PLANT FACT SHEET

Lythrum salicaria L.

GENUS *Lythrum* **FAMILY** Lythraceae

COMMON NAMES Purple loosestrife, Spiked loosestrife, Striped loosestrife

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Stem, Root

The young shoots are cleaned, boiled, washed again and then seasoned and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A herb. It grows to 60-150 cm tall and 45-60 cm wide. It keeps growing from year to year. Young growth is usually hairy. It has strong upright stems. These arise from a clump of downy leaves. The leaves are 2-7 cm long by 1 cm wide. The flowering stalk is spike like and very long. The flowers are small and starry. They are about 1.8 cm across. They can be pink or purplish red. The fruit is a small capsule enclosed in a tube of the flower. One mature plant can produce one million seeds.

HABITAT

It can grow in subtropical and temperate regions. It is frost hardy. It will grow in most soils. It suits moist or boggy land. It can grow on the edges of water a few cm deep. In Pakistan it grows between 600-1,500 m altitude. It can tolerate shade. It suits hardiness zones 3-10. Tasmania Herbarium.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. They can also be grown from cuttings. These should be planted into wet soil.

NOTES

It is used in medicine. There are 38 Lythrum species. It has been declared a weed in some States of the USA. It can be invasive.
Chemical composition: Ash = 7.3%. Rich in lime, starch, sugars, carotene. and pectin

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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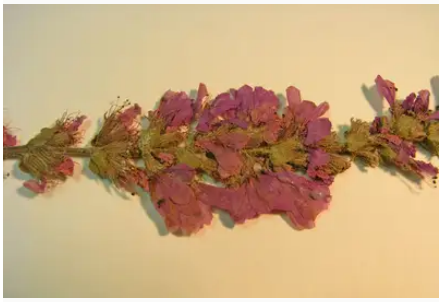

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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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