

Purple Loosestrife

~Beautiful But Deadly~



Why is it a problem?

Although purple loosestrife is extremely beautiful with its vibrant purple flowers perched on a tall stem, it is an aggressive, non-native invader that is spreading at a rate of 115,000 ha a year in the United States. Originally planted in gardens, this species now infests wetlands throughout North America. It crowds out native vegetation, impacting native plants, amphibians, birds and other wetland species.

Each plant is capable of producing up to 2.5 million seeds that can be spread by wind, water, wildlife and humans. In this region, purple loosestrife is known to infest the north shore of Kootenay Lake, Shoreacres, Meldeanna Lake, and Fauquier.



Key identifying traits

- Square stem (roll it in your fingers)
- Smooth-edged leaves that are opposite
- Purple spike flowers

For more information, contact...
Central Kootenay Invasive Plant Committee
(250) 352-1160 invasiveplants@uniserve.com

What can YOU do?!

Prevent...

- Learn to identify purple loosestrife
- Don't plant these plants on your property
- Research nursery and catalogue specimens before buying

Remove...

- Pull young plants by hand or with a garden fork
- Repeatedly pull older plants throughout the season and annually
- If the infestation is too large to remove, clip flower-heads before they go to seed or mow the patch regularly to reduce seed spread
- Dispose of plant materials in bags in the dump, or burn them.

Report....

- Any isolated or unknown locations of purple loosestrife.



Did you know....

Another method of controlling purple loosestrife is through biocontrol, the release of the plant's natural predators. Small leaf-feeding beetles, called *Galerucella californiensis*, have been released in Fauquier to help control the spread of this species.