

Saving Acadia National Park from Purple Loosestrife Infestation



An invasive and non-native species, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is the No. 1 threat to 20 percent of wetland habitat in Maine's Acadia National Park.



Efforts to reduce purple loosestrife's effect on Acadia National Park have been successful.

Challenge:

Prevent new infestations of purple loosestrife, which can have a negative ecological impact in wetland areas currently free of the invasive weed, while keeping existing infestations at low levels.

Solution:

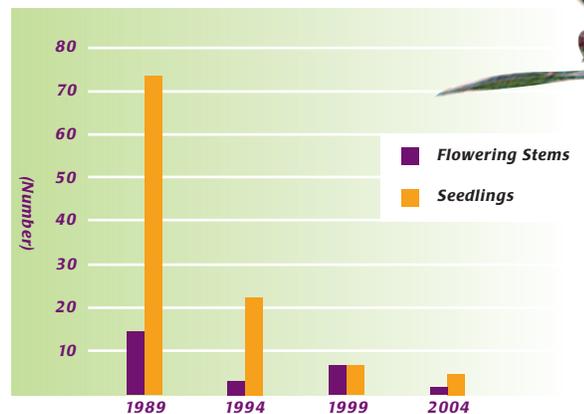
A program that began with park funds and continues today with funding from the National Park Service Natural Resource Challenge has eight major components: preventing new infestations, detecting new infestations, monitoring infestations, quantitatively measuring weed levels, treating existing populations, promoting education and outreach, coordinating management with adjacent landowners and agencies, supporting scientific research and managing data.

Result:

Each year, researchers sample seven permanent monitoring grids to count reproductive and non-reproductive purple loosestrife plants. Over a 16-year period, data shows a steady decline of purple loosestrife stems in each grid. But even with Acadia's success, unmanaged purple loosestrife populations are increasing rapidly just outside the park. Because invasive plant management remains a long-term commitment in the park, officials have expanded their management program to include other invasive species, such as alder buckthorn (*Rhamnus fragula*) and garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)



Purple Loosestrife Grid Counts



Learn More:

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