

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Resource Brief

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Invasive Plant Management in the Apostle Islands

How We Manage Invasives

- ◆ To conserve wildlife habitat, maintain cultural landscapes, and preserve the pristine ecosystems throughout the Apostle Islands, we need to manage invasive plants
- ◆ Invasive plants thrive in disturbed ecosystems, so we conduct surveys throughout the summer at lighthouses, historic sites, campsites, ranger stations, trails, and other areas that are used by many visitors
- ◆ We use GPS units to map the locations of current populations
 - ◆ Information such as species, population density, date of assessment, and GPS coordinates are recorded
- ◆ Spraying herbicides, pulling individual plants, and cutting with brush saws are different methods of treating invasive plants
- ◆ Areas that have been treated for invasives are re-visited each summer to assess if the management efforts were effective



Mapping spotted knapweed near a ranger station



Tansy infestation on hillside at Raspberry Lighthouse

Management Implications

- ◆ Although we can never eradicate invasives, we do our best to control the populations and maintain healthy native plant populations to preserve the original ecosystems within the Apostle Islands
- ◆ If we don't manage invasives, these species can outcompete native plants on the islands, which would reduce overall biodiversity and wildlife habitat quality
- ◆ To prevent the spread of invasive plants, we will continue to monitor and treat invasive plant species
- ◆ Apostle Islands will continue to educate visitors about invasive plants & the threats they pose to Apostle Islands
- ◆ **WHAT CAN YOU DO?** Look out for invasive species and report them to park staff & use boot brush stations to clean dirt and seeds off your shoes!



Major Findings

- ◆ Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), Crown Vetch (*Securigera varia*), Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Curly Dock (*Rumex crispus*), and Everlasting Pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*) are the main species of concern
- ◆ Due to successful preventative management, the majority of our invasive populations are contained to visitor use areas and have not invaded the forest
- ◆ Only 3% of the Apostle Islands have invasive species
- ◆ Sites with high visitor use and large maintenance projects appear to have greater infestations than other areas from seeds transferred by shoes or construction equipment



Boot brush at an Invasive Species information station