

Thanks for helping land managers find invasive species in small populations like this purple loosestrife in Anchorage's Westchester lagoon.



Alaska Association of Conservation Districts photo by Gino Graziano

Your involvement will help prevent them from becoming widespread in natural areas like the white sweetclover in the photo below infesting the Stikine river.



USDA Forest Service photo by Michael Shephard.

Report These Invaders!

**Early Detection and
Rapid Response to
Invasive Plants.**

**A citizens' guide
to identifying and
reporting infestations in Alaska**

Purple loosestrife is only found so far in Anchorage's Westchester lagoon.

If you see it anywhere else, let us know!

Photo by Jamie Nielsen University of Alaska Fairbanks, Cooperative Extension Service.

How to use this booklet

This booklet is meant to be a shortlist of some of the most un-wanted invaders to Alaska. These plants are either here in very limited numbers or not yet known to be here at all. With the participation of engaged citizens like you, resource managers may find and control these weeds before they become widespread and affect natural resources. To help, please follow the simple steps below.

1. Become familiar with the plants identified in this booklet. Note the plant descriptions where plants are most likely to be found, when they bloom and key identifying characteristics.
2. Pay extra attention to the **bolded key characteristics** that differentiate these invasive plants from plants that may be similar in appearance.
3. Carry this booklet as a reference, wherever you go in Alaska.
4. If you find these invaders, report them, noting the information on the form at the back of the booklet. Take photos if possible and submit information by e-mail, mail or phone as indicated.
5. Avoid travelling through infested areas when you find them. It is extremely easy to carry seeds on shoes, clothing, animals, gear and equipment. Clean all potential vectors after leaving an infested area as soon as possible.

Cooperating agencies



This document produced by:
Gino Graziano Alaska Association of Conservation Districts, and
Participants in the EDRR subcommittee of the Alaska Committee
for Noxious and Invasive Plant Management.

Additional location information and/or Map



Feel free to duplicate this form.

Why are invasive species a problem?

Invasive plants replace desirable vegetation. This affects agriculture production, ecosystem processes and reduces forage and cover opportunities for insects, moose, bear, livestock, salmon, waterfowl, and other resources.

Alaska's relative isolation and climate has limited the introduction and establishment of invasive plants, until recently. With increased trade, tourism, and development, concerned people are seeing an increased number of invasive plant infestations in Alaska.

Acting now while these infestations are small will protect Alaska's natural resources and allow for their continued use and enjoyment.

What is Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR)?

The goal of EDRR is to find and control invasive plants when populations are first becoming established. Similar to a garden, a few weeds are easier to control than a large number of them. Controlling large infestations is extremely expensive and not as likely to succeed as managing small infestations. Informed citizens on the lookout for invasive weeds are essential to an effective EDRR program.

Spotted Knapweed
Centaurea stoebe



Species that look similar

Canada thistle,
Cirsium arvense



Russian knapweed,
Acroptilon repens



Saussurea sp.



EDRR REPORTING FORM
Personal Information

Name:
Address:

Email:
Phone number:
Date sighted:

Weed/s Sighted

spotted knapweed purple loosestrife
 giant hogweed leafy spurge
 smooth cordgrass
 other please specify _____

