

PALEGREEN ORCHID

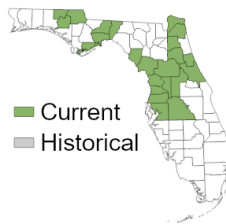
Platanthera flava var. *flava* (L.) Lindl.

Synonyms: *Habenaria flava* (L.) R. Br. var. *flava*

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

FNAI Ranks: G5T4?Q/S3S4

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Threatened



Leaves usually 2 - 5 on the flowering stalk. Bottomland forest at Lafayette Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Terrestrial **orchid** with **stems** 24 - 40 cm tall and larger stem **leaves** usually 2 (-5), near the middle of the stem or toward its base; **raceme** 5 - 20 cm long, 1.2 - 2 cm in diameter; **flowers** green; **lip** entire to minutely eroded with a tubercle on the upper surface near the base, also usually with 2 lateral auricles; **lip** lowermost (flowers resupinate); **spur** 2 - 13 mm long, borne horizontally or descending.

Similar Species: The common toothpetal false rein orchid (*Habenaria floribunda*) is similar but can be separated by its deeply divided 3-lobed lip, 3 - 5 leaves, and flowers on longer peduncles clearly exposing the rachis of the inflorescence.

Related Rare Species: Little club-spur orchid (*Platanthera clavellata*) is similar but differentiated by larger stem leaves usually 1, rarely 2, near the middle of the stem; raceme 2 - 9 cm long, 2 - 3.5 cm in diameter; lip without a tubercle on the upper surface near the base, also lacking lateral auricles near the base.

palegreen orchid

Platanthera flava var. *flava*

Habitat: Swamp, hydric hammock, and bottomland forest.

Best Survey Season: Late spring - summer; April - July

Range-wide Distribution: NJ, IN, IL, MO, and OK, south to Central peninsular FL and East TX; remarkably disjunct in South NS, where it occurs associated with other disjuncts from the Southeastern Coastal Plain. Reported for MD.

Conservation Status: This species is vouchered from 23 counties, from the eastern Panhandle south to central Florida and is mainly threatened by hydrology manipulation and forestry practices in bottomland forest.

Protection and Management: Maintain natural hydrology and protect from forestry practices in swamps and hammocks.

References: Brown and Folsom 2003, Longbottom, Naczi, & Knapp 2016, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Flowers yellowish-green, sparsely distributed. Growing in a bottomland forest at Lafayette Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

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Platanthera flava var. flava



Typically with two basal leaves and 1 - 3 reduced leaves on the flowering stalk. Hickory Mound Unit at Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Growing in a floodplain swamp at Aucilla Wildlife Management Area.
Photo by Kelly Anderson.