Topic: Purple Loosestrife

7/23/20 (See Map for locations listed below)

After surveying all of the Gunlock areas of loosestrife infestation, this past week, Rob, Doug and Pat attacked the problem today. Plants that were accessible were pulled by the roots. In cases where this was not possible, the flowers were clipped to stop regeneration. It is not a solution, but a delay in growth only. We did this, as a last resort being we didn’t rear beetles this year.

The area of the south west corner (4 on map) out from the channel was 90% deflowered. The area to the east and west of the old Cook Estate pier (2 A, B & C) now owned by Brad Smith, was deflowered/plants removed. Doug worked the power line area (2 A).

The Cook Estate property still needs much work, as does down to the Sauey property (3). Rob will check out a few spots in the channel and remove what he can.

8/15/18

Hi gentlemen,

Check out the link below. (From Penn State Univ. Article is on file)

I started at the channel and worked the north shore westward this afternoon. Got that big one I’ve wanted to get.   Sounds like we’re a little late for herbicide use.  Though glyphosate itself is non-toxic to fish, the surfactant used in many of those products *IS.  Thus if we were ever to get a permit to do that, we would have to go with the product mentioned in the article.   Interesting that this is a long term maintenance battle.   With several volunteers, I believe digging the plants is likely the most reasonable long term strategy.   Blossoms are almost done now.  Getting a bit harder to spot the plants.   Will talk tomorrow at Gentleman of the Lake.*

*Rob*

8/12/18

Pat and Doug,

I took out more along north shore properties yesterday.  In front of tan house with white trim, without dock, about six plants. Multiple smaller plants near the docks on next property east with all the boats, from shore; two large plants from shore along that east property line.  Then, there is the seemingly hopeless 😩 situation on Brad’s property.

However, further east, past the power line, they are more scattered, and worth going after to stem the spread eastward to channel ( one smaller plant is only about 100 yards from the channel).

As far as the south side, behind the cattails, it’s worth walking down Doug’s road, to see if we could reach the one large plant from the road with waders.

My observation is that as I’ve searched the shorelines, that more plants become evident as they bloom over time, when you can spot them.   If we can get folks willing to form teams and get dirty, I think we can contain the infestation to its current established area, and continue to use beetles there.  If we really wanted to attack the shoreline on the north side, several teams and several days of work would be needed.

I’ll keep doing my kayak based access.  I doubt John boats could penetrate the grassy areas in front of Brad’s place.  Might we get DNR permission to try herbicide on a test plot by Brad’s property?  Doug, I could meet you tomorrow to look down your road if you have time.

Rob

8/12/18

Pat,  we assume you've seen and are aware of several patchas of loosestrife on left side near entrance to channel going ino Shish.  We spotted it just this afternoon on a boat ride.  Don't remember seeing them a few weeks ago.  We all have to more diligent now before the blossoms send out the seeds! Thanks to you and Bob for making everyone aware of our problem here on Gunlock!

Smith’s

8/10/18

Shore sweep by the Smith’s from the landing south, found plants on the lot line between Kellner and McRell (#292/293). Pat removed the plant.

Also, plants along the shoreline of Vic Blanchard (#280). Two complete plants removed. There appears to be some evidence of small growths and would suggest we watch this property in the future.

Pat

7/18

A major infestation was located on the shore line of the empty lot at #269. Doug, Pat and intern Brady O’Mara removed a pickup truck full of Loosestrife. We should have taken off the flowers before removing the plants, but the amount made that most time consuming. Watch this area in the future.

**May 29, 2018**

From Brock Woods:

Greetings,

Well, here we go again. To add to nature’s curveball of very late cold and snow, we have had record breaking heat here in southern Wisconsin (and elsewhere as well?) the last few days. The latter has been and is wreaking havoc on our beetle life cycles! With no one ready for any beetles until today due to late cold weather—and the current request from just a single cooperator, it had been unwise to collect until now. But I was out attempting to collect over the holiday weekend because of the heat concerns, and beetles were few at a normally great site because this sudden spate of heat has pushed the insects faster than ever. I suspect collecting in southcentral Wisconsin will be iffier here than ever now (though I will check other sites today), and won’t last.

All this leads me to make a few suggestions.

If you are ready for beetles, let me know ASAP. (See below for ways to speed up delivery time.)

Otherwise, if you have released beetles before, you might want to visit a local release site or two now, if possible, to see if you have local adult beetles out and available to collect that might be better timed to your local plants than this year’s insects from the southcentral part of the state (see generic collecting instructions attached). This is always a good idea anyway!

