

## Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)



*Purple coloured flower spikes*



*Produces large amounts of seed each year*

Purple loosestrife is an erect, perennial herb that grows up to 2 m and occasionally to 3m tall. It can quickly invade natural or disturbed wetlands, where it forms dense, bushy stands. The plant was once commonly grown in gardens but can be a problem in natural wetlands where it can replace all other herbaceous native species.

Purple loosestrife stems die back in winter. They are erect, often 4-angled, pink towards the base, and covered in downy hairs. The leaves are usually in opposite pairs, lance-shaped, stalkless and heart-shaped at the base. The purple coloured flower spikes present a showy display during summer. Each flower has 5 - 7 petals. Purple loosestrife produces large amounts of seed each year.

Seedlings should be pulled by hand, before they set seed. Large infestations can be sprayed with herbicide.

**If you find purple loosestrife you should immediately contact your Regional Council.**