

Weed Awareness



Prepared by

Weed Control Authority
Lancaster County



The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority. Russell Shultz serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Barb Frazier and Linda Spilker, Account Clerk.

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About the Weed Control Authority

The Weed Control Authority is responsible for implementation of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act throughout Lancaster County. The authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program since entering into an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

Mission and Goals

Our mission is for the education of the public concerning noxious weeds and to exercise the necessary authority to obtain effective control of noxious weeds county-wide and the education of the public concerning weed abatement and to exercise the necessary authority to cut and clear overgrown weeds and worthless vegetation in the City of Lincoln.

1. Make the landowners of Lancaster County aware of the legal requirements and benefits of controlling noxious weeds.
2. Make the citizens of Lincoln aware of legal requirements and benefits of cutting and clearing overgrown weeds and worthless vegetation.
3. Efficiently and effectively exercise authority when necessary to obtain acceptable noxious weed control.
4. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of operations through management techniques.

2005 Annual Report

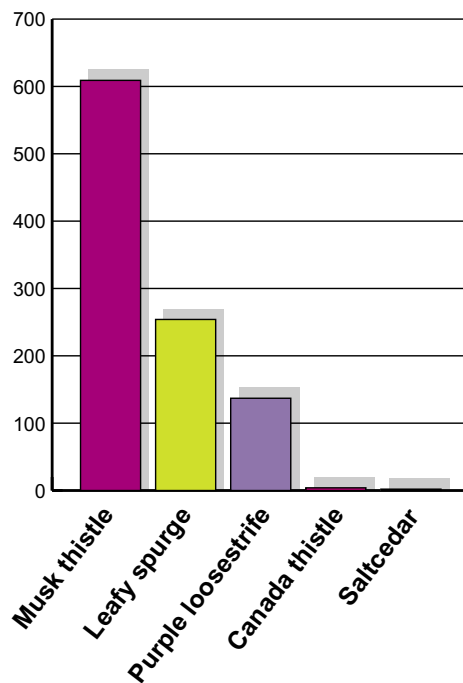
The Lancaster County Weed Control Authority approves an annual noxious weed control plan that guides the operations of the staff for the year. It sets forth an overall goal of obtaining voluntary compliance with the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act and the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program. Efforts are directed at making landowners aware and receptive to the requirements of the law and ordinance and willingness to comply. The inspection program is used to identify properties requiring follow-up actions to obtain compliance. Compliance is obtained with 70-75 percent of the notifications being a personal contact, card or letter rather than a legal notice.

Inspection Activity

A total of 7,175 inspections were made of 3,301 sites on 23,848 acres during the year. We found 2,839 violations on 5,723 acres. Violations increased 341 from last year, requiring 583 more inspections. There are four county inspectors outside the city limits of Lincoln and there are three inspectors in the city of Lincoln. Funds from a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant provided for a seasonal inspector for two months to make inspections for purple loosestrife along the streams in Lincoln. The inspection season lasts from April until December.

Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Program — Infestations were found on 1,004 sites covering 4,908 acres. These infestations were found as a result of 2,388 inspections on 1,160 sites. The number of infestations found decreased by 63, but the acres remained about the same. There were 114 less purple loosestrife infestations

1,004 Total Noxious Weed Violations/ Infestations



found. This decrease was the result of less ornamental plantings found. There were 17 new wild infestations found along streams that were escapes from the ornamental plantings. The number of infestations found by noxious weed is shown above. Of these sites, 791 were controlled by landowners. The Authority controlled 42 sites on 30 acres. The fall inspection of musk thistle was reduced because of the dry weather. Conditions were not good for optimum control. Control was deferred to spring on 74 sites.

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program — Even though the weather conditions were dry, weed abatement demand was greater. The

number of weed abatement violations increased by 404. This created a 28 percent increase in inspection workload. There were 4,787 inspections made on 2,141 sites on 1,060 acres. There were 1,835 violations as a result of 1,674 complaints. There was a continuing emphasis on obtaining voluntary compliance of landowners. Almost 94 percent of owners cut their overgrowth after notification. This was accomplished with 70 percent of the notifications being other than legal notifications. Bankruptcies continue to be a problem. We published 142 notifications in the paper. Forced cutting had to be performed on 107 sites at the cost of \$13,962. Of these sites, 81 had to be specially assessed for \$10,557.

