

## PARROT PITCHERPLANT

*Sarracenia psittacina* Michx.

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae (pitcherplant)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4/S4

**Legal Status:** US-none FL-Threatened

**Wetland Status:** US-OBL+ FL-OBL



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**Field Description:** A carnivorous plant with small pitchers topped with reddish hoods that are cupped over the entrance to the trap. These pitchers are usually recumbent rather than erect. The lower part of the pitcher is often winged on one side. Flowers are maroon with large petals and an umbrella-like style. Although the Florida Panhandle has several native pitcherplants, *Sarracenia psittacina* is unmistakable with its recumbent pitchers and pointed hoods that enclose the pitcher opening.

**Similar Species:** Parrot pitcherplant is similar to white-topped pitcherplant (*Sarracenia leucophylla*) and hooded pitcherplant (*Sarracenia minor*) in having white patches and windows on the upper portions of leaves and hoods; the other three pitcher plant species lack this character. Differences between parrot and white-topped and hooded pitcherplant are position of the pitcher aperture and habit. Parrot pitcherplant has the pitcher opening directly under the hood and has

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decumbent pitchers while white-topped pitcherplant and hooded pitcherplant has a terminal opening on one side of an erect pitcher.

**Related Rare Species:** Parrot pitcherplant is one of seven pitcher plant species known to occur in Florida. Six of the seven pitcher plant species occur in northwest Florida and five of those six species are considered rare: Gulf coast redflower pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *gulfensis*), Wherry's redflower pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *wherryi*), parrot pitcherplant (*Sarracenia psittacina*) and Gulf purple pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rosea*), and white-top pitcherplant (*Sarracenia leucophylla*). Parrot and white-topped pitcherplants both have white patches or windows on the upper portions of leaves and/or hoods and have maroon to red petals and the former has sprawling pitchers and the latter has erect. Gulf purple pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rosea*), Gulf coast redflower pitcherplant and Wherry's redflower pitcherplant lack the white patches and windows. Gulf purple pitcherplant has urn-shaped decumbent pitchers with hoods that are erect and wide open pitcher apertures that are lined with a thick rim and have pink petals. Both Gulf coast redflower pitcherplant and Wherry's redflower pitcherplant have erect, thin tubular pitchers with recurved hoods that cover the pitcher aperture and have red petals. Gulf coast redflower pitcherplant is known to occur in Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, and Holmes Counties, whereas Wherry's redflower pitcherplant is only known to occur in Escambia County. The yellow pitcherplant (*Sarracenia flava*) is not listed as rare, but it occurs in northwest Florida often times with the above-mentioned pitcher plants and is distinguished by its tall, tubular, yellow-parrot green pitchers and bright yellow petals. The seventh pitcher plant species-hooded pitcherplant (*Sarracenia minor*) is listed as state threatened, but does not occur west of Gulf, Liberty, and Gadsden Counties.

**Habitat:** Sunny, low, wet areas with wiregrass.

**Best Survey Season:** Spring; April to June

**Range-wide Distribution:** Native to the panhandle of Florida as well as Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and is considered threatened by the states of Florida and Georgia.

**Conservation Status:** Parrot pitcherplant has been vouchered in 15 northwest Florida counties. It has also been documented in northeastern Florida in Baker and Nassau Counties. Potential threats to this species includes disturbances caused from woody encroachment due to fire exclusion and land clearing.

**Protection and Management:** Benefits from more frequent fires that are allowed

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to burn into titi edges and open up the habitat.

**References:** Wunderlin and Hansen 2011, Coile 2000, Wunderlin, et al. 2020, FNA 2009, Chafin 2000, Godfrey and Wooten 1981