

EMERGING INVASIVE ALERT:

Lythrum portula

Spatula-leaved Loosestrife (Lythraceae)

NYBG

Kate Samra, New York Botanical Garden
ksamra@nybg.org · 9 August, 2024

© 2024. This work is openly
licensed via [CC BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).



IDENTIFICATION

prostrate,
annual herb



stems 5–30 cm
tall, often pink



leaves opposite,
spatula-shaped



flowers & fruits
solitary in axils



INVASIVENESS

Native to Eurasia and Africa, *Lythrum portula* is well-established and invasive on the U.S. Pacific coast and has recently become established in the Northeast. Due to its rapid expansion here in the Northeast and invasiveness elsewhere, *L. portula* should be monitored closely as an emerging invasive.

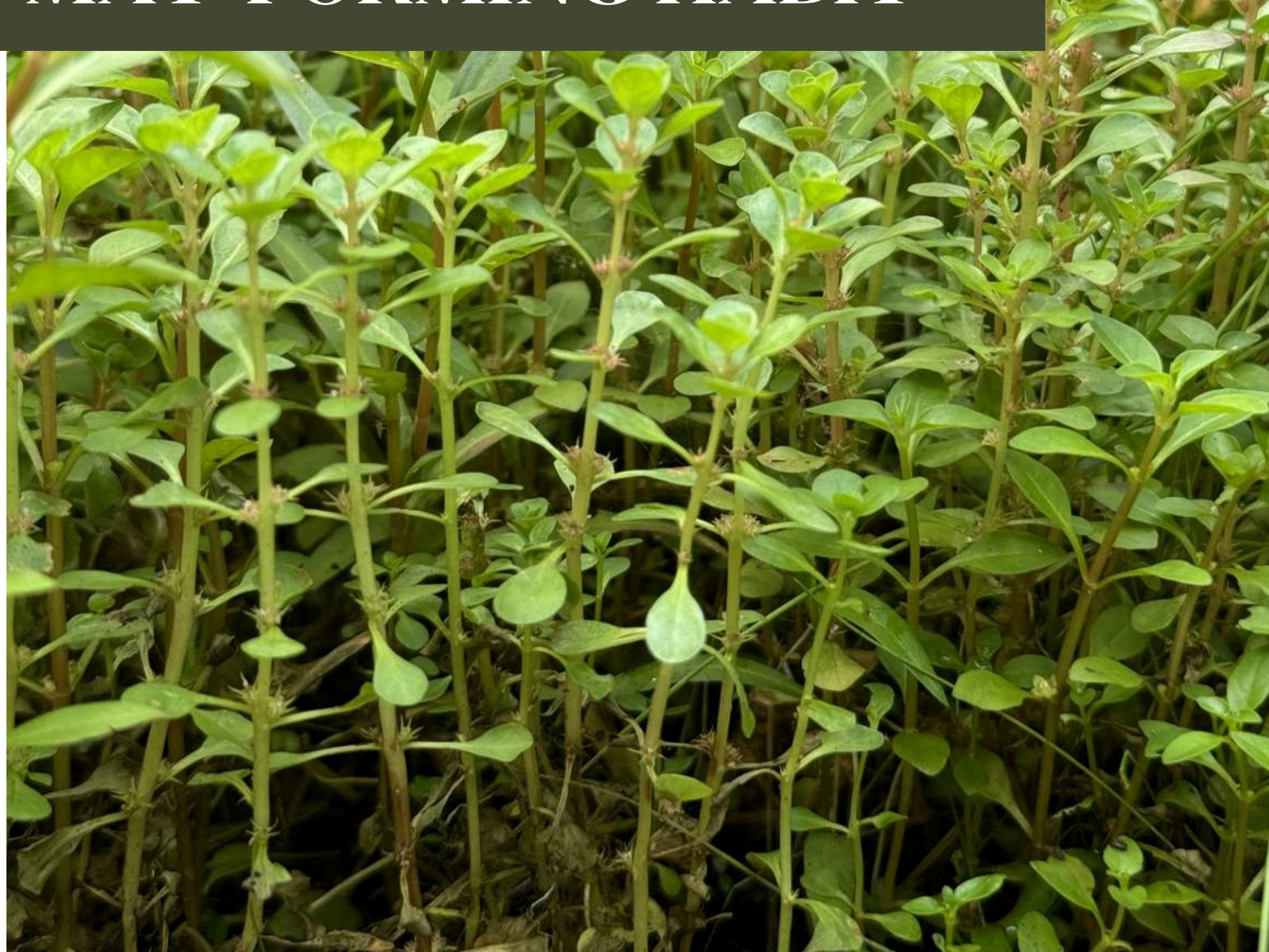
HABITAT

Marshes,
margins of lakes and streams, vernal
pools, roadsides, disturbed areas.