Public Awareness

The major information efforts are a four-page Weed Awareness special insert in the March Lancaster County Extension Nebline, and maintaining and updating Internet Home page. There are 11,000 copies of the Weed Awareness insert published and there were 44,723 hits on the Web site in 2005. Other informational efforts include over 1,000 special mailings, almost 3,000 notifications of violations, several news articles and a state fair exhibit.

Other Activities

Other activities include making inspections for weed-free forage certification, participating with the Lower Platte Weed Management Area, attending required continuing education sessions and actively participating in the Nebraska Weed Control Association and the North American Weed Management Association.

Learn to Recognize Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act states it is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Pictured are Nebraska's noxious weeds which can be found in Lancaster County.*



Musk Thistle



Leafy Spurge



Purple Loosestrife



Canada Thistle



Saltcedar



Plumeless Thistle

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation. The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.

*Nebraska's noxious weeds Spotted and Diffuse Knapweeds have not be found in Lancaster County.

Weed Awareness

Weed Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware that noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified prior to harvest. Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority one to two weeks prior to harvesting. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost of bale tags.

Nebraska carries out its Weed-Free Forage Certification Program in accordance with the standards of the North American Weed Management Association standards.

The standards of this program are designed:

- To provide assurance to all participants that forage certified through this program meet a minimum acceptable standard.
- To provide continuity between provinces and states in the program.
- To limit the spread of noxious weeds through forage and mulch.
- To inspect for designated noxious 51 weeds of the cooperating states and provinces.
- To allow transportation of forage to other states, provinces and restricted areas.

Certified weed-free forage products include: straw, alfalfa/grass hay, forage pellets/cubes, alfalfa hay, grain hay and grass hay. Weed free forage is required on many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, in National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation land, military locations, tribal lands as well as National Fish and Wildlife refuges. The Nebraska Department of Roads requires weed-free forage on highway projects. Restrictions may apply to other lands administered by provincial, county, state or federal agencies.

For More Information

If you have questions about certification regulations or weeds not allowed in certified forage, please see the North American Weed Management Association's (NAWMA) Web site at <http://www.nawma.org> for a complete list of weeds and regulations.

Noxious Weed Control Tips

In order to obtain long-term effective noxious weed control, you must be smarter than the weeds. Here are ten control tips to remember.

1. Your infestations are most likely coming from seeds in your soil and not from other sources. Seeds will remain viable in the soil 10 to 20 years.

2. You are going to find infestations where you have found them in the past and in areas where the soil surface has been disturbed.

3. Prevent the germination of seeds by maintaining or establishing a good vegetative cover.

4. Biennial weeds (Musk and Plumeless thistle) are easiest to kill when small (rosette stage in spring or fall).

5. Perennial weeds should be controlled at the stage of growth the herbicide will be taken into the root system:

- Canada thistle—bud stage and fall regrowth
- Leafy spurge—flowering stage and fall
- Purple loosestrife—flowering stage

6. Fall is the best time to begin control efforts on biennial plants, they



Musk and plumeless thistle are easiest to kill during the rosette stage (pictured).

germinate in the fall and produce the seeds the next spring.

7. One-time control effort is not enough! You invariably will have some escapes from the first and even later efforts, and there may be plants that germinate after your initial control effort. Follow-up by scouting the area until after the normal flowering time of the plant.

8. It is always good to use a herbicide that has residual

control. It will not eliminate the need for follow-up scouting of the infestation, but it will reduce the amount of follow-up control required.

9. You do need to be alert to the introduction of new infestations. New infestations can begin from noxious weed seed infested hay, bedding and grass seed, flowing water along streams, movement of livestock from an infested area and other means of transportation.

10. Weeds won't wait. Be ready to act. Develop your control plan before the weeds start growing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension publication EC130 "2006 Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska" includes herbicide recommendations for noxious weeds. Available at the extension office for \$5 or free online at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendit/weeds>.



When Will Weeds Bloom?

