

Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol Project - Timeline for Possible Activities

Activity	Task	Time period
General preparation for using biocontrol at a purple loosestrife infestation site	Identify purple loosestrife infestations/potential release sites and discuss potential project with landowners	Anytime
	Identify possible project partners	Anytime
	Identify potential funders (if necessary)	Anytime
	When you identify an ideal site, discuss potential project with WRP/submit site nomination form	Anytime, initiate at least 4 months prior to first beetle release or rearing activity at site
	Work with landowner and project partners to inform Conservation Commission* (Cons Com) of proposal to monitor site and/or release beetles to control purple loosestrife.	Initiate conversation at least 3 months prior to first beetle release or rearing activities at site.
	Ensure all permissions are granted (check with landowner, WRP for NHESP* review, and Conservation Commission, ACEC* (if applicable).	Anytime, prior to first beetle release or rearing activities at site.
Monitoring Site	Planning, gather monitoring supplies, and establish plots at site (Year 1).	Summer before first monitoring year (before fall baseline monitoring)
	Year 1, Monitor potential release site to collect baseline data (monitor baseline using fall protocol)	August or September
	Conduct annual spring monitoring beginning first year a release occurs at the site	End of May - July
	Conduct annual fall monitoring	August – September, ideally when purple loosestrife is in full bloom.
	Data entry/compilation, summary, reporting.	September - October
	Provide update for project partners, WRP, and conservation commission (if requested).	October - November
Map purple loosestrife infestations	Map purple loosestrife in a defined region (town, sub-watershed). Compile and submit data to your town conservation commission and WRP.	Anytime, but easiest in August or September when loosestrife is flowering
	Photo documentation of purple loosestrife, to track changes in infestation over time.	Anytime, but easiest in August or September when loosestrife is flowering
Inventory beetles and damage	Inventory biocontrol beetles and damage at sites away from known release sites. Compile and submit data to WRP via website.	Anytime in growing season if can recognize feeding damage. End of May -July are best months for observing beetles
Beetle rearing and release	Planning, gather rearing supplies and order beetles (if ordering beetles)	February - March
	Harvest Purple loosestrife rootballs from the field and deliver to propagation location(s). Pot up root balls and wait for plants to grow.	Late April, depending on timing of ground thaw.
	Put beetles on plants in sleeve cages. Beetles delivered when plants are ready (or collect beetles from existing site if possible).	Late May – June (or when plants are 18 inches tall in pots)
	Maintain plants and monitor beetle activity.	May - July
	Beetle release--beetles and plants transported to site when beetles emerge. If not released right away add purple loosestrife bouquet for beetle food.	When beetles emerge, usually late June or July
Beetle release without rearing	Beetles delivered and released directly to site	June through September

Notes:

*You will need to discuss with the town Conservation Commission if you plan to release beetles or dig up purple loosestrife plants.

NHESP – Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. DER communicates with them regarding all planned release sites annually (usually April). Georgeann Keer, DER to follow up. georgeann.keer@state.ma.us

ACEC – Areas of Critical Environmental Concern If a site is in an ACEC, the proponents should discuss the project plan with the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR’s) ACEC Program staff. Contact Nancy Putnam for follow up. nancy.putnam@state.ma.us
Phone: (617) 626-1394

BEETLE LIFECYCLE TIMELINE

