

# Gulf purple pitcherplant

(*Sarracenia rosea*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_botanical\\_terms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms).

Gulf purple pitcherplant is a insectivorous perennial wildflower that blooms in spring. It occurs naturally in wet prairies, seepage slopes and roadside ditches.

The flowers of the Gulf purple pitcherplant are light to dark pink, with five petals and five sepals. They are solitary and nodding. The leaves tend to lie flat on the ground. They are tubular or urn-shaped with exposed, upward-facing mouths that form the “pitcher” where insects become trapped. The upper portion is often inflated. The fruit is a capsule with many seeds.

Gulf purple pitcherplant is a state-listed threatened species. It was originally classified as a variety of purple pitcherplant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) by American botanist Edgar Wherry, who referred to it as a “mutant” form. In 1999, the case for reclassification was made because of three distinguishing factors noted in populations occurring along the Gulf Coast: Flowers are larger and flower stalks are shorter; petals are pink, not purple, and pitcher structure is different.

The species name *rosea* refers to the pink or rose-like color of the flower (as opposed to *purpurea*, which means “purple”).

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae (Pitcherplant family)

**Native range:** Gadsden and Liberty counties west into Escambia County

To see where natural populations of Gulf purple pitcherplant have been vouchered, visit [www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu](http://www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu).

**Hardiness:** Zones 7–8a

**Soil:** Inundated to saturated soils; can also grow in semi-aquatic (periodically flooded) habitats

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Growth habit:** <1' tall

**Propagation:** Division, seed

**Garden tips:** Gulf purple pitcherplants do best in their natural habitat. They should not be harvested or collected without permission because of their threatened status.



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich



Open “pitcher” or “mouth” of gulf purple pitcherplant.  
Photo by Eleanor Dietrich