When noxious weeds bloom depends whether you are in eastern Nebraska or western Nebraska or if the growing season is warmer or cooler than normal. Plants will bloom earlier in eastern Nebraska and earlier if the growing season is warmer. The concept of growing degree days was developed to predict the dates for growth stages for crops. Growing degree days can also be applied to other plants.

Growing Degree Days

The concept of growing degree days (GDD) resulted from observations that plant growth and development are more closely related to an accumulation of temperature above a certain base than time alone. The base temperature is a threshold below which growth does not take place. A base temperature of 40° F is commonly used for cool-season crops and 50° F for warm-season crops.

GDD for a particular day are obtained by subtracting the appropriate base temperature from the average daily temperature. Thus, on a day with temperature averaging 60° F, the GDD for a cool-season plant such as noxious

weeds would be $60 - 40 = 20$. For a warm-season crop such as beans, GDD would be $60 - 50 = 10$.

GDD and Stages of Growth of Nebraska Noxious Weeds

The Weed Control Superintendents in counties having an official Nebraska Weather Station were asked to record the dates that 50 percent of the musk thistle, Canada thistle, plumeless thistle and leafy spurge reached their key stages of growth. These observations were made in 1995, 1996 and 1997. The observed dates that 50 percent of the noxious weeds reached each of its growth stages was matched up with 40° F GDD data from the weather stations arriving at an average GDD required to reach each growth stage. Following is the average GDD required to reach the key growth stages for each of the observed noxious weeds and the date that this would occur in Lincoln in an average year.

Average growing degree days for noxious weeds (by stage of growth) and date this would occur in Lincoln

	Musk Thistle	Plumeless Thistle	Canada Thistle	Leafy Spurge
Bolting	1,000 May 5	1,000 May 8		
Bud	1,300 May 26	1,600 June 23	1,300 June 23	
Flower	1,700 June 14	2,000 June 30	2,000 June 30	1,000 May 5
Seed Dispersal	2,300 July 1	2,600 July 14	2,600 July 14	
Seed Filled				1,600 Jun 16

GDD by Stage of Growth and Lincoln Date

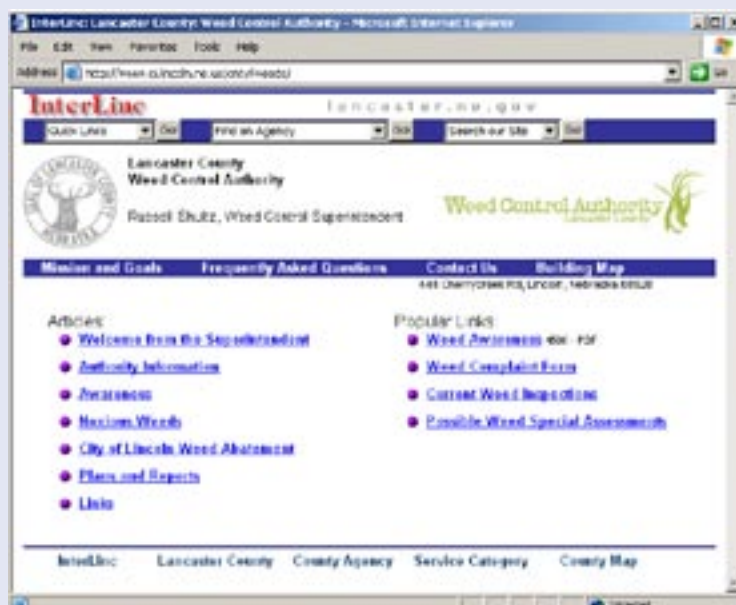
This information can be used to project the dates the noxious weeds would reach each of its growth stages in a normal year or a year that varied from normal by tracking the accumulated GDD for that year. Growing Degree Day information is available at Crop Watch Weather at <http://crop-watch.unl.edu/weather.htm>.

Lancaster County Weed Control Web site

The Lancaster County Weed Control Authority Web site at www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/cnty/weeds provides very useful information about the Authority's program and activities and about weed control and management. The site is continually being updated.

