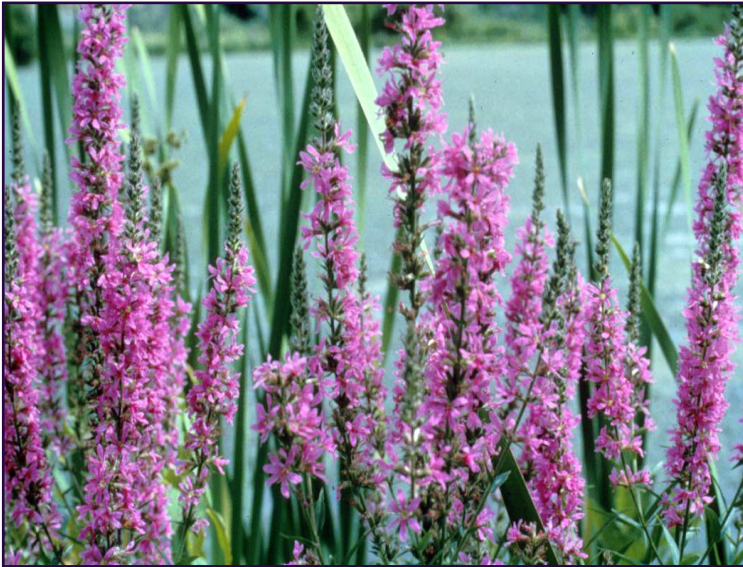


# LOOSESTRIFE

invasive  
fact sheet




© IPANE

Purple loosestrife invades Vermont's fields, marshes and bogs. It is easy to see in the summer when its showy magenta blooms are at their peak.




© Leslie Mehrhoff/IPANE




Recognize

purple loosestrife




© Leslie Mehrhoff/IPANE

magenta flowers



© Leslie Mehrhoff/IPANE

opposite, long, narrow leaves



© Judy Preston/The Nature Conservancy

growth in dense stands of stems

## The Problem

- ◆ As the leaves of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) decompose in water, they secrete high levels of tannic acid. Research shows that American toad (*Bufo americanus*) tadpoles suffer higher mortality rates in this highly acidic environment.
  - ◆ Each purple loosestrife plant can produce 1,000,000 seeds, 97% of which are viable.
- ◆ Wetlands filled with purple loosestrife stands do not contain the grasses, sedges, aquatic vegetation and native shrubs that were once there. Purple loosestrife does not support as many insect species as native plants. Native birds can no longer find the food sources or quality nesting habitat that they could once find in the wetland.



© Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

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## purple loosestrife

### For small infestations:

- Hand pull individual plants by grasping each stem at its base and pulling slowly to remove all the root.
- Break off flower heads before they go to seed.
- Put the discarded vegetation into a plastic garbage bag to decompose.

### For large infestations:

When funding allows, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation's Water Quality Division releases beetles near large patches of loosestrife. Call 802-241-3777 to report locations of loosestrife or learn more on-line at [www.vtwaterquality.org](http://www.vtwaterquality.org).



*Galerucella* spp.

© Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

DO NOT COMPOST THIS PLANT! Plant fragments can re-sprout.



## Non-invasive Alternatives



joe pye-weed  
*Eupatorium maculatum*

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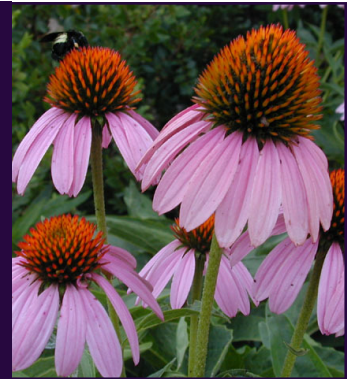


blazing star  
*Liatris spicata*

© Stefan Bloodworth/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

purple  
coneflower

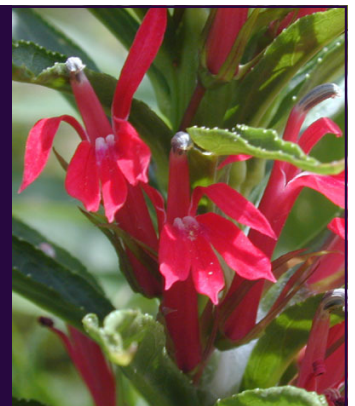
*Echinacea  
purpurea*



© Joseph A. Marcus/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

cardinal  
flower

*Lobelia  
cardinalis*



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Wise On Weeds!

The Nature Conservancy, Montpelier, Vermont  
802-229-4425 x120  
[www.vtinvasives.org](http://www.vtinvasives.org)

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