



Common Name: MANY-FLOWERED GRASS PINK

Scientific Name: *Calopogon multiflorus* Lindley

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: *Calopogon barbatus* (Walter) Ames var. *multiflorus* (Lindley) Correll

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

Rarity Ranks: G2G3/SH

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: FACW

Description: Perennial **herb** with 1 - 2 grass-like **leaves** at the base of the stem, 1 - 6 inches (3 - 15 cm) long and usually less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (9 mm) wide. **Stem** 7 - 20 inches (17 - 50 cm) tall, leafless, with 2 - 15 dark pink, fragrant **flowers** crowded at the top of a dark reddish-brown stalk; most flowers are open at the same time. **Flowers** with 2 spreading **petals**, an erect **lip** petal, and 3 spreading **sepals**. **Petals** widest above the middle, with a narrow base and bluntly pointed tip. **Lip** petal as wide as long, with a crest of yellow-orange bristles. **Middle sepal** usually less than $\frac{5}{8}$ inch (1.7 cm) long; **lateral sepals** spreading but not reflexed backwards. **Fruit** an erect capsule, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{7}{8}$ inch (1.3 - 2.2 cm) long.

Similar Species: Bearded grass pink (*Calopogon barbatus*) petals are widest below the middle and its flowers are not fragrant; it occurs in wet flatwoods. Tuberous grass pink (*C. tuberosus*) leaves are wider than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch, the middle sepal is longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (2 cm), and the petals are widest below the middle. Pale grass pink (*C. pallidus*) flowers are white or pale pink (rarely dark pink), and the lateral sepals are flexed backwards.

Related Rare Species: Oklahoma grass pink (*Calopogon oklahomensis*) was last seen in Calhoun County in 1947. It resembles bearded grass pink, but its leaves are wider and the flowers are fragrant. More than 30 species of orchids are rare in Georgia. On this web site, see: pink lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), Kentucky lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium kentuckiense*), yellow lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*), green-fly Orchid (*Epidendrum conopseum*), Michaux's spider orchid (*Habenaria quinqueseta*), small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*), Appalachian twayblade (*Listera smallii*), Florida adder's-mouth orchid (*Malaxis spicata*), southern white fringed-orchid (*Platanthera blephariglottis*), Chapman's fringed-orchid (*Platanthera chapmanii*), large purple fringed-orchid (*Platanthera grandiflora*), monkeyface orchid (*Platanthera integrilabia*), purple fringeless orchid (*Platanthera peramoena*), crestless plume orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*), downy slender ladies-tresses (*Spiranthes brevilabris*), Florida ladies-tresses (*Spiranthes floridana*), Great Plains ladies-tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*), three birds orchid (*Triphora trianthophora*).

Habitat: Dry to moist (not wet) pine flatwoods and savannas with wiregrass and saw palmetto.

Life History: Grass pink flowers differ from most orchid flowers in that the lip is erect at the top of the flower, not at the bottom. The lip bears a crest of yellow-orange bristles which attract pollinators, primarily bees; when the bee lands on the bristles, its weight bends the lip forward, dropping the bee onto the pollen-bearing column below; pollen packets (pollinia) stick to the back of the bee and are then carried to the next flower. If the bee is already carrying a pollen packet from a previously visited flower, it will leave this pollen behind as it struggles to escape, thus pollinating this flower before it leaves for the next. The name *Calopogon* means "beautiful beard," referring to the showy crest of bristles. Orchid seeds are minute, dust-like, and easily dispersed by the wind.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering, primarily in April but plants may flower March–June, depending on timing of recent fire.

Range: Coastal Plain of Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Threats: Fire suppression, ditching and draining of flatwoods, conversion of habitat to pine plantations and agriculture.

Georgia Conservation Status: Once known from 4 Georgia counties, this orchid has not been seen in many years.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Plants flower after winter and early spring burns; apply prescribed fire every 2 - 3 years. Protect pine flatwoods from draining, bedding, clear-cutting, roller-chopping, and other disturbances to hydrology and soil.