Via the Web site, you can:

- Contact the Weed Control Authority.
- Make a weed complaint.
- Make a real-time search of current weed inspections.
- Look at a map of noxious weed locations in the county.
- See the latest listing of possible weed special assessments.
- Study noxious weed and weed abatement laws and regulations.
- Learn about noxious weed identification.
- Read about the County Noxious Weed and City Weed Abatement Programs.
- See plans and reports.
- Check on noxious weed controls.
- Learn about managing natural areas in an urban setting.
- Test your knowledge about Nebraska weeds.
- Link to other weed control Web sites



Current Weed Inspections Search

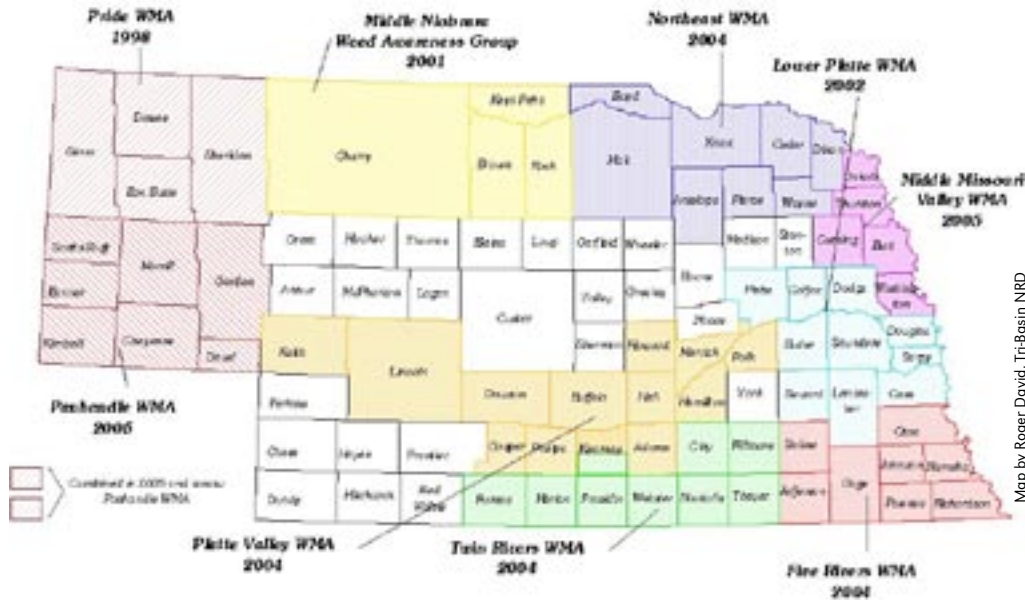
You may access information on the Web site about any active inspection made by the authority.

All inspections are shown for sites with infestations not yet under control. You may search for individual sites by entering the address of the parcel, the parcel ID number or the owner's name. You may also look at all the inspections for a weed problem: musk thistle, plumeless thistle, Canada thistle, leafy spurge purple loosestrife or weed abatement in Lincoln.

Weed Awareness

Nebraska Weed Management Areas

Much of the state is now organized into weed management areas (WMA). Eight of the nine have formed in the last four years. The Lower Platte Weed Management Area, which includes Lancaster County, was formed in 2002. It began as an organized effort to fight the non-native weeds invading the lower Platte River and then encouraged counties upstream to organize and fight these weeds before the seeds could come downstream. The purpose of creating a WMA is to facilitate cooperation among landowners and others to manage common weed problems in a common area. County weed control authorities had been developing annual noxious weed control plans and have been cooperating with public and private landowners and others in carrying out the noxious weed programs. But the WMA's allow for a more formalized way to involve others and to address common problems across a common area and not stopping at county lines. A recently recognized common problem of three



Map by Roger David, Tri-Basin NRD

non-native plants invading riparian areas along streams, has been a major impetus to become organized. Purple loosestrife became a noxious weed in 2001 and saltcedar became a noxious weed in 2005. Phragmites or common reed is not yet designated as a noxious weed, but is a major concern. Recent amendments to the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act allowed for emergency designation of saltcedar and provided for a matching grant

program to encourage the formation of multi-stakeholder WMA's with provisions for federal and other sources of funding. The Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund awarded a \$250,000 grant to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture to initiate this matching grant program. Five of the WMA's, including the Lower Platte Weed Management Area, just received approval for grants from this program.

