

# Parrot pitcherplant

(*Sarracenia psittacina*)

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

Parrot pitcherplant is a carnivorous perennial plant. Its leaves are tubular with curved lids or hoods, and form the “pitcher” part of the plant. They typically lie nearly flat on the ground in a prostrate rosette. The pitcher mouth is small, hooded and adorned with window-like features that help attract prey. The pitcher is tubular, horizontal and is lined with many criss-crossed hairs. Parrot pitcherplant flowers are red, solitary and nodding.



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich

Parrot pitcherplant is dissimilar to most pitcherplants in both its shape and the way it traps insects. Its trapping mechanism is considered a “lobster pot” while most pitcherplants have a “pitfall” trap.

Parrot pitcherplant typically flowers in April and May. It occurs naturally in seepage slopes, wet prairies, depression marshes, dome swamps, and bogs.

Parrot pitcherplant is a state-listed threatened species. Its species name *psittacine* means “of or relating to parrots” and refers to the shape of the flower resembling the head of a parrot.

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae (Pitcherplant family)

**Native range:** Central to western Panhandle, Baker and Nassau counties

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

**Lifespan:** Perennial

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

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Growth habit:** Prostrate, 3-8 inches

Carnivorous plants have very specific habitat requirements and as such are not suited for use in urban native plant gardens. However, many Florida native carnivorous plants can be purchased from online retailers. Always be certain that retailers are certified by their state agriculture department, who inspect and ensure proper origin of plants.