Infestation Description

Est. Number of Individual Weeds: 1-25
 26-50 51-150 151-500 500+

Number of patches of weeds in the infestation:
 1 2-5 6-10 10 or more

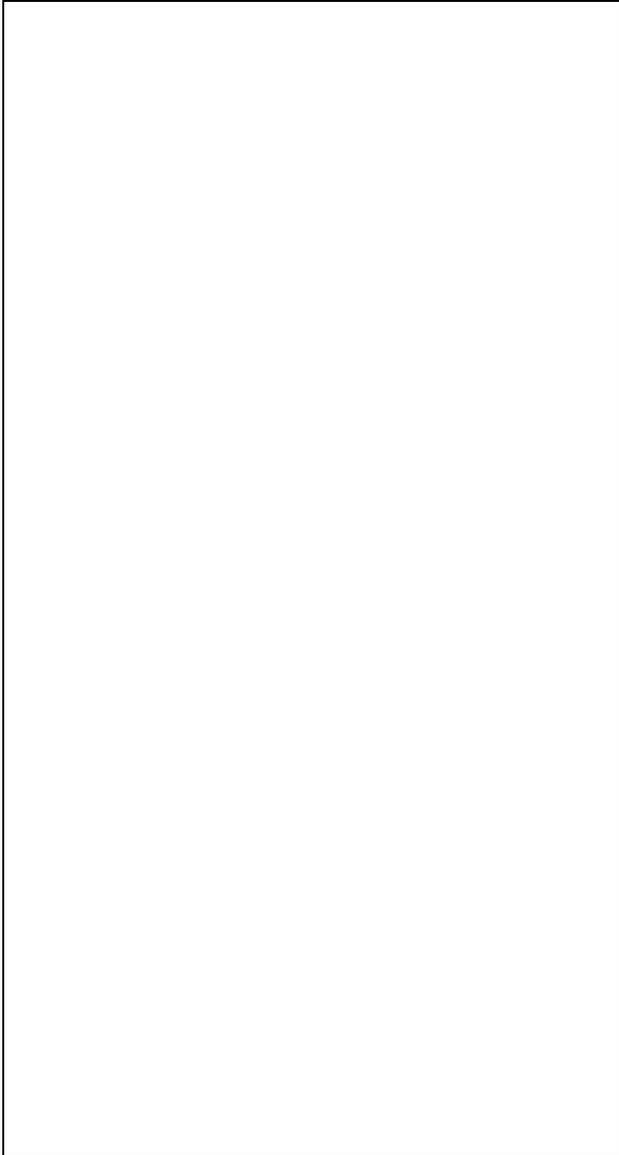
Estimated Size of Weed Infestation:

Plant Description: Seedling vegetative
 Flowering Seeds spreading
 Unknown

Local description

Name of park, neighborhood, street where the weeds are located or adjacent to. Include enough information to find the weeds. Road mile, and **GPS coordinates** (identify the datum used).

Additional location information and/or Map



Feel free to duplicate this form.

Where, When, and What to look for:

Where: Highways, railways, pipelines, grasslands, rangelands, shrublands and open forests

When: Blooms June through September

What: Pink, purple and sometimes white flowers that are 1 inch wide and urn-shaped. Stems 1-4 feet tall, **many branched**, with single flower on each branch. Leaves and branches have fine hairs giving it a grayish color

Species that look similar

Canada thistle and other thistles: Thistles have **spiny leaves**. Report if seen outside of Anchorage.

Russian and other knapweeds: Look similar to spotted knapweed, and are not known in Alaska. **REPORT**.

Saussurea sp.: Native to Alaska, flowers similar to knapweeds. **Few to no branches**. Leaves are wider. Do not report.

Picture citations clockwise: TOP James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org; (2) Michael Shephard, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org, BOTTOM UAF Cooperative Extension Archive, University of Alaska - Fairbanks, Bugwood.org; Hulten, E, (1968). Flora of Alaska and Neighboring Territories. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.; Norman E. Rees, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

Leafy Spurge
Euphorbia esula



Species that look similar

Cushion spurge,
Euphorbia epithymoides



EDRR REPORTING FORM
Personal Information

Name:
Address:

Email:
Phone number:
Date sighted:

Weed/s Sighted

spotted knapweed purple loosestrife
 giant hogweed leafy spurge
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Name of park, neighborhood, street where the weeds are located or adjacent to. Include enough information to find the weeds. Road mile, and **GPS coordinates** (identify the datum used).

Early Detection Reporting Form

visit www.alaskainvasives.org
E-mail to weedsighting@mtaonline.net
call 1-877-invasiv
Or mail to:

Weed Sighting, Plant Materials Center
5310 S. Bodenbug Spur, Palmer, AK 99645

Instructions: If you think you have spotted an infestation of a weed described in this booklet please record as much of the information described on this form as possible. Send the information to one of the contacts above. Provide pictures if possible. The occurrence will be identified, documented, and controlled if possible.

Personal information: Information will only be used to contact the reporter about the weed.

Weed/s sighted: Mark the weed sighted. "Other" weeds may include those identified locally as EDRR species.

Infestation description: Mark the category for each descriptor of the infestation size. Mark the Plant Description that represents the life stage of the plants.

