

#### 4. LYTHRUM Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 446. 1753.

千屈菜属 qian qu cai shu

Qin Haining (覃海宁); Shirley Graham

Annual or perennial herbs or shrubs; young branches 4-angled. Leaves opposite, alternate, or 3-whorled, sessile or subsessile. Flowers in terminal spikes or racemes, whorled in cymes, paired, or solitary in axils, 6-merous, [mono-, di-, or] trimorphic, shortly pedicellate. Floral tube elongate, cylindrical [rarely broadly campanulate], 6–12-angled or -veined; sepals 6, generally short; epicalyx present, sometimes longer than sepals. Petals [absent to] 6, purple, rose, pink [or white]. Stamens [2–6 or] 12, in two whorls of different lengths. Ovary 2-loculed; style of three lengths with capitate stigma below, above, or between two stamen whorls. Capsule elongated, included within persistent floral tube, 2-valved, valves often 2-lobed, dehiscence usually septical at apex. Seeds numerous, red-brown, elongate, bilaterally compressed, ca. 1 mm.

About 35 species: cosmopolitan; two species in China.

- 1a. Leaves ovate-lanceolate to broadly lanceolate, base rounded, truncate, or semiclasping; plants typically sparsely to densely pubescent; epicalyx segments much longer than sepals ..... 1. *L. salicaria*  
1b. Leaves narrowly lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, base cuneate; plants glabrous; epicalyx segments shorter than to equaling sepals ..... 2. *L. virgatum*

##### 1. *Lythrum salicaria* Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 446. 1753.

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*Lythrum anceps* (Koehne) Makino; *L. argyi* H. Léveillé; *L. intermedium* Ledebour ex Colla; *L. salicaria* var. *anceps* Koehne; *L. salicaria* var. *glabrum* Ledebour; *L. salicaria* var. *intermedium* (Ledebour ex Colla) Koehne; *L. salicaria* var. *mairei* H. Léveillé.

Perennial herbs or subshrubs, 0.3–1.5 m tall, scabrous or sparsely to densely gray pubescent [or tomentose], sometimes somewhat glabrescent. Stem erect, 4-angled. Leaves opposite or 3-whorled, sometimes alternate toward stem apex, ovate-lanceolate to broadly lanceolate, 2.5–10 × 0.5–1.5 cm, base rounded, truncate, or semiclasping, apex acute to subobtusate. Inflorescences terminal, spicate, 15–35 cm; bracts broadly lanceolate or deltoid-ovate. Flowers in 1- to multi-flowered whorled axillary cymes, shortly pedicellate. Floral tube 5–8 × 1.5–2 mm, 12-ribbed; sepals deltate, 0.5–1 mm; epicalyx segments erect, linear, 1.5–2 mm, much longer than sepals. Petals reddish purple to rose-purple, lanceolate-oblongate, 7–10 × 1.5–3 mm. Fl. Jul–Sep, fr. Oct.  $2n = 30, 50, 58, 60$ .

Damp grasslands, banks. Almost throughout China [widespread in northern latitudes worldwide, Afghanistan, India, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, E Russia; N Africa, Europe, North America].

Great variability, especially in degree of indumentum and leaf shape, has led to recognition of many microspecies and infraspecific taxa that are not satisfactorily separated when the species is investigated over its geographic range. Apparent hybridization between *Lythrum salicaria* and *L. virgatum* and among the many races of *L. salicaria* in E Europe and Asia have further confused the taxonomy. *Lythrum salicaria* is recognized here as a single species with localized variants. Formal names are not recognized for variants within the species until a biosystematic study of the species complex can be made.

##### 2. *Lythrum virgatum* Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 1: 447. 1753.

帚枝千屈菜 zhou zhi qian qu cai

Herbs, perennial, less robust than *L. salicaria*, 50–100 cm tall, glabrous throughout. Stem erect, 4-angled. Leaves opposite, sometimes alternate, narrowly lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, 3–13 × 0.3–1.6 cm, base narrowly cuneate, apex acute-acuminate. Inflorescences terminal, spicate, 13–25 cm; bracts linear-lanceolate. Flowers in 1–3(–7)-flowered axillary cymes, solitary or in sparse whorls, shortly pedicellate. Floral tube 4–6 × 1–1.5 mm, 12-ribbed; sepals deltate, 0.8–1 mm; epicalyx segments erect, linear to awl-shaped, shorter than or equaling sepals. Petals purple to pink, elliptic-lanceolate or oblongate, 5.5–7 × 2.5–4 mm. Fl. Apr–Aug, fr. Jul–Sep.  $2n = 30, 40$ .

Damp places. Hebei, Xinjiang [E Europe to SE Siberia].

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