



**Common Name:** HOODED PITCHERPLANT

**Scientific Name:** *Sarracenia minor* Walter

**Other Commonly Used Names:** none

**Previously Used Scientific Names:** none

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae

**Rarity Ranks:** G4/S4

**State Legal Status:** Unusual

**Federal Legal Status:** none

**Federal Wetland Status:** OBL

**Description:** Perennial **herb** with leaves modified into erect, tubular pitchers. **Pitchers** 5 - 14 inches (12 - 35 cm) tall, with a **wing** running the length of the pitcher and a strongly curved **hood** covering the opening; lower pitcher green; hood and upper pitcher reddish with white, translucent patches; pitchers persist through the winter. **Flower stalk** 5 - 22 inches (12 - 55 cm) tall,

leafless, usually slightly shorter than the tallest pitchers. **Flower** solitary with 5 drooping, pale yellow **petals**, 1 - 1½ inches (3 - 4 cm) long; 5 yellow-green **sepals**; and a pale yellow, umbrella-shaped **style disk** in the center of the flower. Sepals and style disk persist long after the petals fall, and the **fruit** – a round, warty capsule about  $\frac{3}{8}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch (0.8 - 1.8 cm) wide – develops.

**Similar and Related Rare Species:** Okefenokee hooded pitcherplant (*Sarracenia minor* var. *okefenokeensis*) is a variety found only in the Okefenokee Swamp, usually growing on floating peat mats; its pitchers are much larger, 16 - 47 inches (40 - 120 cm) tall.

All seven of Georgia's pitcherplants are state-protected and included on this web site: yellow trumpets (*Sarracenia flava*), white-top pitcherplant (*S. leucophylla*), hooded pitcherplant (*S. minor*), green pitcherplant (*S. oreophila*), parrot pitcherplant (*S. psittacina*), purple pitcherplant (*Sarracenia purpurea*), and sweet pitcherplant (*S. rubra*).

**Habitat:** Wet savannas and pine flatwoods, seepage slopes, sphagnum seeps in swamps, bogs, and wet ditches.

**Life History:** Pitcherplants capture and digest insects and other small animals in their pitchers. Nectar is produced by glands around the top of the pitcher, luring animals to the opening with its sweet smell. Stiff, down-pointing hairs line the pitcher, encouraging the animals to slide in and impeding their escape. The white patches in the hood and upper pitcher transmit light, further confusing the insects. Enzymes dissolved in water in the base of the pitcher digest the animals, making nutrients, particularly nitrogen, available for absorption by the plant. (Soils of bogs and other permanently saturated wetlands are typically low in nitrogen.).

Pitcherplants reproduce sexually and also vegetatively by the spread of underground stems (rhizomes). They usually reach 4 - 5 years old before they flower and may live to be 20 - 30 years old. The unusual shape of their flowers, with drooping petals and umbrella-like style disk, promotes cross-pollination by insects. When an insect, usually a bee, pushes its way past the petals to reach the nectar and pollen on the interior of the flower, it brushes against one of the stigmas, which are at the pointed tips of the "umbrella," and deposits pollen gathered from a previously visited flower. Once inside the petals, it picks up pollen from the anthers and from the inner surface of the umbrella and then carries it to the next visited flower, usually avoiding the stigmas as it leaves the flower.

**Survey Recommendations:** Hooded pitcherplant blooms April–May, but its pitchers are recognizable all year.

**Range:** Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

**Threats:** Conversion of habitat to pine plantations, pastures, and developments. Ditching and draining of wetlands. Fire suppression, canopy closure, and encroachment by woody plants. Poaching. Digging by feral hogs. Off-road vehicle traffic.

**Georgia Conservation Status:** Hooded pitcherplant is one of the most common of Georgia's pitcherplants, historically occurring in at least 50 counties. It was originally added to the state protection list because of the threat of poaching and commercial exploitation. However, its

habitat has since been widely destroyed and many of the older populations are now gone. Only a few populations occur on conservation lands.

**Conservation and Management Recommendations:** Avoid ditching, draining, mechanical clearing, and other soil-compacting activity. Apply prescribed fire every 2 - 3 years. Limit access to sites to prevent poaching and off-road vehicle traffic. Eradicate feral hogs.