Lower Platte Weed Management Area

Lancaster County Weed Control Authority is participating in the fourth year of the 10-county Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA)

This project targets non-native invasive weeds invading the natural plant communities along 170 miles of the Platte and Missouri Rivers and their drainage areas. This project is detecting, preventing and controlling three invasive weeds (purple loosestrife, salt cedar and phragmites) in 10 counties of east central Nebraska. The three targeted weeds are invaders of the riparian area along the Platte and Missouri Rivers. These plants are still in the early stages of invasive plant population dynamics. If left uncontrolled, they will enter the colonization phase (population explosion phase). This would create major impacts on native vegetation and reduce the quality of wildlife habitat, restrict stream flows contributing to flooding and ice jams and using twice as much water as the vegetation they replace. The Lower Platte River is the mainstay of the endangered interior least tern breeding habitat in Nebraska and contributes significantly to the threatened piping plover habitat. These birds nest on sandbars and sandpits along the river. Nearly 10 percent of the entire interior least tern breeding population rests along this portion of the river. Sandbar habitat is also critical to migrating shore birds, waterfowl and other wading birds. Purple loosestrife and phragmites invasion makes these areas less desirable habitat. A natural restoration process will take place by removing invasive plants and allowing for natural regeneration from existing native plant seed bank.

Efforts are being made throughout the area to promote awareness and provide organized control efforts. Assistance is being provided to the 855 landowners along the Lower Platte River in developing control plans.

Accomplishments in 2005 include:

- Almost 2,000 acres have been



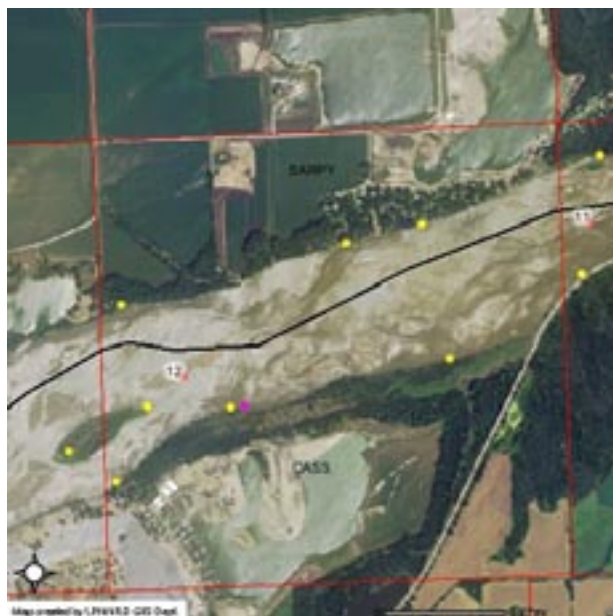
Map by Steve Cacioppo, LPNNRD

controlled by partners and landowners exceeding the goals set.

- A public service billboard is being displayed for 12 months at sites along the interstate in the project area.
- There are 7 kiosks placed at high traffic locations including the Henry Doorly Zoo.
- A Web site has been developed and

maintained.

- A Web-based mapping program has been developed.
- A Lower Platte Weed Management Area brochure has been completed.
- Exhibits and displays placed at several events.
- Informational tours given to public and landowners
- Numerous newspaper articles have been printed on invasive and noxious weed control.
- Efforts to increase local funding has included presentations at seven Natural Resources Districts.
- Letters to all landowners and meetings with public and corporate landowners.



An example of the Web-based mapping program showing purple loosestrife infestations along the Platte River, online at <http://www.lowerplattewma.org>

LPWMA is promoting aggressive organized control efforts upstream. We encouraged 42 counties upstream in forming five weed management areas with our assistance. Monthly mailings are shared with eight weed management areas and joint meetings will be held four times a year. An effort is being initiated to plan a statewide summit conference on "Threats to Nebraska Rivers."

Professional Invasive Weed Associations

Participation in the Nebraska Weed Control Association (NWCA) and the North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) has benefited the Lancaster County and Nebraska noxious weed programs. The control authority has contributed to these associations by its membership and participation of its staff. Following is a summary of some key benefits obtained.