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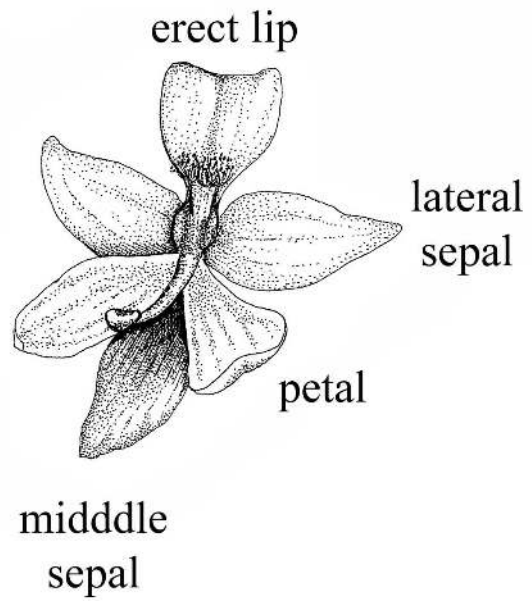
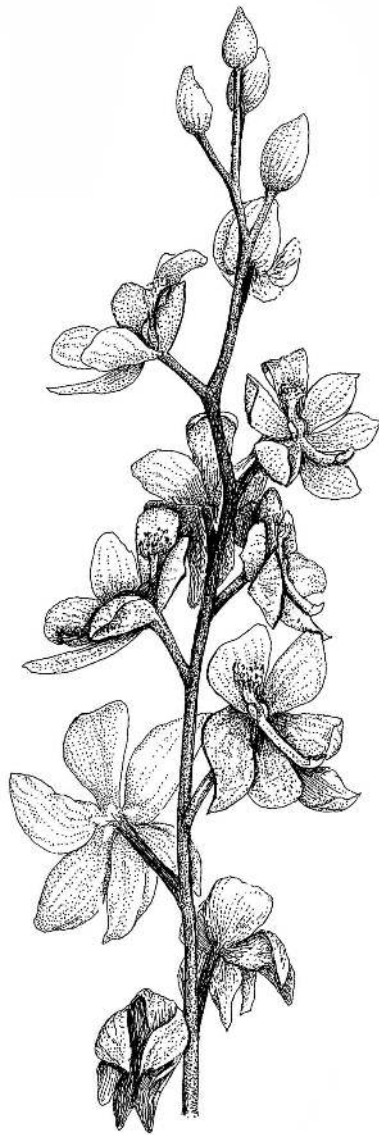
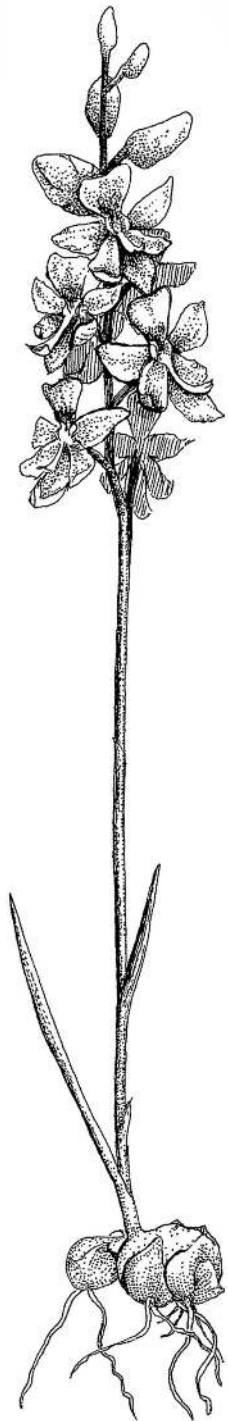
Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Feb. 2008: original account

K. Owers, Jan. 2010: updated status and ranks, added pictures

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