



Lythrum salicaria

WA – Class B Noxious Weed, Prohibited Plant List

OR – Class B Noxious Weed

Purple Loosestrife

Spiked Loosestrife, Purple Lythrum

Family: Lythraceae

Origins: Native to Asia and Europe. It is believed that a ship in the mid to late 1800s traveled from the European tidal flats to America with Purple Loosestrife aboard, leaving a major seed bank along the east coast. Records show its distribution traveling west along I-90.

Range: Found throughout the United States.

Habitat: Purple Loosestrife occurs in freshwater and brackish wetlands. Found in or near lakes, riverbanks, ponds, streams, and ditches, it is a successful colonizer and potential invader of any wet and/or disturbed site.

Impact: Purple loosestrife is an invasive and competitive noxious weed that alters wetland ecosystems by replacing native and beneficial plants. Forming monotonous stands, Purple Loosestrife impacts water-dependent mammals, waterfowl, and other birds by reducing their food source, nesting material, and shelter. Purple Loosestrife produces up to 2.7 million seeds per plant, which are readily dispersed by water.

Description: Purple Loosestrife is a perennial, emergent aquatic plant reaching up to 10 feet tall and 5 feet wide. It grows from a persistent taproot and spreading fibrous rhizomes, which form a dense mat and allow the plant to spread vegetatively and by seeds. Each plant may have 30 to 50 stems with flower spikes that form at the ends. Flowers are magenta to purple with 5 to 7 petals densely clustered on a 4 to 16-inch terminal flowering spike.

Leaves are alternate, opposite, or in whorls of 3. Leaves range from 1.5 to 4 inches long, are lance-shaped with smooth edges, and sometimes covered with fine hairs. Stems are smooth, green to red, stand upright, and are somewhat square with 4 to 6 sides.

Common Look-Alikes: Garden Loosestrife, Native Spirea, Wand Loosestrife, Fireweed.

**Purple Loosestrife is not known to be toxic. Look-alike Fireweed is toxic to humans and animals.*



Integrated Pest Management - Control Methods

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines various methods such as mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical controls to manage pests. IPM offers the possibility of improving the efficiency of pest control while reducing its negative environmental impacts. For more information, see the Cowlitz County Noxious Weed's IPM Resources & Strategy Guide or contact your local Noxious Weed Control Board to develop a customized IPM plan.

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Non-Herbicide Control

Mechanical (pulling, cutting, digging, etc.)	Cutting alone is ineffective; new shoots and adventitious roots will develop. Small infestations can be dug up, although this is not recommended for well-established populations. Cutting late in the season may reduce shoot production more than mid-summer cutting.
Cultural	No effective cultural methods at this time.
Biological	Loosestrife Beetles, <i>Galerucella californiensis</i> and <i>Galerucella pusilla</i> , adults and larvae, impact plant growth and reproduction by feeding heavily on the plant's leaves, stems, and buds. The adult Loosestrife Root Weevil, <i>Hylobius transversovittatus</i> , feeds on plant foliage, and the larvae feed within the roots. The Loosestrife Seed Weevil, <i>Nanophyes marmoratus</i> , adults and larvae impact the plants by feeding on unopened flower buds.

Herbicide Control: Foliar Broadcast Treatment

Glyphosate (Rodeo, AquaMaster, Aqua Neat, Roundup)	Timing: Summer to actively growing plants at full to late flowering; in early season on seedlings following a fall application to mature plants. Remarks: Apply to foliage, but avoid runoff; second application 2 to 3 weeks after may be necessary; Glyphosate is non-selective may injure or kill other vegetation contacted by the spray; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas.
Imazapyr (Imazapyr, Arsenal, Habitat)	Timing: Summer to actively growing plants after mid-bloom until killing frost. Remarks: Apply to foliage, but avoid runoff; Imazapyr will injure or kill other vegetation contacted by the spray, including trees; this herbicide is soil-active and can harm trees and other plants rooted in the spray area or sometimes immediately downhill from the area being sprayed; refer to the label for use in aquatic areas; note crop rotation restrictions.
Triclopyr Ester / Triclopyr Amine (Garlon4, Remedy / Garlon 3A)	Timing: Early season on seedlings, summer to mid to full flowering plants. Remarks: Apply to foliage, but avoid runoff; dust on plants may reduce effectiveness; Triclopyr is a selective herbicide and will kill only broadleaf plants and trees; refer to the label for site type and use in aquatic areas.
Metsulfuron (Escort, MSM)	Timing: Apply to actively growing plants. Remarks: Do not allow spray to drift to sensitive crops; refer to label for site type, application sites differ between products; for best results, use a nonionic or silicone surfactant; do not apply near water.
For best results	Add a surfactant to the herbicide mixture.

* Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Control Board does not endorse any product or brand name. Brand names are listed as an example only. Other commercial products may contain the listed active chemical for herbicide control. Always read and follow the safety protocols and rate recommendations on the herbicide label. **The Label is The Law.**

This control sheet includes excerpts from the Written Findings of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB), nwcb.wa.gov. Herbicide information from the PNW Weed Management Handbook (ISBN 978-1-931979-22-1) and product labels.