Professional Improvement and Certification

NWCA sponsors four continuing education sessions a year. NAWMA has a program that provides a Certified Manager of Invasive Plants which includes Internet available training and resource materials, certification exam and continuing education requirements.

Funding Needs

NAWMA has been a part of the steering committee of the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Pulling Together Initiative grant program that has provided funds for five areas in Nebraska including Lancaster County. A federal "2004 Noxious Weed Control & Eradication Act" was passed with the support of NWCA and NAWMA. When funded, this law will make federal matching funds available to local weed control efforts. NWCA worked with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and Agricultural Committee of the Unicameral making noxious and invasive grants available and to get dedicated funding for the Nebraska Noxious Weed Program. Eight projects received grants from funds provided by the Nebraska Environmental Trust including the Lower Platte Weed Management Area.

Improved Laws and Authorities

NAWMA prepared a model invasive plant management act. NWCA working with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and Agricultural Committee of the Unicameral used some ideas from the model act to amend the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act to provide a grant program, emergency noxious weed designation and dedicated funding for the noxious weed program. This helped trigger the formation of seven weed management areas in the state.

Sharing Information

Both NWCA and NAWMA have Annual Conferences and NAWMA publishes a quarterly newsletter that provides for an exchange of information, education, training, weed management practices, programs and technologies. Both associations have information Web pages. The NWCA address is <http://neweed.org> and NAWMA address is <http://nawma.org>.

Coordinated and Uniform Efforts

NAWMA worked with states (including NWCA) and provinces in establishing standards for a Weed-Free Forage Program and coordinating the development of invasive plant mapping standards. NWCA is making a state-wide Web-based weed mapping program available with funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

The continued interaction of weed management professionals not only provides these and other benefits, it reenergizes the participants and improves the quality and quantity of performance.

Weed Awareness

More Purple Loosestrife Along Streams

Purple loosestrife is continuing to invade the streams in the city of Lincoln. Seventeen new infestations were found in 2005 as a result of intensive survey effort. This brings the total of wild infestations of purple loosestrife found to 45 since 2001. The seed source for these wild plants is from the ornamental lythrum plantings that have been made in yards throughout the city. Many homeowners had mistakenly been told these ornamental plants were sterile and would not produce viable seed. The plants may have been self-sterile but are able to cross-pollinate with other lythrum plants and produce viable seed. When carried by water to a location with saturated soil conditions, the viable seeds can germinate and become wild infestations of purple loosestrife.

Purple loosestrife is a serious threat to wetland biodiversity. It can spread and form dense stands which block out other plants. The tall plants can change the habitat of wetland and waterway sites so the species that used to grow there are no longer able to survive.

If allowed to spread, it will colonize water margins, ponds and shallow lakes, affecting wetland wildlife. Purple loosestrife also has the potential to clog

drainage and irrigation ditches.

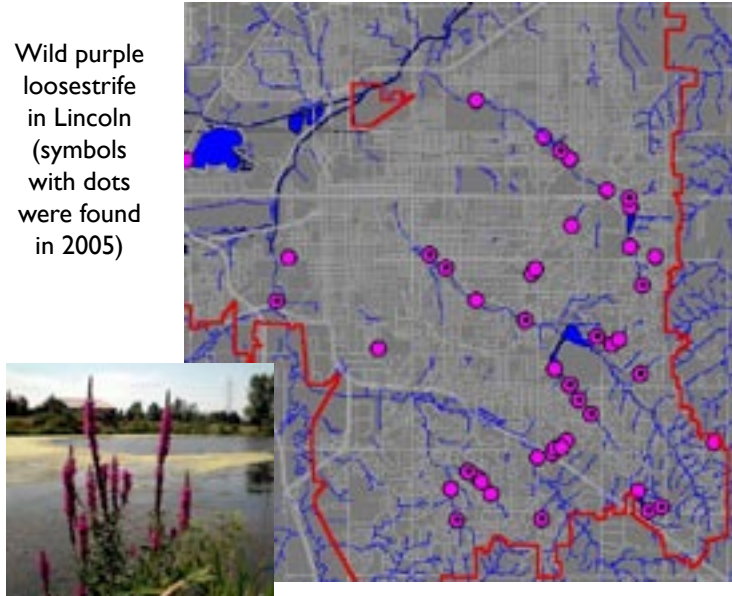
Each plant is capable of producing millions of seeds, which are mainly dispersed by water. Pieces of plant will also take root. Its ability to reproduce prolifically and spread also contribute to its weediness. This potential for rapid spread and increase in population size mean if we are to have a realistic chance of getting on top of the problem, we

have to act quickly.

