

# BEETLE FARMERS: A SOLUTION FOR PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

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Invasive non-native plants are a serious concern because they decrease the abundance of native species and reduce biological diversity. Biological control, the use of natural enemies to reduce a plant's population below an economic or biological threshold, is a sustainable, low-input method to control purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*).



*Galerucella* leaf-feeding beetle



Feeding damage on purple loosestrife by *Galerucella* beetles

*Galerucella* leaf-feeding beetles have been approved by state and federal governments for biological control of purple loosestrife. The beetles feed primarily on purple loosestrife and do not prefer other kinds of plants. Feeding injury by the beetles helps to reduce purple loosestrife populations that invade wetlands in Connecticut and throughout the US.



Purple loosestrife taking over a meadow



Beetle Farmers from a middle school ecology club

BEETLE FARMER TIME LINE	
MARCH	Obtain supplies
APRIL	Dig plants
MAY	Collect beetles for plants
JUNE	Identify release site
JULY	Release new generation beetles



Collecting beetles in a wildlife area



Releasing beetles into a wetland

Raising beetles through the Beetle Farmer Program to control purple loosestrife is an exciting opportunity for community involvement for people of all ages - conservation groups, teachers, students, Scouts, senior citizens, and families. If you know of a site invaded by purple loosestrife where biological control is desired, or if you would like to raise *Galerucella* beetles to release at a particular site, find out more about becoming a Beetle Farmer and starting this successful program in your area.



Contact Donna Ellis at the University of Connecticut  
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Visit the UConn Beetle Farmer website at [www.hort.uconn.edu/ipm](http://www.hort.uconn.edu/ipm)

**BECOME A BEETLE FARMER TODAY!**