

Purple Loosestrife

(*Lythrum salicaria*)

Is Purple loosestrife on your property?

Purple loosestrife is included in Horizons' Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as a Zero-Density plant. All infestations will be controlled to Zero-Density as and when they are found. Zero-Density means the control of the pest plant to the last individual. Pest plant species that are limited in distribution will fall under this objective. If you see any sites of this plant, please contact us on free phone 0508 800 800.



Identification

Erect perennial herb to 2-3 m that dies down in winter. Taproot and fibrous roots form a dense surface mat that produces up to 50 stems per rootstock. Square stems are multi-branched with narrow leaves in pairs. Numerous showy magenta terminal flower spikes are present from December to February. Originates from Europe and Asia.

Weedy characteristics

Quickly invades damp ground and shallow water overtopping native species with dense bushy growth. Tolerates heat or cold, low and high nutrient water. Long-lived and produces millions of long-lived and highly viable seeds from an early age. Tolerates a wide range of environmental conditions, except salt.

Methods of dispersal

Seeds dispersed by water, machinery, soil, livestock and hay. Vegetative spread by underground stems and stem fragments.

Impact on indigenous plants

Forms massive tall impenetrable stands that exclude all other plant species. Destroys valuable wetland and marginal habitats that provide food for many fish and bird species. Causes flooding and drain blockages. It is also a major pest of temperate North America, capable of taking over millions of hectares of wetlands.

Typical habitats

Wetlands, lake margins, streams, swamps, ditches, bogs, drier open areas and creeps onto dry margins.

Control

1. Spray with glyphosate at gorse rates. Re-spray until eliminated.
2. Spray dry sites with Tordon BK at ½ gorse rates. Follow up 3-monthly.
3. On low water level sites, mechanically remove, where possible.

Site management

Plant shade trees adjacent to infected margins. Implement control at margins and prevent seeding. Progressively eliminate infestations working downstream where possible. Deepen water to prevent growth.

Species recovery

Re-seeds profusely.

For more information free phone 0508 800 800.