In fact, if you find any sites that appear to have more beetles than you will need, let me know as I will be looking for such sites, especially in the North, in case my concerns about beetle availability here pan out.

Note also that a slight change in plant recommendations and beetle numbers may also be useful for some cooperators. Usually, plants should be nearing 2 feet tall to get beetles (why it’s important to dig them early), having had their growing tips pinched (results in better foliage, but slower growth), and 10 beetles are placed on each plant. If you won’t have any well-timed, local insects to put on your plants—thus are dependent on DNR supplies, this year it may be wise to get slightly fewer beetles for shorter plants—say only a foot tall and that have not been pinched back. This would allow us to send you beetles sooner, giving you better insect stock! If plants are short enough when adding beetles that they never really get ahead of larval feeding, the pots must be put out earlier than is ideal, but it is better to produce new larvae and get them into your infested wetland (albeit with a bit more release care than usual), than to raise bigger plants, but never get any good reproduction because they required more growing time and did not get early beetles with lots of eggs still in the females. If we sent fewer beetles per plant—say, 6 or 7, this might also allow normal new beetle development without the early plant release, and would still get new beetle stock into your wetland, though a bit fewer than otherwise. These changes might help some of us get through the difficult weather nature is throwing at us this year!

And we should not only hope for more “normal” weather in future, but do all we can to minimize our own carbon footprints, thus helping to stabilize our weather patterns!

Thanks for your attention to all this!!

Brock

**May 18, 2018**

**From: Brock Woods**

Greetings!

Just a quick notice that PL Biocontrol beetles are now out in the South. This is about average, maybe a bit early. We anticipate collecting may start Monday, so if you or anyone you know is ready for beetles, let me know ASAP since NOW is when you’d get the highest quality stock—with the most eggs in all the females. The longer it takes for anyone to be ready for beetles (plants tall enough), the less propagation success they will likely have.

This means affected cooperators should do everything possible to get plants ready as soon as possible. Have transplanted plants in warm, upland, full-sun sites with plenty of water, and maybe a little liquid fertilizer if you think your soil is lacking. Also, anyone with plants far behind may want to resist removing shoot tip buds this year so plants grow taller more quickly. This would compromise amount of foliage later, but result in taller plants now when plant height is important for getting propagation stock sooner. It just means you might have to release beetles earlier than is ideal, with consequent predation a bit higher, but would help ensure decent reproduction.

If you are ready for beetles now, let me know how many (up-date as some plants may not have grown), when you want them, and if you will be at the address I have during the day to sign for a delivered box (sent overnight delivery).

For northern folks, I have been in touch with GLIFWC about sites we used to collect from in Bayfield Co. to see what they think about collecting there this year because your summer (we never really had any spring) came so late and your plants are lagging behind in growth, to say the least. I may visit those sites sometime in the next weeks, and will keep you informed about availability of high quality late stock.

Call if you have any questions! Thanks for all your work!

Brock

9/5/17

Hello Pat,

It sounds like folks are busy on your lake. It is a lot of work to dig the purple loosestrife plants.

I am to blame – I am pretty sure that I forgot to tell you last year that we should report where we have released our Gallerucella beetles. There is a reporting form attached that you can fill out and send to Brock Woods (he is copied on email).

I am also attaching a link to the purple loosestrife chapter in the CLMN AIS manual. It has good information in it.

And pictures of Gallerucella beetles.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=galerucella+beetles&rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS754US754&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi2zY-j5P_VAhVI6YM>

Sandy

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Sandy Wickman

Phone: (715) 365-8951

[Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov)

From Rob:

It was late July, as Barb and I left during the first week of August for Alaska.  Doug retrieved the potted plants in August while I was gone, after being in place for the 3-4 week recommended time.

Rob  
  
Hi Pat,

If at all possible, the flowers should be removed from the plants. The plants flower from the bottom to the top and the seeds ripen as the flowers fade.

The plants are dug in the spring and re-potted. When the plants are mature, you add beetles to the plants and then the beetles reproduce. When you release the plants, there are 100 beetles as opposed to the 10 that you put there originally. The plants are put in small pools to make sure that they are watered sufficiently.  We have been raising the plants in the back of the DNR office in Rhinelander but if you are going to release them on Shish or Gunlock you might want to find some place closer. It is best to raise the plants some place where you mow (seeds are often transported despite your best efforts and if the plants are grown on asphalt or on a lawn, it is easier to control the spread.

High ground is often easier to dig purple loosestrife plants from (you don’t need a boat, and it is easier to haul them back to the car).

