

Association for the Preservation of Long Pond

83 Dunaskin Rd., Centerville, MA 02632

September 12, 2003

Dear Lakefront Property Owners:

This communication is to bring you up to date on a new issue that requires your direct help and assistance. The issue is the continuing escalation of pond-side growth of a pretty, albeit potentially troublesome, invasive aquatic weed called purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). Please see attached picture.

We are advised that infestations of purple loosestrife appear to follow a pattern of establishment, maintenance at low numbers, and then dramatic population increases when conditions are optimal. It is a prolific seed producer with an average of 120 seeds per capsule and up to 900 capsules per plant. High seed viability and prolific seed production can build up a seed bank of massive proportions.

What we've done to date

First of all we contacted Rob Gatewood, who as you know heads up our Town Conservation Division and has been so helpful concerning our hydrilla control and eradication efforts. He agreed that it was time to plan for some corrective action. However, because of the plants' proximity to pondside, any proposed corrective action would need approval by the Town of Barnstable Conservation Commission. Rob went before the Commission and requested their approval of a proposal to let each individual pondside property owner cut or remove any purple loosestrife that was growing on their property. The Commission unanimously approved the proposal. As a result, each property owner can decide what to do on their own pond-front property.

What we are recommending

At a minimum, we recommend each property owner cut and remove the flowering seed-bearing tops of their purple loosestrife plants. The tops are already in the process of going to seed so this should be done as soon as possible. It should also be done carefully and bagged right at the point of removal to avoid disbursement of the seeds. Smaller plants, which usually can be pulled out by the roots rather easily, should also be removed as carefully as possible. All cuttings and plants should be bagged and tied off. The Barnstable Transfer Station will not accept this as yard waste (like leaves and grass) so you will have to go to Cape Resources around the corner with your bags. This is the ideal terminus anyway because in their processing, the seeds and plants will be subjected to extreme heat and the seeds will be destroyed.

Some of you will want to consider removing the larger mature plants. We have learned by experimenting with this that the large plants do not want to be removed! Hand pulling is futile. *However*, the Town has loaned us a shrub-pulling tool that turns removal of the plants into a difficult but possible endeavor. Ron Sirch (508-771-7225) has the tool and is willing to provide "training" and assistance to anyone wanting to undertake removal. The disposal of these plants, which will have very large and heavy root balls will have to go to Cape Resources and you may want to get some help lined up for the task. Again you may contact Ron. This is an undertaking that could be started now with a planned continuance into next summer.

Hopefully, most people will be able to remove the seed-bearing tops at a minimum. Don't hesitate to contact neighbors or Steering Committee members if you need help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerry Gilmore". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jerry Gilmore. APLP Chairman
and

The APLP Steering Committee:

Dick Teel Barbara Enos

Bob Enos Kallie Garoufes

Tony Antin Ron Sirch

David Elmer, MD

Ted Schilling, Esq.