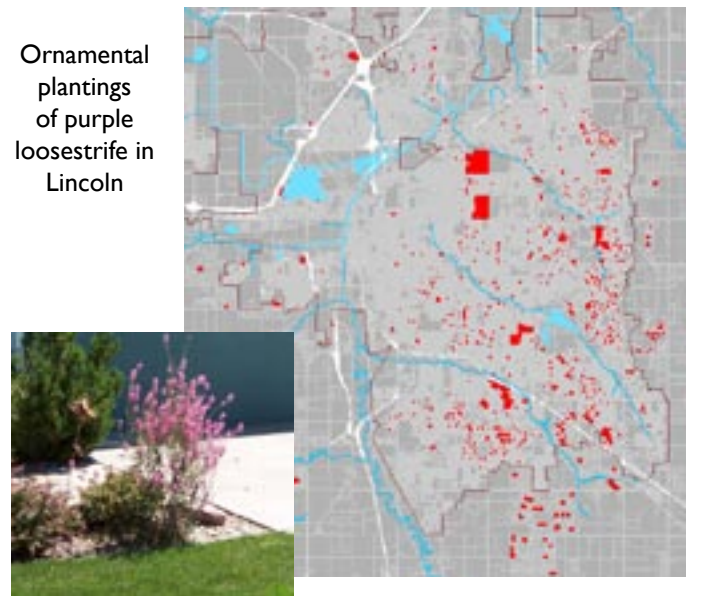
Until 2001, purple loosestrife was available through garden centers and nurseries. However, it has now been designated a noxious weed under the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act. This means it can't be propagated or sold. We have requested almost 1,000 homeowners remove plants. These homeowners, along with many others, have

removed the plants. Landowners with the wild plants have been asked to remove these infestations. They are doing so and are providing follow-up control in following years. Homeowners that still have plants are requested to remove them and to encourage others to remove plants they may have. Any ornamental or wild plants should be reported to the Weed Control Authority.

Wild purple loosestrife in Lincoln (symbols with dots were found in 2005)



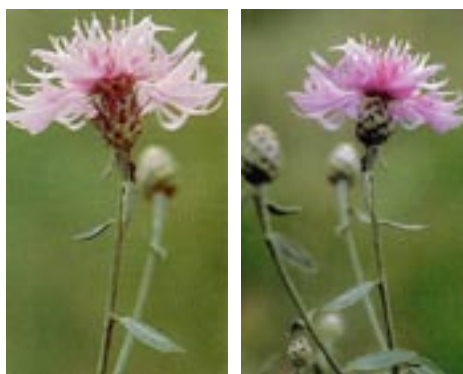
Ornamental plantings of purple loosestrife in Lincoln



Weed Alert

Landowners should be alert to new invasive weeds. It is much more cost effective to deal with invasive weeds when they are just getting started than when they become well established. Following is a description of some invasive weeds which have not yet taken hold in Lancaster County. Please report any sightings to the Weed Control Authority at 441-7817.

Knapweeds



Diffuse Knapweed Spotted Knapweed

Spotted Knapweed and Diffuse Knapweed are considered a major threat to the western rangeland states. They are designated noxious weeds in Nebraska. Approximately 7,000 acres of Nebraska have become infested, mainly in the North Central and Northeastern part of the state, with isolated infestations occurring in other parts of the state. A small spotted knapweed infestation was found in Lancaster County and has since been eradicated. This infestation was thought to be spread by imported sheep.

Diffuse and Spotted Knapweed are both pioneer species which readily establish themselves on dry, disturbed soils, such as roadsides. These aggressive plants then invade good condition, native hay and rangeland. Early spring growth makes them very competitive for soil nutrients and moisture. Evidence also indicates that allelopathic chemicals released by the Knapweed inhibits the growth of surrounding vegetation.

