LOWLAND LOOSESTRIFE
Lythrum flagellare Shuttlw. ex Chapman
Synonyms: none
Family: Lythraceae (loosestrife)
FNAI Ranks: G3/S3
Legal Status: US-none FL-Endangered

Plants with low growth form. Growing at edge of large floodplain marsh at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Flowers solitary or paired in axils; **stamens** usually (4-) 6; **leaves** opposite throughout, mostly shorter than to about as long as the internodes, 1-6 mm wide; **leaves** elliptic, averaging ca. 2× as long as wide; **stems** decumbent to ascending.

Similar Species: This is the only *Lythrum sp.* in the state to grow in a decumbent manner.

Related Rare Species: Curtiss' loosestrife (*Lythrum curtissii),* state-endangered, occurs in clearings in wet flatwoods, dome swamp edges, sunny patches in stream thickets and floodplain forests. Plants are erect, the floral tube only 3-4 mm long, and leaves are opposite below, alternate above, mostly longer than the internodes, and 2-14 mm wide. Tropical waxweed (*Cuphea aspera*), state-endangered, occurs in open wet flatwoods and prairies in the Central FL Panhandle. Flowers are opposite or whorled at upper nodes, with 6 pink-purple, unequal petals. Sepals form a purple, ribbed floral tube with a pouched base. Upper stems, flower stalks, and floral tubes are covered in purple glandular hairs, making the plant waxy or sticky to the touch.

lowland loosestrife ***Lythrum flagellare***

Habitat: Mucky or sandy-peat muck soils with high hydroperiods in floodplain marshes, wet prairies, and edges of cypress depressions. Can also be found along roadsides and maintained rights-of-way.

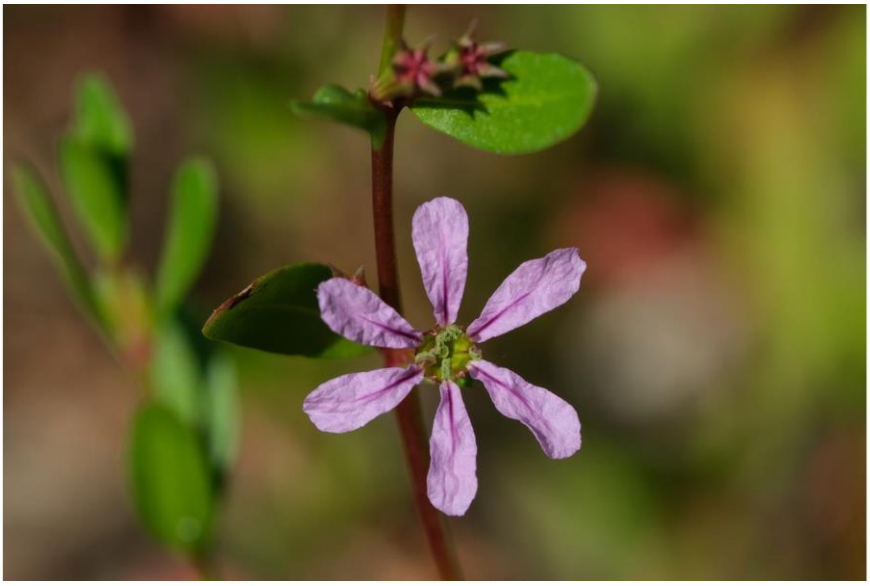
Best Survey Season: Late spring - summer.

Range-wide Distribution: Central-Southwestern peninsular Florida

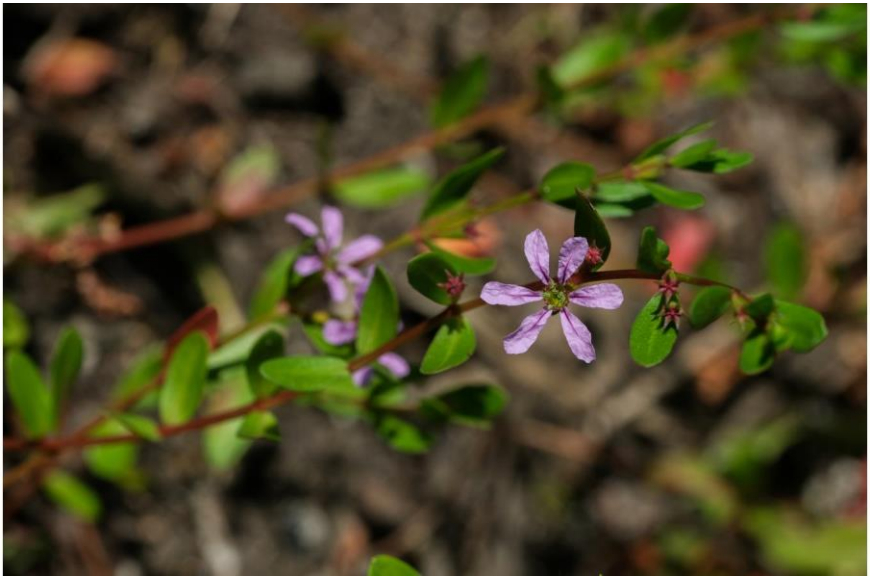
Conservation Status: More occurrences are being discovered for this species, expanding its previously documented range within the state. However, there are still only 70 occurrences known. Many of these do not have high population viability given that they occur along roadsides/ditches/ROW. Key habitat requirements include seasonally inundated mucky or sandy-peat-muck soils, primarily in floodplain marshes, wet prairies, and pond margins. Drainage has destroyed much suitable habitat for this species and continues to threaten it.

Protection and Management: Hydrology within the floodplain marshes this species occupies needs to be restored/maintained

References: Godfrey and Wooten 1981, Graham 1964, Graham 1975, Kral 1983, Long and Lakela 1971, Weakley et al. 2023, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011



Flowers solitary or paired. Growing at edge of large floodplain marsh at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Leaved opposite and elliptic. Growing at edge of large floodplain marsh at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Edge of large floodplain marsh at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.