

Have You Seen This Plant? It's **Mud Mat.**

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has been notified that *Glossostigma diandrum* (L.) Kuntze (mud mat) exists in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This plant, native to Australia, New Zealand, India, and East Africa, was not thought to be present in the United States. With the detection of mud mat in the two States, APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) unit is now trying to determine the extent of its introduction in the United States. We need your help to look for this plant.

What To Look For

Look for tiny aquatic plants (usually less than 2 cm high) with bright green opposite leaves, often forming mats in shallow water. The leaves are narrow, about 1.5 to 14 mm long, and slightly expanded at the tip; they taper to the base and may be sessile or stalked. Leaf margins are smooth. Mud mat spreads by rooting at the nodes.

The plant's flower color ranges from pink, mauve, lilac, blue, or bluish-white to white. The flowers in the Pennsylvania population are pinkish. Flowers are small (about 1–3 mm wide), bisexual, and solitary in leaf axils at the base of the plant. Flowers are borne on slender stalks, which may be short or as long as the leaves. Mud mat usually flowers as receding water exposes the plants.

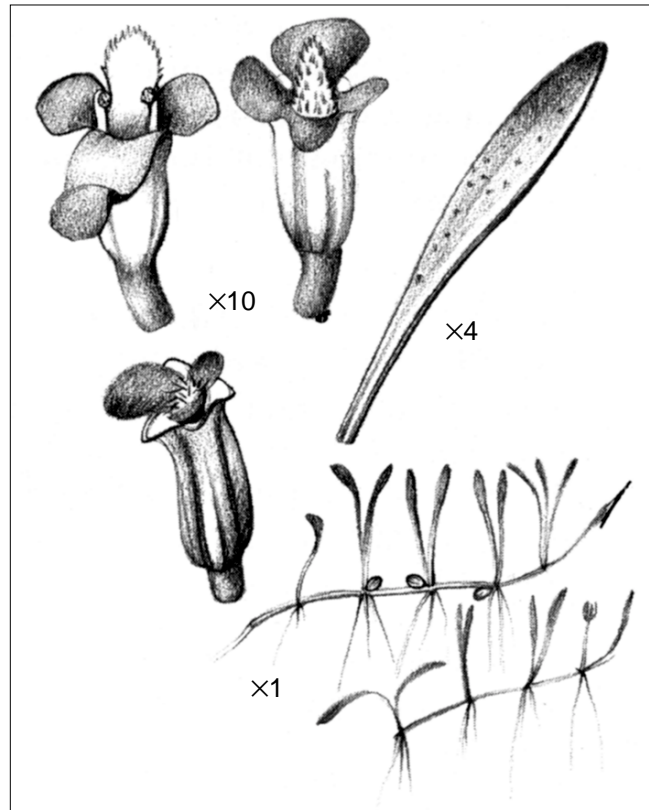
Mud mat's capsules are round, thin-walled, and divided into two cavities. They contain many minute, dark brown seeds.

Where To Look

Mud mat prefers shallow water, swamps, and periodically inundated areas. In its native range, mud mat grows in damp drying sand to clay in short-lived pools, creekbeds, and depressions in river flats. Check in shallow margins of water bodies with little wave action. Most plants will be anchored in the soil, but some may be floating on the water surface.

Known Distribution in the United States

In New Jersey, mud mat was discovered in several manmade lakes in Mercer, Ocean, Middlesex, and Monmouth Counties. In Pennsylvania, mud mat occurs in Bucks County.



Drawing supplied by Landcare Research, New Zealand.

Find the Plant?

If you think you have found this plant in a new location, please contact

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