Knapweed seed is spread when the mature plants break off at the root stock and are blown by the wind, or are caught and dragged by vehicles. Infested hay can spread seed on the roadway while being transported and on fields

where the hay is fed. Individual seeds can be easily attached to, and transported by passing wildlife. Knapweed plants have a very bitter taste and infested rangeland are generally not grazed by cattle or wildlife. Recreational areas have been ruined because infestations of knapweed, with rough stems and spiny seed heads, make it difficult to walk through.

The knapweeds will most likely be spotted when it is flowering between June and September. It grows in pastures and roadsides. The bracts below the diffuse knapweed flower have a distinct terminal spine. Spotted knapweed does not have these spines.

Sericea lespedeza



Sericea Lespedeza

Sericea lespedeza (Lespedeza cuneata), or Chinese bush clover, is an introduced perennial legume native to eastern Asia. It is recognized for its tolerance of drought, acidity and shallow soils of low fertility. It will tolerate soils ranging from very acidic to slightly alkaline, but is best adapted to a pH of 6.0 to 6.5. It does best on clay and loamy soils that are deep, fertile and well drained, but will also grow on poor sites. It has few insect and disease problems. Sericea lespedeza's ability to thrive under a variety of conditions and its tendency to crowd out more palatable forages are among the reasons it has been declared a noxious weed in Kansas.

High tannin concentrations significantly reduce beef cattle grazing of sericea lespedeza. Livestock do not like to graze sericea lespedeza high in tannins. High levels of tannins cause sericea lespedeza to be unpalatable and reduce intake and digestibility. Tannins bind with proteins, causing them to be unavailable for digestion. The level of tannins appears to increase with maturity of the plant, high air temperatures and low rainfall. The tannins also reduce insect feeding. Sericea lespedeza was originally considered valuable as food and cover for wildlife. This has not been supported by research or practical experience.

Sericea was planted in the past to control soil erosion, provide forage for livestock and provide cover and food for wildlife. From these plantings, it has spread by animals and movement of hay contaminated with sericea seed to native prairies, shrublands, forests and introduced pastures.

Sericea lespedeza was introduced into Missouri and other southern states during the 1930s. It was planted on roadsides and for forage. It appears to be moving into Nebraska from Kansas, particularly in the southeast part. It also was planted in Nebraska including Lancaster County during the mid- to late-1970s for wildlife food and cover. Sericea lespedeza has been identified in about eight counties in southeast Nebraska. Wildlife managers are currently addressing sericea lespedeza on public lands. Private landowners have begun control efforts in many areas. Efforts are under way to identify infestations and conduct an aggressive public awareness campaign.

Sericea lespedeza is a shrubby, deciduous perennial about two to five feet tall. Coarse stems are single or clustered with numerous branches. New growth each year comes from buds located on the stem bases or crown about one to three inches below ground. Stems and branches are densely leaved. Leaves are trifoliate and attached by short petioles. Leaves are club- or wedge-shaped (wider at the tip than the base), 1/4 to 1-inch long, and 1/16 to 1/4-inch wide. The leaf is round to flat at the top, with

a conspicuous point at the tip. The lower leaf surface has silky hairs. Scale-like stipules are present on the stem.

Common Reed



Common Reed

Common reed, or Phragmites, is a tall, perennial grass that can grow to over 15 feet in height. Once Phragmites invades a site, it quickly can take over a wetland community, crowding out native plants, changing wetland hydrology, altering wildlife habitat and increasing fire potential. It has been found in a few locations in Lancaster County along Salt Creek and other drainages. Almost 100 miles of the Platte River from North Platte to Kearney has solid stands of phragmites on both banks, adjacent wetlands and islands. It is spreading at an alarming rate. Common reed is reducing the flow capacity of the streams and impacting wildlife such as cranes, waterfowl, least terns and piping plovers. The clogging of the streams will increase the threat of floods as rainfall returns to normal or above. It is a heavy water user, using twice as much water as the vegetation it replaces. The scattered infestations along the Lower Platte River have been doubling in the past three years.

Any suspected infestations of phragmites should be reported to the Authority.