Local description: Identify key features of the surrounding area that will help locate the infestation. GPS coordinates are useful if the datum used is identified.

Additional location information and/or map: On the back of the sheet you may provide more information or a map of the location of the infestation.

Where, When, and What to look for:

Where: Pastures, rangelands, waste areas, abandoned croplands, roadsides and areas of ongoing disturbance

When: Blooms July through September

What: Pale green plant grows **16-32 inches tall**, leaves 1-4 inches long. **Flowers are small, yellowish-green**, and arranged in clusters.

Species that look similar

Cushion spurge: Commonly used in gardens and sold in greenhouses, this harmless plant has **bright yellow flowers** and is **smaller** than leafy spurge at only 10-18 inches tall. Don't Report.

Picture citations clockwise: TOP Norman E. Rees, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org; William M. Ciesla, Forest Health Management International, Bugwood.org; Richard Old, XID Services, Inc., Bugwood.org, BOTTOM The Dow Gardens Archive, Dow Gardens, Bugwood.org, Bugwood.org

Giant Hogweed
Heracleum mantegazzianum



Species that look similar

Cow parsnip, *Heracleum maximum*



Where, When, and What to look for:

Where: Saltwater tidal marshes **between average high and low tide marks**

When: look throughout summer

What: Plant ranges from 2-8 feet tall. **Leaf blades** are 8-24 inches long, greenish-grey in color, tough, and **narrow** 1/4-5/8 inch wide and **folded at the tip**.

Species that look similar

Saltwater Sedges: Grow in similar environment, and common in Alaska. Remember that **sedges have edges** while grasses, and rushes are round. **Cordgrass is considered a grass, has round hollow stems.** Don't report sedges.

Beach Wild Rye: This grass grows on sandy beaches throughout Alaska and is commonly planted on roadsides. 2- 5 feet tall, with **wide flat** bluish green leaves. Typically **grows above average high tide marks.** Don't report.

Picture citations clockwise: TOP *Spartina alterniflora* flower_Steven C._Pennings; USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org; BOT-TOM Jennifer Anderson @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database; Andy Nolen, Alaska DNR Division of Agriculture Plant Materials Center.

Smooth Cordgrass
Spartina alterniflora, *S. densiflora*,
S. patens and *S. anglica*



Where, When, and What to look for:

Where: River banks, streams, damp areas, roadsides, and waste places.

When: Flowers and seed heads conspicuous July through September

What: Plant grows **10-15 feet tall**, leaves **3-5 feet in width** divided multiple times. **Flowers clusters** are **1 foot or more** in diameter.

Species that look similar

Saltwater sedges,
Carex sp.



Beach Wild Rye,
Leymus mollis



Species that look similar

Cow Parsnip A.K.A . Pushke: Native to Alaska, this plant is smaller in stature rarely growing taller than **6 feet in height**, and **flower clusters** are only **8-12 inches wide**. **Leaves** divided in **threes** and smaller than giant hogweed. Don't report.

Picture citations clockwise: TOP Terry English, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org; Thomas B. Denholm, New Jersey Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org; Donna R. Ellis, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org, BOTTOM Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org, Bugwood.org

Purple Loosestrife
Lythrum salicaria



Species that look similar

Common Fireweed,
Epilobium angustifolium



Big leaf lupine,
Lupinus polyphyllus



Where, When, and What to look for:

Where: Wetlands, bogs, cattail marshes, sedge meadows, stream banks, lake shores, ditches and other wet soils.

When: Blooms July through September

What: Rose to purple flowers. **Stems are square** and erect. Plants grow 3-8 feet tall. Leaves are opposite or whorled.

Species that look similar

Common Fireweed: This native plant is extremely widespread in Alaska, and generally does not occur in wet soils. Has purple flowers, leaves are alternate, and **stems are round**. Don't report.

Big leaf lupine: Purple flowers, common in Anchorage parks. Leaflets form a **circular fanlike leaf**. Typically grows on drier soils than loosestrife. Don't report.

Picture citations clockwise: TOP David Cappaert, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org; Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org; John D. Byrd, Mississippi State University, Bugwood.org BOTTOM Linda Wilson, University of Idaho, Bugwood.org; Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, , Bugwood.org