



Weed Abatement Program Lancaster County / City of Lincoln

June 2012

www.lancaster.ne.gov/weeds

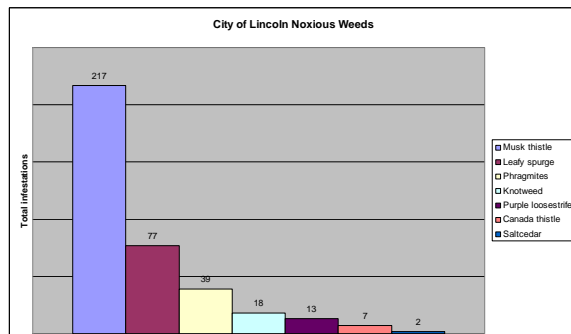
Weed Abatement Inspections

We've completed 2,838 inspections on weed abatement in the City of Lincoln through June. That is 567 more inspections, or almost 25% more inspections than during the same time period as last year. I feel the increase is mainly due to the warmer weather earlier this spring, the inspections in June were pretty normal compared to last year. The forecast for dryer, hotter weather in July should help keep the vegetation from growing as fast and in turn give us a chance to catch up.

Our office received 884 complaints from the public about overgrown properties and has had our contractor's complete 71 force cuttings. We have 248 open files we are currently working on to get controlled.

Noxious Weeds in Lincoln

Noxious weeds know no boundaries and grow inside the city limits just as easily as in the rural areas of Lancaster County. Through June our office completed 686 inspections on 373 infested sites.



The following article went out on this month's Acreage Owners list serve from UNL – Extension

Purple loosestrife

By [Brent Meyer](#), Lancaster County Weed Superintendent

Purple loosestrife was originally sold as an ornamental plant in Nebraska, but after its escape into the state's rivers, wetlands and marshes it was designated a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2001.



Purple loosestrife on the Platte River

Despite the sale of "sterile" cultivars in the nursery industry, and even though most owners of ornamental plants never saw any spread or escape in their own landscapes,



sterile plants were producing viable seed after pollination by wild loosestrife plants.

[Purple loosestrife](#) is

extremely difficult to control and once it gets

into wetlands and rivers it has the ability to

spread very rapidly. It is a perennial forb that originated in Eurasia and North Africa. It typically flowers from July to September, but this year with the warmer weather it is flowering in June and will continue to produce rose-purple flowers for the next few months. Its ability to produce flowers for extended time along its spike beginning at the bottom and slowly flowering to the top is one of the reasons it was a popular plant with homeowners, unfortunately it is also one of the reasons it is able to spread so rapidly on the rivers and in wetlands. Purple loosestrife is capable of producing millions of seeds that may lay dormant in the soil for many years. Another unique identify part of the plant is its square 4-angled stem.

Lancaster County Weed Control inspectors continue to find ornamental plantings occasionally, but they are very few compared to when it was first designated a noxious weed. We also have about 15 locations where purple loosestrife has spread into the wild. Those locations are being managed by the property owners. Chemical control has proven to be the most effective method to eradicate large infestations. Individual plants can be hand dug, completely removing all the root system and put in a closed container to allow the entire plant to completely dry out before placing it in a tightly wrapped dark plastic bag to prevent contamination at the landfill.



Contact Information

We need everyone’s help, so if you would like more information on purple loosestrife or would like to report an infestation contact the [Lancaster County Weed Control](http://LancasterCountyWeedControlOffice.com) Office. Email: weeds@lanaster.ne.gov or phone 402-441-7817.

Weed Control host “Weed Walk”

Lancaster County Weed Control hosted the “Weed Walk” tour sponsored by the 5 Rivers Weed Management Area on June 21st at [Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center](http://SpringCreekPrairieAudubonCenter.com) south of Denton.

We were lucky to pick a day when the temperature was in the low 80’s with low



humidity. A good crowd showed up to hear Ben Mullarkey, Habitat Program Manager at Spring Creek

Prairie described the management practices, some of the history of the property, grazing practices and the goals for the prairie.

The group then went on a walk out on the prairie with Chris Helzer, Program Director for [The Nature Conservancy](http://TheNatureConservancy.com). Chris was able to point out many different plant species and tell about what makes them thrive. He pointed out that some of the plants were there because of overgrazing or prior year’s management and some thrive because of weather



conditions and soil types. Chris’s message is that by looking at the plants that exist you can often tell what is right or wrong with the management on a piece of property.

Following the tour a picnic lunch was provided by the 5 Rivers WMA.

July Planned Activities

- 4 Holiday
- 9-13 Brent’s Vacation
- 10 5 Rivers WMA
- 12 Management Team Meeting
- 13 Invasive Species Council
- 17 LPWMA Meeting
- 19 NWCA Region 1
- 24 Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance tour
- 26 Problem Resolution Team