Sandy

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Sandy Wickman

Phone: (715) 365-8951

[Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov)

**From:** Patrick Hayes [<mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com>]   
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2017 4:36 PM  
**To:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR <[Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Purple Loosestrife

Hi Sandy,

First off, as for marking plants, do we leave the flowers on this fall?

Second, come spring, we dig them up.  Not sure what “high ground” is for.  Are you replanting them to then grow beetles?  I have 5 forested acres on high ground off our lake.  This is separate from our lake property.    Would this work?

Will take any advice and help you can offer.

Regards,

Pat

**From:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR [<mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov>]   
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2017 3:23 PM  
**To:** Patrick Hayes  
**Subject:** RE: Purple Loosestrife

Thank you Pat. I appreciate your help.

As for the beetles. The purple loosestrife plants are dug as soon as the frost is out of the ground. If you think you would like to do this, think about an easy spot to dig the plants. I have a couple of spots in Price County that are on high ground and easy to access. Sometimes it is hard to identify purple loosestrife in the spring so marking them in the fall with ribbon isn’t a bad idea. I am happy to help you if you wish. It is hard work digging the plants so it is nice to have help. I also have pots.

Sandy

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Sandy Wickman

Phone: (715) 365-8951

[Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov)

**From:** Patrick Hayes [<mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com>]   
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2017 3:01 PM  
**To:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR <[Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Purple Loosestrife

Hi Sandy,

In regards to my July kit:

1 Sent it in on Monday 7/31.  They returned it on Wednesday 8/2, and I got it back on Thursday 8/3.

I intend on sending the August kit in on Monday 8/21.  I will do as requested and forward the tracking information at that time.

As for the beetles, let’s stay in touch on that as I would like to looking into raising them.  When would one start?  Or, maybe I just ought to go to the site, which I will.

Regards,

Pat

**From:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR [<mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov>]   
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2017 2:47 PM  
**To:** Patrick Hayes  
**Subject:** RE: Purple Loosestrife

I like the idea of pulling the accessible plants. If it is really wet, the plants pull out fairly easily. I would cut off the flower heads and associated seeds and bag the flowers before pulling. It would reduce the number of seeds that would go back into the soil.

I have herbicide available but you need to get to the plant to spray it and if the plants are inaccessible the chemical is not very effective (if it is a wetland, you would need a permit from the DNR to apply herbicide).

I believe that the beetles have all been distributed from McNaughton for this year. If you wish, you can plan for next year and dig purple loosestrife plants and raise beetles yourself. I have pools and netting and most everything you would need. I can help you if you wish to plan for next year.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/loosestrife.html>

It really takes a fair amount of work and planning to raise beetles so it is good to start planning for next year. I am glad that the beetles are doing their job.

Sandy

**From:** Patrick Hayes []   
**Sent:** Saturday, August 12, 2017 6:14 PM  
**To:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR <[Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov)>  
**Subject:** Purple Loosestrife

Hi Sandy,

Hope your summer is going along well.  It is for us.

Just received a report from our SGLA member in charge of monitoring our Purple Loosestrife infestation between Gunlock and Shishebogama lakes, in the channel.  We have a plan of attack for pulling accessible plants.  In addition, he is reporting that some of the plants look very eaten.  Meaning, planting beetles in there last year is working!

I now am asking, would we be able to plant more beetle plants in there this year, or would we be better off waiting until next spring.

If now, can you give me contact information on the place to get the plants?

Pat Hayes

On Aug 30, 2017, at 3:41 PM, Patrick Hayes <[phayes@fabricimages.com](mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com)> wrote:

Hi Rob,

Sandy Wickman is my Oneida County DNR contact in regards to AIS.  She is MOST helpful in all cases.

I will complete the field report for the release of the beetles last year.  Do you remember what month we did that?

Regards,

Pat

**From:** Patrick Hayes [<mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com>]   
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2017 1:22 PM  
**To:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR <[Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.Wickman@wisconsin.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Dams and Purple Loosestrife

Hi Sandy,

The following is the latest update from us in regards to Purple Loosestrife management.  I am not sure if I am to report this to UW.  If you would tell me porotcol, I will do so.  I do believe there is something on our internet project list.  I am guessing I should go there for data entry, correct?

Last, can you lead me to more information on what the beetle looks like?  I am sure we went over this, but it is always the easy route to bug you?  (no pun intended).

Pat

**From:** Rob [<mailto:robfox53@gmail.com>]   
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 30, 2017 1:16 PM  
**To:** Patrick Hayes  
**Cc:** Rich Carini; bobs; Doug Holle; Bill & Pat Melby  
**Subject:** Re: Dams and Purple Loosestrife

Thanks for your mucky work Pat, it's not easy.   I am available only Thursday afternoon and Friday next week.  I can help then.

