



Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) Loosestrife Family

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- A perennial plant which grows 2 to 8 feet tall. Produces tall spikes of purple-magenta flowers, each with 5 to 7 “ruffled” petals and a small yellow center. Lance-shaped leaves have smooth edges, and are usually arranged opposite one another, in groups of 2 or 3 along the stem. As many as 40 stems arise from the base of a well-established mature plant. Stems are 4 or 5-sided in cross-section.
- Purple-pink flower spikes may be confused with Alaska’s native fireweed (*Epilobium* spp.) but in Alaska purple loosestrife blooms in the fall, well after fireweed blooms have faded.
- **An aggressive wetland invader, purple loosestrife chokes waterways, degrading wildlife habitat and fish spawning areas. Single plants can produce millions of tiny seeds, which are easily spread by wind, water, and wildlife. Wild loosestrife is known to hybridize with horticultural varieties.**

