



Tips for Managing Purple Loosestrife

Description

- Flower: Multiple flowers on each spike. 5-6 pink-purple petals per flower with yellow centers.
- Seed capsule: Contains hundreds of seeds.
- Leaves: Downy. Smooth edges. Opposite in pairs at 90° angles from the stalk. Pairs alternate length of stalk. Leaves may be in groups of three.
- Stalk: Square, 5 or 6-sided, woody, up to 6 ft or more in height. Mature plants have multiple stalks.
- Roots: Perennial, extensive rootstocks producing 30-50 shoots and dense web.



Prevention

- Choose plants wisely. Do not plant purple loosestrife and its cultivars.
- Choose alternative non-invasive perennials such as *Delphinium* spp., *Salvia* spp., *Veronica* spp., *Liatris* spp., *Astilbe* spp., Lupine, Lobelia, etc. Check the labels of wildflower seed packages before you buy.
- Thoroughly brush off your clothes, shoes, and tools after coming in contact with purple loosestrife.

Management

- Remove dry seed heads and flowering spikes before other cutting or mowing. Place material in a bag and dispose of the bag in a landfill.
- Do not compost.
- Dig and hand-pull the entire plant and as much of the root system as possible to prevent new shoots.
- Cut or mow the entire plant to the ground.



Least Risk Pesticides

Use only selective spraying with an approved herbicide in areas heavily infested. Biological control is currently being tested.



Further Management Options

Contact the Cooperative Extension Pest Management Office (1-800-287-0274), your county Extension office, or visit <http://www.gotpests.org/>.

Photo credits: Plant: Steve Dewey, Utah State University; Seeds: Gary L. Piper, Washington State University; Flowers: Richard Old, XID Services, Inc.; Biological control: Eric Coombs, Oregon Department of Agriculture.



<http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pi/ipmcouncil>

Promoting least risk pest control for a greener environment.

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