

SARRACENIA PURPUREA L.
Pitcher-plant

FAMILY: Sarraceniaceae

HABIT: Perennial herb with hollow leaves, 1-2 dm.; flowering scapes 3-5 dm.; flowering late May-August; fruiting June-September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: This plant is unmistakable, even in vegetative condition.

TOTAL RANGE: Labrador and Newfoundland to n. FL and s. LA, restricted to the coastal states southward, but far inland n. of the glacial boundary, to Man., MN, n. IL, IN, and OH.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Geauga, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, and Wayne counties. There are pre-1960 records from Ashland, Huron, Lake, Logan, and Lorain counties. There are extant populations established from introduced plants in Geauga, Licking, and Portage counties.

HABITAT: Open areas of sphagnum bogs and marl fens.

HAZARDS: Overshading by woody species due to succession; digging of plants by wildflower gardeners.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Presumed extremely poor unless planted in suitable habitat. However, once established, this species may spread vigorously (Schwaegerle, 1983).

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Sight records are acceptable for this distinctive plant.

COMMENTS: The current knowledge of the range of native populations of this plant in Ohio is probably accurate. Its distinctive appearance and limited habitat make it unmistakable.

Sarracenia purpurea can, and has been, successfully transplanted to proper habitats. Schwaegerle (1983) documents the tremendous growth of the Licking County population, established from a single individual transplanted to the site in 1912.

Some authors divide the species into two varieties, and others, into two subspecies. However, the taxonomic validity of these entities has been questioned. Bell (1949) suggests that they are merely environmentally induced growth forms. The species is here treated as a single variable entity.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Bell, C.R. 1949. A cytotaxonomic study of the Sarraceniaceae of North America. J. Elisha Mitchell Sci. Soc. 65: 137-166.

Folkerts, G.W. 1982. The Gulf Coast pitcher plant bogs. *Am. Scientist* 70: 260-267.

Gleason, H.A., and A. Cronquist. 1991. *Manual of vascular plants of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada*. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York. 910 pp.

Schwaegerle, K.E. 1983. Population growth of the pitcher plant, *Sarracenia purpurea* L., at Cranberry Bog, Licking County, Ohio. *Ohio J. Sci.* 83: 19-22.

Wood, C.E., Jr. 1960. The genera of Sarraceniaceae and Droseraceae in the southeastern United States. *J. Arn. Arb.* 41: 152-163.



Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Natural Areas and Preserves

Created: 3/1984 James F. Burns