This past Monday I clipped and bagged all dry (last year's) seed tops and flowers off the Purple Loosestrife in front of the two owners' property on the north side of the Gunlock channel on the west end.  I then proceeded to pull or dig out the plants by their rootballs and put the rootballs up on shore.  Some of those plants look to have been established there for years--6 feet tall with large crowns, others small.  I took out all I could identify and obtained consent of the property owners about our continuing surveillance of their property.  The small plants before blooming look similar to Swamp Milkweed foliage, so I hope I didn't dig any of that native plant.  As far as the easternmost property, which is for sale, in my opinion that area is a "control " only area--perhaps with more beetles. Many of those plants looked "unhealthy," as if the beetles are having some effect.   It is too infested and swampy, like the tribal land further east, to do anything more.   Hopefully by digging isolated plants as we find them in other areas, we can prevent any extensive spread from there.

By the way, does anyone know what the beetles look like?   I saw some on the plants I dug which looked similar to Ladybugs, and also some smaller 1-2 mm all black beetles.  I did not see any beetles on the plants we set out last summer, so really don't know their appearance.

Rob  
  
Sent from my iPad

On Aug 30, 2017, at 12:49 PM, Patrick Hayes <[phayes@fabricimages.com](mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com)> wrote:

Hi Rob and Rich, et al;

Rob, thanks much for the heads up on the Beaver Dam in the river.  That is the best built dam produced by those critters.  It was down to having mud packed on the top.

Due to the soft bottom, I was unable to get more than ten feet on the west side taken down.  This did relieve the water congestion, but the remainder still needs to come down.  Due to the upcoming busy weekend, I won’t be able to assist further with its deconstruction until Tuesday.

If anyone is available next week, let me know.  I think that one ought to take about two hours to clear out.

As for going further down the river, it was not possible, as the cleared area was too risky for me to take my boat through.  I didn’t want to get over, and then find I couldn’t get back, being by myself.

Work for another day.

Regards

Pat

P. S.  Gunlock channel is cleared.  For today.

2/9/17

Hi Pat,

You aren’t a pest at all – I appreciate all the work that you do. Hope you are enjoying the winter. I do appreciate the sunshine.

Pat Goggin is the contact person for Healthy Lakes. He is located in the Rhinelander office at 715-365-8943.

The web site for Healthy lakes has some good implementation practices and Pat has a new handout (in draft form) that has straightforward advice on plant species and placement of plants. Brent Hanson from Hanson’s in Rhinelander sells many of the native plants that are listed in Pat’s publication.

<http://healthylakeswi.com/best-practices/>

I have lost my purple loosestrife co-coordinator. John Preuss (AIS Coordinator for Lincoln, Langlade and Forest County) was not funded in this grant cycle. John and I dug plants and potted the plants and distributed them together so I am not sure how much time I will have to devote to purple loosestrife this year. It is very disheartening that the work that John did will come to an end. The counties do not see the need to come up with the money to fund the position and prefer to wait for grant money.

For your project, the plants were put out and the beetles are in place. They are in the leaf litter now and will over winter unless they are flooded. It will take time for them to do their work. You can continue to cut blossoms to reduce the seed if that is possible.

The other options you have (other than bio-control) is to dig up the plants or to use chemical control. Chemical control of larger, older plants is not very successful and the seed bank is present in the soil so you need to remove them for the next decade to make sure you are getting all of the plants. We used to try to use chemical control and eventually gave up because it was only successful on young plants.

You could come up with a plan where you removed young plants (they are fairly easy to hand pull if the soil is soft) or removed those plants that were easy to get to. I do have herbicide. A permit is required from the DNR in wetland or aquatic sites.

Sandy

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Sandy Wickman

Phone: (715) 365-8951

[Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov)

**From:** Patrick Hayes [<mailto:phayes@fabricimages.com>]   
**Sent:** Thursday, August 18, 2016 7:47 PM  
**To:** Wickman, Sandra J - DNR  
**Cc:** [eorstead@aol.com](mailto:eorstead@aol.com); Bob Schmidman ([bobs@wi.rr.com](mailto:bobs@wi.rr.com)); Holle81 ([holle81@aol.com](mailto:holle81@aol.com))  
**Subject:** Purple Loosestrife plants

Hi Sandy,

The Loosestrife plants that you gave us (10) are alive and well, and up to 6 feet tall and about ready to flower.  That is, until we took them out this week.

