Prairie Fen Companion *Plant facts*

Purple loosestrife

Lythrum salicaria

C=0
Color: purple
Irregular flower

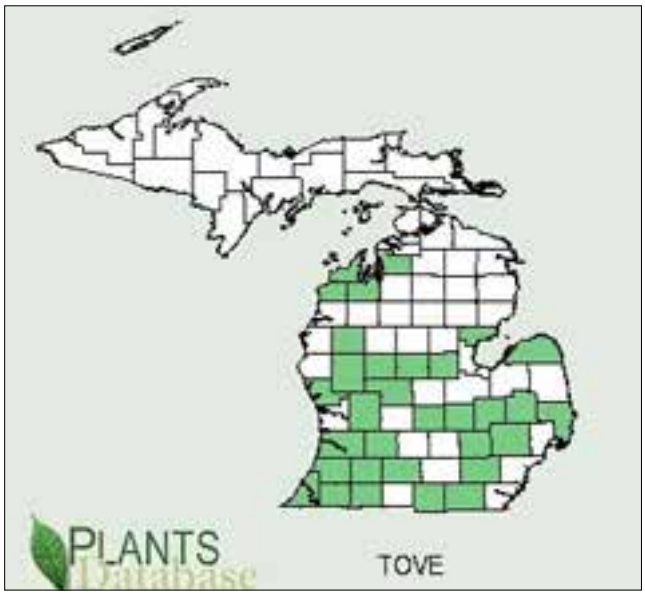
Plant type: Flowering perennial

Bloom period: July – August

Distinguishing characteristics: Leaves are opposite, elongate, and entire (smooth-edged) and attach to a square stem. Showy, five to six-petaled purple flowers bloom in a spike. Plants grow 1-4 feet tall.

Habitat Quality: This species is a non-native invasive that occurred in such large numbers that a leaf-feeding beetle (Galerucella calmariensis; http://bit.ly/galcal1) was introduced to the Midwestern United States beginning in the late 1990's to control purple loosestrife populations. Plants throughout Michigan will likely be controlled by these beetles, but cultural control, including herbicide application, may be needed to keep populations in check in other areas.

Where can you find this plant?



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Michigan Natural Features Inventory

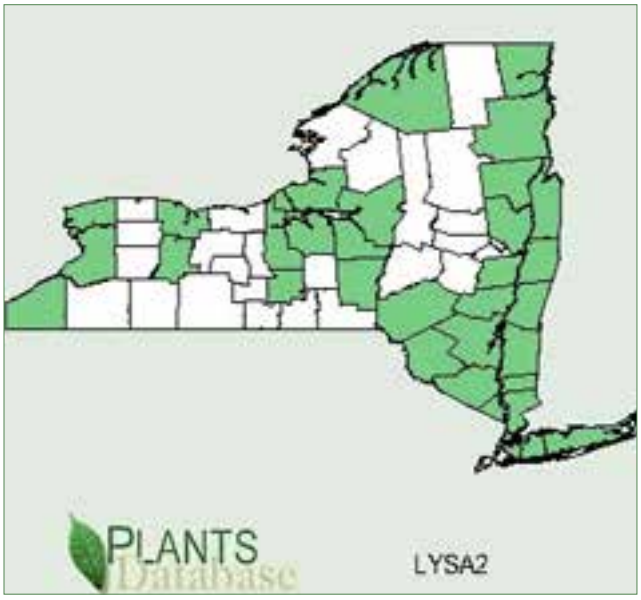
The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

The Stewardship Network

Developed by: Doug Landis and Anna Fiedler, MSU Department of Entomology. Funding support: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Lynn and Thelma MacCready Forest and Wildlife Endowment, MSU, and Hanes Trust of the Michigan Botanical Club. Partners: The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Natural Features Inventory, The Stewardship Network, Michigan DNR Landowner Incentive Program. For more information on native plants and prairie fens, go to www.nativeplants.msu.edu.

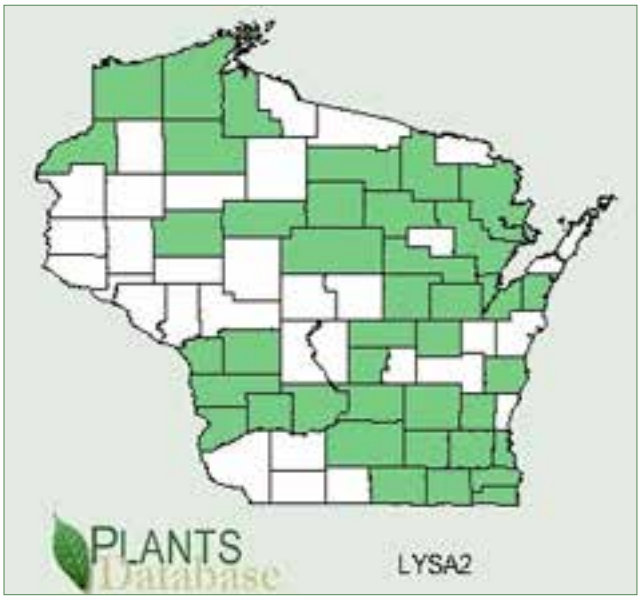
Where can you find this plant?

Indiana



New York

Ohio



Wisconsin

For more information on native plants and prairie fens, go to www.nativeplants.msu.edu

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Key description

C=

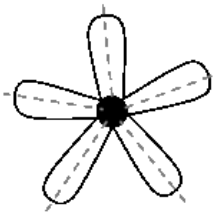
Coefficient of conservatism. This is a value that ranges from 0 for non-native invasives to 10 for plants that would only be expected to be found in undisturbed, high quality plant communities. It is a general guideline for whether the plant would be likely to be found in an intact prairie fen (not filled in with shrubs and without invasive species). However, C values may be high for some species that are not found in prairie fen but would be part of another wetland such as a marsh. They are included here because they are a widely accepted measure of habitat quality in the Midwest (http://1.usa.gov/FQAMethod).

Flower type

Classifications here follow those of Newcomb's wildflower guide (http://amzn.com/0316604429).

Number of regular parts

The flower has this number of petals or petal-like parts that are symmetrical from the flower center (radial), with each similar to the other in shape, size, and color. There may be 3 to 7 regular parts. See image at right.



Aster

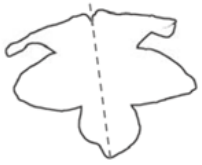
These flowers have regular parts and are symmetrical from the center, but there are more than 7. Asters have a set of disc flowers in the center of the flower and a set of ray flowers outside of the disc flowers, often called petals. They are one group (genus) within the family Asteraceae, and there are many species in this genus.

Flowers not readily obvious

The flowers of plants such as grasses, sedges, and cattail are not obvious and are often confused with the fruits (seeds) of these species. While this website does not include flower descriptions for these species, they do flower.

Irregular

The flower is not symmetrical from the center but is symmetrical down a line (bilateral). See image at right.



No flowers

A number of primitive plants, including ferns, do not flower but make spores in order to reproduce.

Parts indistinguishable

These species either have parts so small their number is difficult to determine or have no petal-like parts. This group includes goldenrods, other species with small individual flowers, and plants in the family Asteraceae that have more than 7 parts, but the parts do not form distinguishable, symmetrical ray flowers (which are often called petals).

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