

Is Purple Loosestrife growing on your shoreline??

By law, you must kill or remove any of the invasive species purple loosestrife (PL) on your property. If the PL is not too plentiful, the best method is to dig or pull it out by the roots. If the infestation is heavy, cut the blossoms off being careful not to shake them or spread the seeds as you bag them up for disposal in the garbage. Then cut the plant off at the ground to inhibit future growth.

You can also hand spray the plants with poison. Contact the MNDNR For more details on spraying and remember to apply for a permit to do so.

The following diagrams and photos will help identify whether the plant you are seeing is PL or not.



**DESCRIPTION FOR PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE
(*Lythrum salicaria*)**

WHEN TO LOOK FOR IT:

Mid-July through the end of August when it is in bloom and easily recognized.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR IT:

It is present on wet soils to shallow standing water; wet meadows, pasture wetlands, cattail marshes, stream and river banks, lake shores and ditches.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:

Growth Habit: Upright hardy perennial, bushy, up to 7 feet tall.

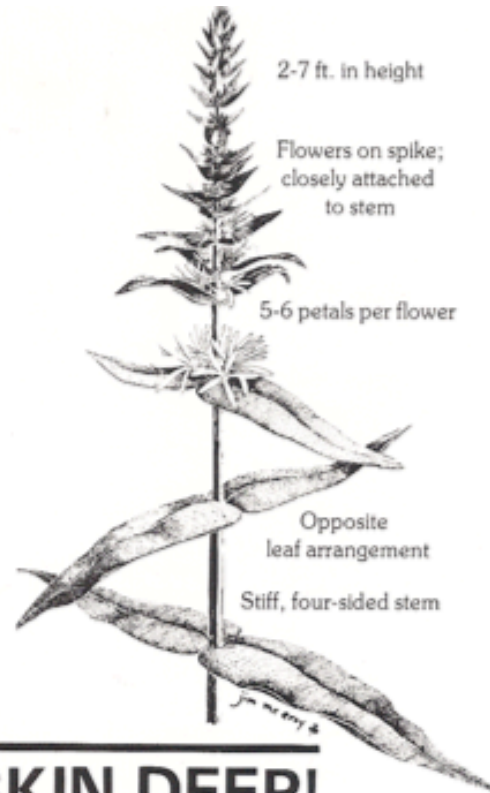
Flowers: Purple-magenta color. Flowers numerous on a long spike; 5-6 petals per flower.

Leaves: Vary, although usually opposite; linear shape and smooth edges. Attached directly (no stalk) to a four-sided stem.

Roots: Woody taproot with fibrous root system that forms a dense mat.

HOW IT SPREADS:

It is a prolific seed producer; also grows from underground root and sprouts from broken-off plant parts.



BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP!

The attractive plumage of purple loosestrife conceals its menacing nature.

WHAT IS PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE?

Purple loosestrife is an aquatic plant that is gaining a foothold in Minnesota. The plant is widely distributed in the northeastern United States, and over the past five years loosestrife has increased significantly in Minnesota. You may have seen the plant's magenta flowers which are strikingly evident throughout July and August.

This hardy perennial has been introduced from Europe. Because of its exotic origin, loosestrife has left behind all of its natural enemies and multiplies with no checks or balances in North America.

WHAT IS THE MAJOR IMPACT?

The plant aggressively crowds out the vegetation required by wildlife, while having no value for wildlife itself.

For example, songbirds do not make use of the small hard seed. Muskrat require cattail to build their homes and they show a preference for cattail over loosestrife for food. Waterfowl, especially ducks, shun wetlands that have become dominated by loosestrife. In addition, overall waterfowl production is decreased as habitat is eliminated. Finally, the plant's growth is generally too compact to offer cover, and cover may be as crucial to wildlife as food.