What appeared to be a thriving beetle community munching away at the plants seems to have disappeared.  In fact the plants that they were to have attacked are thriving better than ever, and we have noticed another ¼ mile of shoreline that has spots of new plant growth.

Our Doug Holle, who was involved in originally locating your plants, was in there this week for inspection.  He not only removed those plants, but attempted to take the flowers off of as many existing plants as possible.

Now what?  Any comments or suggestions.

On another topic for Elaine, but want you to also read this Sandy………………

Elaine,

While Doug was doing a Loosestrife plant check, he landed his canoe at the cottage next to Smith’s.  That is the brown one that is for sale.  Once on that pier, he noticed an overabundance of Milfoil surrounding the pier and mixed in with the lily pads.  Not being sure if it was Northern or EWS, he asked if it would be possible for you to take a walk over there and inspect the milfoil surrounding that pier.  OK, by you?

(Elaine responded that she would check this out)

Regards to all,

Pat

8/19/16

Hello,

Purple loosestrife seems to be particularly abundant this year. Places where I have never seen purple loosestrife suddenly have many plants with multiple blossoms. It is a good year for purple loosestrife. I am dismayed by how many plants are along Highway 13 in Price and Taylor County.

The Galerucella beetles and larvae that were on the plants that you brought in likely left those plants and moved to existing purple loosestrife plants.  I am a little dismayed that the plants in the pots were so healthy.

It takes time for the beetles to reproduce and do their work. Just keep checking the plants for beetle damage on the leaves. We have released hundreds of thousands of beetles on the Thoroughfare on Highway 47 since the mid 1990’s and some years there is a noticeable difference in the abundance and vitality of the plants (and other years, there is more purple out there then we would like to see).

Be patient and keep an eye on the beetle damage on the leaves. Hopefully, the beetles will be happy and over winter and will increase in abundance. The beetles aren’t a quick fix but one that hopefully will reduce the population over time.

The best that you can do is to remove blossoms early. The plant blooms from the bottom up and the seeds at the bottom are being released when the top of the plant is in blossom. If the plants are growing in muck or sphagnum, you may be able to hand pull the plants. All plants and blossoms should be bagged and taken to the landfill and not composted.

Here are two forms that should be filled out and returned to Brock Woods (the purple loosestrife coordinator for Wisconsin)

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/forms/InsectRelease.pdf>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/forms/SiteRevisit.pdf>

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sandy

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Sandy Wickman

Phone: (715) 365-8951

[Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Sandra.wickman@wisconsin.gov)

**From:** Woods, Brock - DNR   
**Sent:** Thursday, August 18, 2016 6:36 PM  
**To:** Van Egeren, Scott J - DNR  
**Cc:** Kreitlow, James D - DNR; Wakeman, Robert S - DNR; Thomsen, Shelly B - DNR; Van Egeren, Scott J - DNR; Schaal, Carroll - DNR; Bates, Jeremy M - DNR; Wickman, Sandra J - DNR  
**Subject:** RE: Price County Sailor Creek Flowage Purple loosestrife

Everyone,

It does seem to be a good year for PL—my guess is it’s because it has been so wet through the summer, and flooding could be opening up new sites. However, it is increasingly important to note if the plants in question already have beetles that are doing all that we expect of them. Are the plant only ~waist height, candelabra-like (as opposed to a strong, tall central leader), and with short inflorescences (only 6 to 10 inches or so, rather than feet long). All these characteristics indicate that beetles are present on the plants noted. Thus, even in a year when the plants flower a little more than before—and that’s when people notice them, one often can tell if biocontrol is already present locally. Because there is annual (or longer cycle) variation in level of control by our beetles, it’s pretty important to note these things in determining biocontrol need in an area. Of course, it never hurts to put more beetles into any site since they are quite monophagous, and I rarely discourage cooperators, but their efforts might be better spent on some other invasive species. Unfortunately, few want to use herbicides (and I don’t blame them), and there are precious few other non-chemical control activities for most other wetland invasive plants. Thus, we need more biocontrol research! Also,like I said, I rarely discourage raising beetles, even if not sorely needed, because it gets folks involved in a positive way. Hopefully, they will want to stay involved afterwards.

BTW (Sandy, in particular), I have had McNaughton Correctional Facility (Oneida Co.) inmates raise lots of beetles over the last several years. The insects are then shared among many in the North who need them. If you think lots should be going to any special place, let me know.

Brock

Brock Woods   
Wisconsin Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol & Wetland Invasive Plant Programs   
608-266-2554