

August 7, 2008

## **Ontario Rangers Help In Fight Against Purple Loosestrife**

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority has enlisted the help of several groups of Ontario Rangers to help in the fight against Purple Loosestrife.

Purple Loosestrife is a European plant that was introduced to North America in the 1800's. For a time it was sold as an ornamental garden plant until its harmful effects were noticed. Loosestrife is extremely prolific and can take over the habitat of other natural plants. It thrives in wetlands and can also destroy essential habitat for wildlife such as ducks.

Control methods include manually removing the plants by the roots. Since 2006 Ontario Rangers have been digging out Purple Loosestrife plants along a stretch of Lakeshore Drive in Shuniah. To date, approximately 2/3 of this patch has been eradicated.

On August 11th and 12th Ontario Rangers from Nipigon, Sleeping Giant Provincial Park and Thunder Bay will make a final assault on this patch. Approximately 20 Rangers will work together with the goal of digging out the remaining Loosestrife plants. It's hoped that, if successful, only a few plants may appear at this location in the future and that they can easily be destroyed by a minimum number of volunteers.

The public is encouraged to take action if Purple Loosestrife is found on their property. Loosestrife should be dug out by the root before it goes to seed and it should be placed in plastic garbage bags and sent to a landfill.

Brochures to help identify Purple Loosestrife are available at the Conservation Authority office, 130 Conservation Road in Thunder Bay or online at [www.lakeheadca.com](http://www.lakeheadca.com).