

## GULF PURPLE PITCHERPLANT

*Sarracenia rosea* Naczi, F.W. Case, & R.B. Case

**Synonyms:** *Sarracenia purpurea* ssp. *venosa* var. *burkii* Schnell ssp. Schnell; *Sarracenia purpurea* L. var. *burkii* Schnell

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae (pitcherplant)

**FNAI Ranks:** G3/S3

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



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**Field Description:** Perennial, carnivorous herb with dull green to maroon to gold stout leaves that are modified as hollow tubes (pitchers or urns) that range from 6 - 28 cm long. The pitchers are inflated, clumped and rest almost flat on the ground with wavy-margined and erect hoods that sometimes have contrasting darker red veins, dense hairs and have well-defined, thick red rims around the open aperture. Flowers occur singly on top of scapes up to 35 cm tall and are composed of purple-red sepals and petals that are primarily pink.

**Similar Species:** Recognized as a variety of *Sarracenia purpurea* until recently. *Sarracenia rosea* differs from *Sarracenia purpurea* in having a much larger hood and thicker aperture (lip) and it has pink petals whereas *Sarracenia purpurea* has petals that are various darker shades of red. The flowers of *Sarracenia rosea* are larger with petals (4.5 - 6.5 cm long) versus *Sarracenia purpurea* petals are 2.2 - 5.3 cm long. *Sarracenia rosea* is the only *Sarracenia* species in Florida (except for perhaps some hybrids) that have pink flowers. Given that *Sarracenia rosea* can grow with various other *Sarracenia* species, hybridization can occur.

**Related Rare Species:** Four other rare pitcherplant species/subspecies are known to occur in the Florida panhandle: Gulf coast redflower pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *gulfensis*, G4T2Q/S2 and state listed threatened), Wherry's redflower pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *wherryi*, G4T3/S3 and state listed threatened), parrot pitcherplant (*Sarracenia psittacina*, state listed threatened), and white-top pitcherplant (*Sarracenia leucophylla*, state listed endangered). Parrot and white-topped pitcherplants both have white patches or windows on upper portions of leaves and/or hoods 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. Some experts recognize Wherry's redflower pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *wherryi*) as a subspecies of cane-brake pitcherplant (*Sarracenia alabamensis*).

**Habitat:** Seepage slopes, wet prairies and bogs.

**Best Survey Season:** Identifiable all year, flowers in spring.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Coastal plain in southwest Georgia, southern Alabama, southeastern Mississippi, and central and western panhandle.

**Conservation Status:** Gulf purple pitcherplant plant is known to occur in 10 Florida panhandle counties. Habitat has been reduced on private lands due to silviculture, alteration of wetlands hydrology, and fire exclusion.

**Protection and Management:** Protect from collection. Threatened by hog digging and woody encroachment from fire exclusion.

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



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