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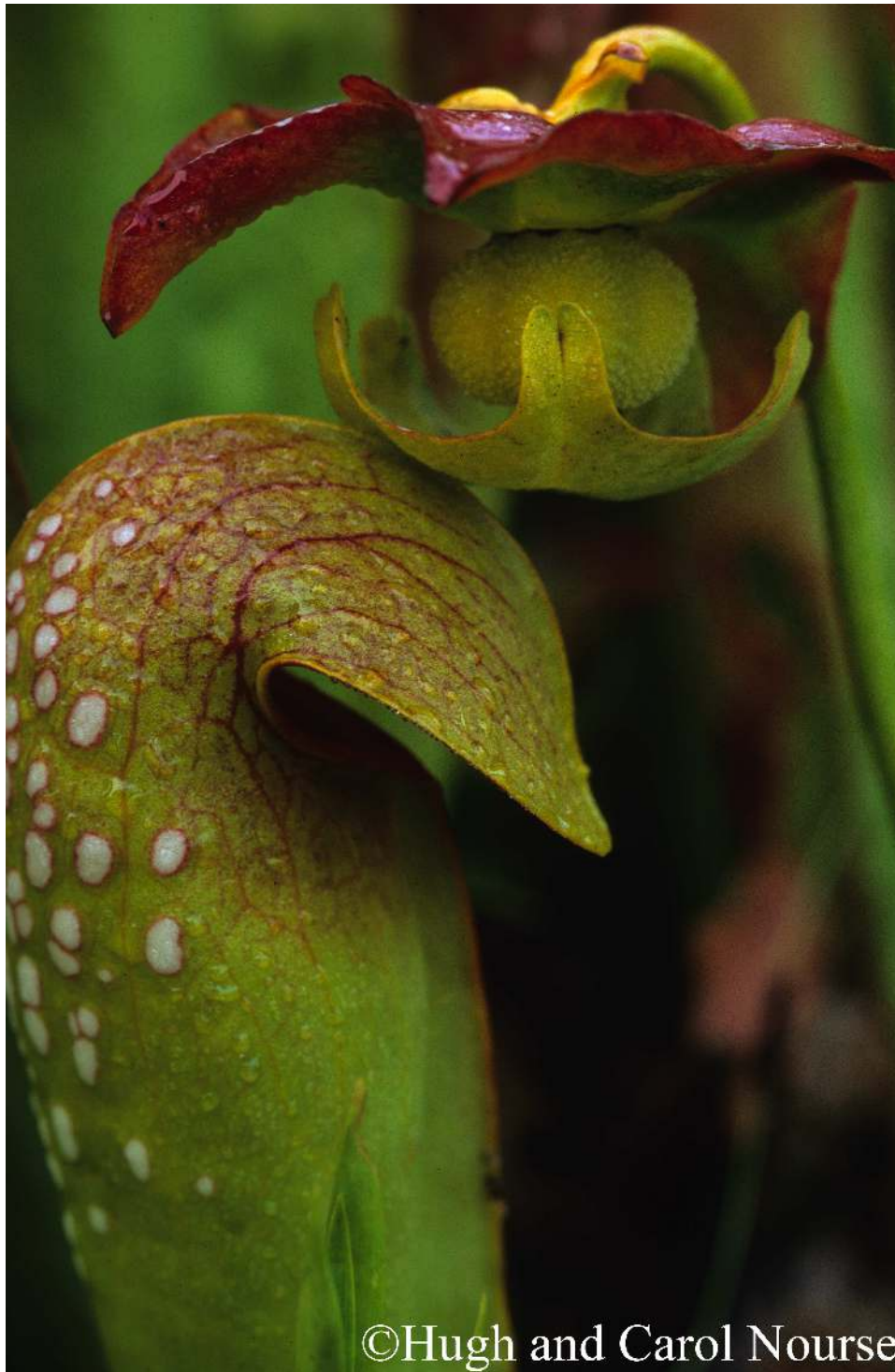
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**Date Compiled or Updated:**