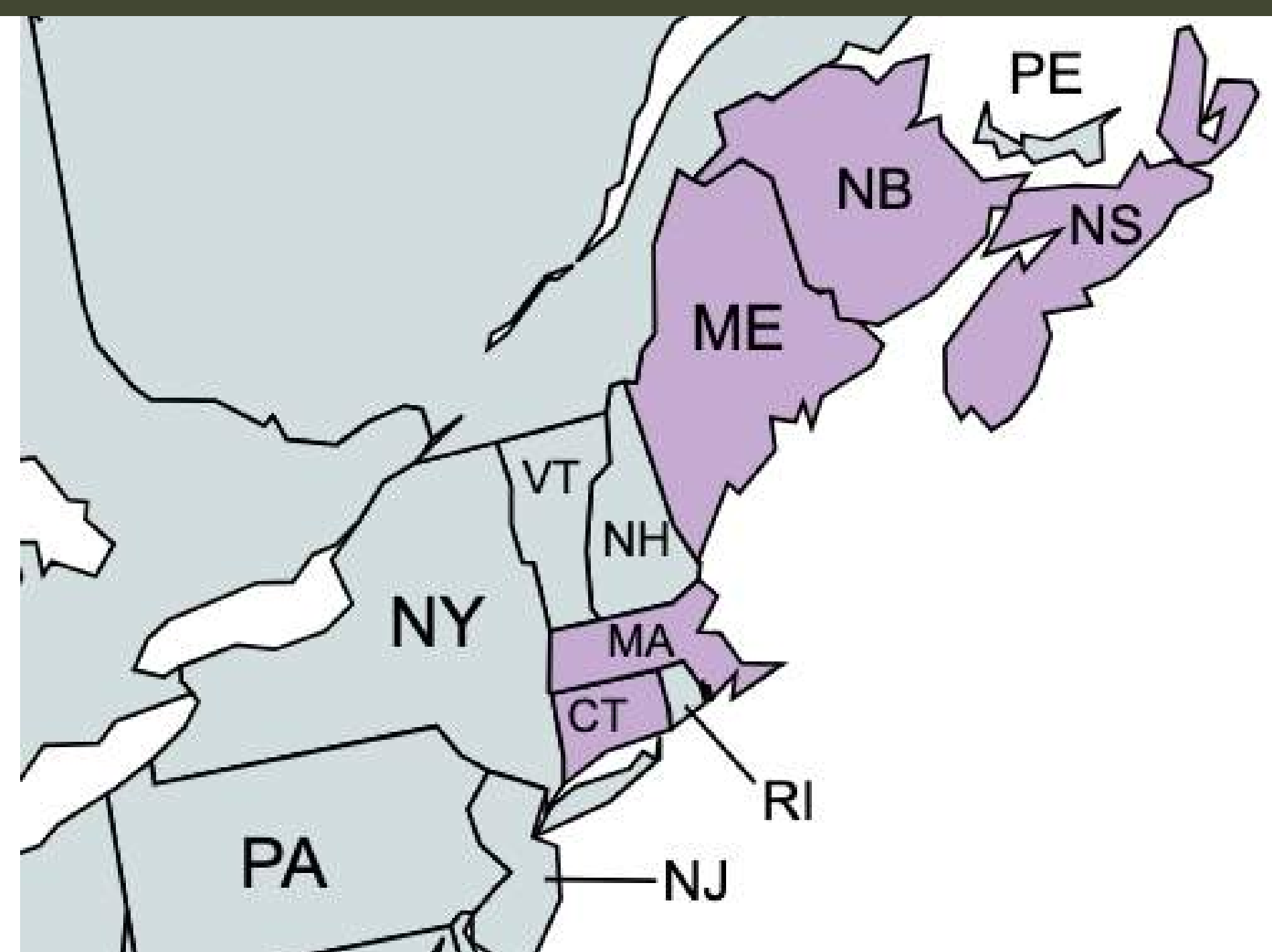
HOW TO HELP

Report
occurrences to your local or state
invasive species management agency.

MAT-FORMING HABIT



DISTRIBUTION IN NORTHEAST



SOURCES

Hickler, M. G. 2018. *Lythrum portula* (L.) D.A. Webb New to New England. *Rhodora* 120(984): 381–382.

Peterson, L. 2015. Removal of invasive *Lythrum portula* from natural and created vernal pools to measure plant community composition and diversity [Master's thesis, California State University, Sacramento].

Samra, K. 2024. Field observations of *Lythrum portula* in Turner Falls, MA, 15 July.

We gratefully acknowledge financial support for the New Manual project from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Hubbard, and the Richard King Mellon Foundation



This work is part of the project to produce *New Manual of Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada*, www.nybg.org/science-project/the-new-manual-of-vascular-plants-project-by-nybg/