

Lythrum salicaria

Purple Loosestrife

Other common names:

purple lythrum, spiked willow-herb, long-purples

Lythraceae, the loosestrife family

Category: CONTAINMENT



Diagnostic Characteristics

- Semi-aquatic perennial; can grow up to 8 feet tall
- New shoots grow from a broad, woody crown in the spring
- Stems are simple or branched; square or 5-angled
- Leaves are lance shaped, have smooth margins, and are sessile, alternate, opposite, or whorled around the stem
- Flowers are bright pinkish-purple, having 5-7 petals that are arranged in long vertical racemes

Background

- Native to Eurasia; introduced to the U.S. as an ornamental
- Escapes cultivation
- Inhabits seasonal and perennial wetlands, pond and marsh edges, streambanks, and ditches
- Reproduces by seed and spreading rhizomes that form dense monocultures

Photo Credit:

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