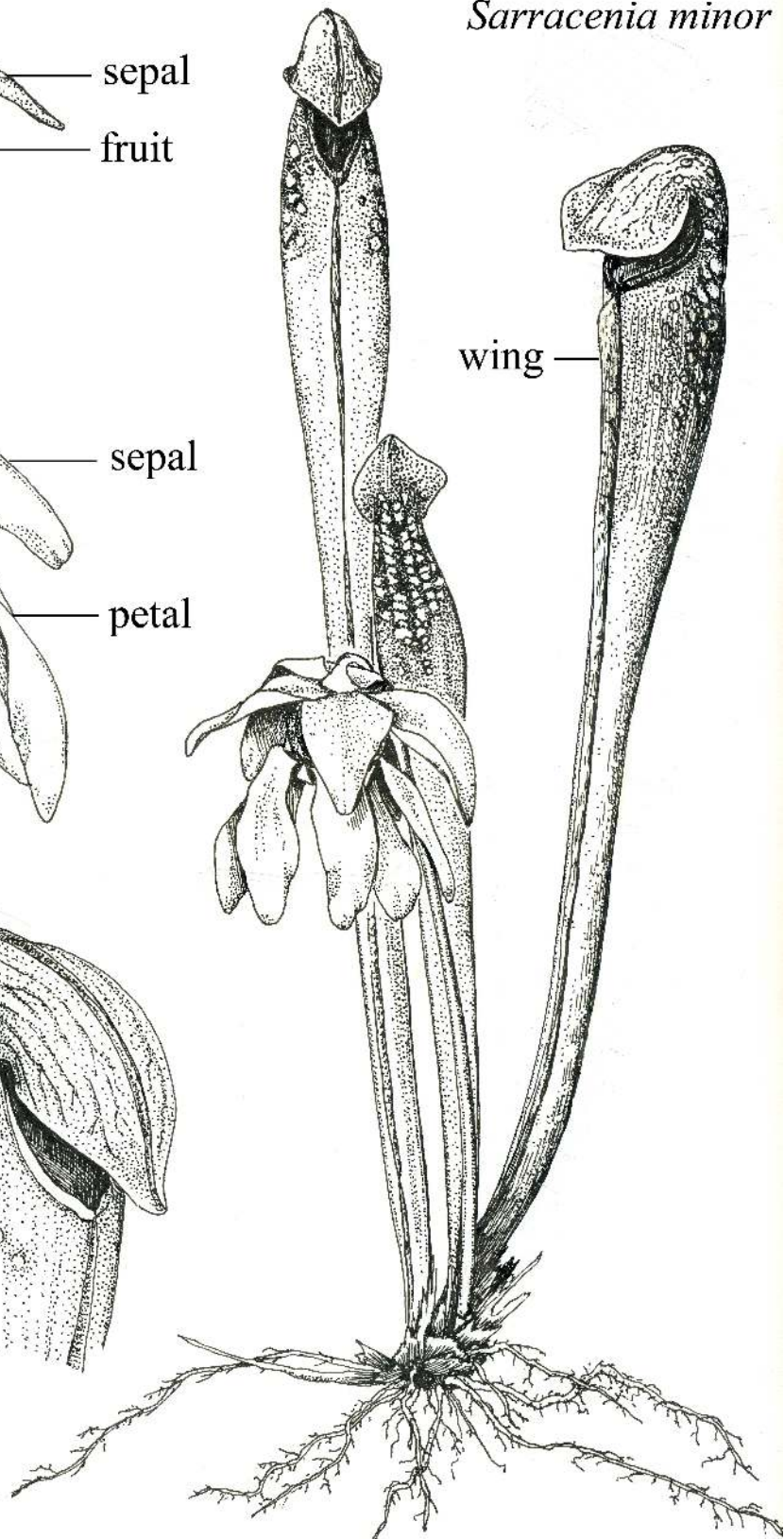
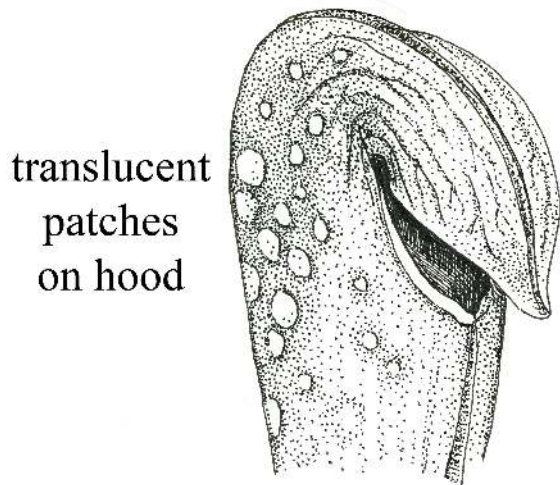
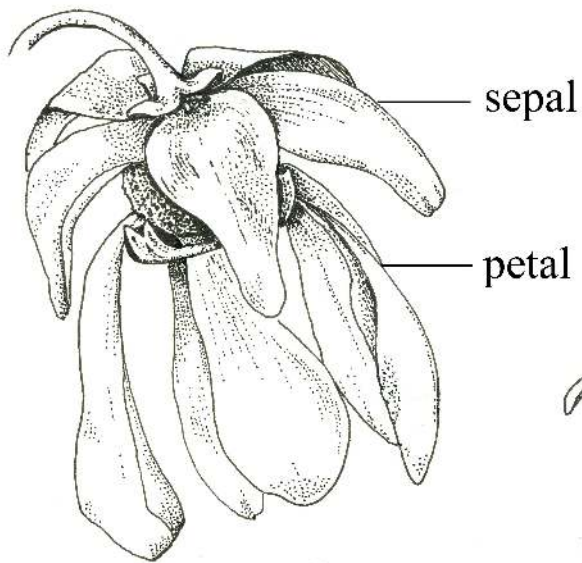
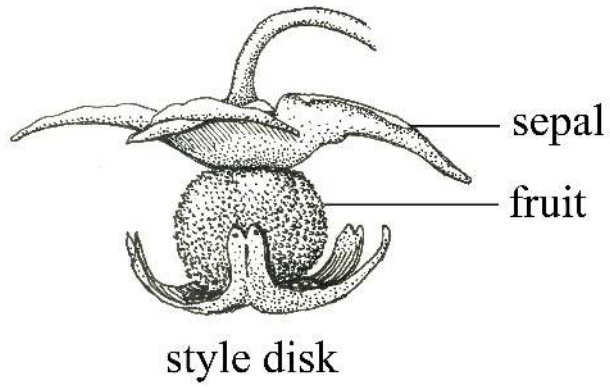
L.Chafin, Aug. 2008: original account  
D.Weiler, Feb. 2010: added pictures



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HOODED PITCHERPLANT  
*Sarracenia minor*



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