CONTROL

If you detect Purple Loosestrife it is important to control it as soon as possible. Controlling the plant with herbicides is effective if only done properly. Treatment of the plant should be done mid-summer through early fall. To minimize seed production begin treatment as soon as the plant begins to flower. Spray during mid-morning/early afternoon when rain is not expected for 24 hours. Make sure to monitor the infected area each year to treat any remaining plants.

WHAT IS PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE?

Purple Loosestrife is a herbaceous wetland perennial that grows in a wide range of habitats. This plant was introduced in North America in the 1800's, first spreading along roads, canals, and drainage ditches, and later distributed as a decorative plant. The Purple Loosestrife can range from 2 to 7 feet in height, displaying 30-50 stems that form wide-topped crowns. Each plant has the ability to produce up to two million seeds annually. These seeds are easily dispersed by water and in mud adhering to aquatic wildlife, livestock and people.

