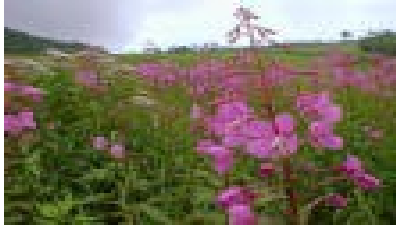


Plant Data Sheet



Species (common name, Latin name) – Fireweed or rosebay willowherb - *Epilobium angustifolium* or *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, *Chamaenerion danielsii*, *Chamaenerion platyphyllum*.

Range - Fireweed occurs throughout the US except in the southeastern states and Texas. It is found in all of the Canadian provinces. It also occurs throughout Eurasia (and is the national flower of Russia).

Climate, elevation – In North America, fireweed occurs in maritime to strongly continental climates with short, warm summers and long, cold winters. Precipitation averages between 13 and 134.7 inches a year on the west coastal edge.

Local occurrence (where, how common) – The species of interest is common throughout the Pacific Northwest, but only locally abundant on the outer coast.

Habitat preferences - Fireweed inhabits a wide range of site and soil conditions (moist to dry), but it is most common in disturbed areas such as burned forests and swamps, avalanche areas, riverbars, highway and railroad rights-of-way, waste places and old fields. It grows well in coniferous forests, mixed forest, aspen parklands, meadows, thickets, and grasslands.

Plant strategy type/successional stage (stress-tolerator, competitor, weedy/colonizer, seral, late successional) – The species of interest is an early seral species that colonizes areas following vegetation disturbances in temperate climates throughout the world. Once fireweed enters a disturbed community, it rapidly becomes abundant. The species of interest is a dominant species in many diverse riparian and upland seral community types.

Associated species - Fireweed often occurs with conifers such as: black spruce, cedar, hemlock, Douglas-fir, silver fir, Jack pine, Balsam fir, tamarack, shortleaf pine, lodgepole pine, western larch, blue spruces and Sitka spruce. Hardwoods associated with fireweed include: red maple, aspen, paper birch, and oak. Common shrubs found with fireweed are snowbrush, snowberry, thimbleberry, salmonberry, prickly rose, hoary willow, black twinberry and common juniper.

May be collected as: (seed, layered, divisions, etc.) – Cuttings of sideshoots may be taken in the spring or divided in the fall. Seeds may be sown in the spring. Vegetative reproduction is more prevalent than sexual reproduction (although the seed production is very prolific). Shoots sprouting from rhizomes may bloom within 1 month! Fragmentation of rhizomes stimulates shoot production.

Collection restrictions or guidelines - none

Seed germination (needs dormancy breaking?) – Seeds are nondormant and germinate over a variety of temperatures. Most of the newly collected seeds germinate within 10 days.

Seed life (can be stored, short shelf-life, long shelf-life) – One plant of fireweed can produce

about 80,000 seeds per year! The seedbank of fireweed is not long-lived. Most seeds lose viability after 18-24 months. The seed hairs (plume) respond to humidity. As humidity increases, the plume diameter decreases, resulting in a reduced loft. This increases the chance that seeds are deposited in places with moisture adequate for germination.

Recommended seed storage conditions - Seed can be stored for up to 24 months in dry conditions.

Propagation recommendations (plant seeds, vegetative parts, cuttings, etc.) – While seed production is very high, fireweed reproduces predominately through vegetative means. Cuttings and seeds are both effective means to plant fireweed. Optimum seed germinating conditions are warm, well-lighted, and humid. This plant is very aggressive!

Soil or medium requirements (inoculum necessary?) – Fireweed may be grown in well-drained, moist soil but they establish best with the addition of fertilizer. They grow best in full sun, but will tolerate some shade.

Installation form (form, potential for successful outcomes, cost) – Seeds or cuttings. Root cuttings should be planted 5 cm deep.

Recommended planting density – If you absolutely want to grow fireweed, I would recommend that you do not grow very much (just a few cuttings). Due to its rapid reproduction rate, it is sure to spread.

Care requirements after installed (water weekly, water once etc.) – Moderate to no watering after it is established.

Normal rate of growth or spread; lifespan – While fireweed is grown as an ornamental, it can become an aggressive weed since it reproduces by both seed and rhizome.

Sources cited

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