

Collect or Not Collect From the Wild: Conservation

By

Don Schnell

(Rt. 1, Box 145C, Pulaski, VA 24301)

As we see more CP species and good CP habitat becoming endangered or threatened, there is naturally concern about collecting from the wild. Ordinarily, habitat destruction wreaks more havoc than individual collections providing we are not talking about public lands, preserves or private property without permission. However, as good habitats become fewer and smaller, massive wholesale collecting from any lands for huge sales of plants into new markets increases, and certain species such as *Sarracenia oreophila*, are becoming so rare that individuals remaining can almost be numbered and counted, casual collecting can become a real problem.

The American Rock Garden Society (ARGS) is confronting the same problem with species and habitats of interest to them—often overlapping with our interests!—and appointed a committee to come up with a statement of policy on collecting from the wild. One of the members was CPN coeditor emeritus Larry Mellichamp. The committee was quite diverse consisting of those who categorically opposed collecting at the outset, those who collected, and attitudes in between. This same span of attitudes toward collecting, of course, reflect similar feelings among individual members and the botanical community as a whole, and I am certain, our society as well. The ARGS committee came up with a policy, understandably after much spirited discussion. The policy appeared in the Bulletin Board, supplement to the ARGS Bulletin of Summer, 1992 (Volume 50, No. 3). We were struck by the reasonable and balanced nature of that statement and asked for and received written permission from the ARGS president to adapt the policy to ICPS. The operative word is “adapt” since what appears below is not entirely the original statement as adopted by ARGS, but has many changes and additions applicable to our society. If you wish to compare our statement with the original, by all means consult the above reference. So, we thank ARGS for their generosity in allowing us to adapt their framework, and their effort in conceiving the project and carrying it through. Any changes that seem to us appropriate to our CP and possibly not entirely to rock garden plants are our responsibility.

We would hope our members will take these concepts to heart and consider them when going to the field to collect or when transplanting in habitats, and even when selecting dealers where you will purchase plants. The co-editors in their capacity of interim ICPS officers approve this policy. We would appreciate your comments.

ICPS Policy Statement on Plant Collection

1. ICPS is dedicated to understanding, preserving, growing, selecting, propagating, studying, and appreciating the natural flora of the earth with special interest in carnivorous plants.
2. Above all, we support efforts to protect wild habitats as the sources for genetic variations and naturally thriving plants for generations to come.

We believe habitat destruction, both planned and accidental, is responsible for the greatest loss of habitats and species in the world today and we deplore this situation.

We strive to support those organizations around the world that seek to preserve valuable wildlife habitats, and we support field and media education as effective

means of instilling respect for natural habitats.

We also support the efforts of legitimate organizations that preserve genetically broad spectrum samples of threatened and endangered species as living material with a view to replanting existent or reclaimed habitat.

We discourage introduction of plant species into habitat where that genetic material has not or does not occur naturally unless for closely monitored research purposes with a view to eventual removal of the inappropriate material and prevention of crossbreeding with naturally occurring plants while the study is in effect.

3. We are against the wholesale collecting for resale of wild plants from public lands, especially the rarer plants and abhor the practice of misleading the public by calling such collected plants nursery propagated by any stretch of the definition.

4. Except in the instance of public lands, private lands and preserves without express permission, and very rare species where individuals are numbered, we support the practice of knowledgeable and responsible individuals collecting seeds, cuttings or divisions of wild plants for the purposes of growing, studying, selecting, hybridizing and ultimately propagating the plants and distributing to other growers.

We recognize that without experienced people with horticultural and/or botanical interests selecting and propagating species from the wild, there would be fewer choices of propagated horticultural material and consequent increased pressure on wild habitats with illegal or inappropriate collecting, and there would be less knowledge gathered on the nature of the plants.

We would encourage collectors to be responsibly aware that rare plants merit special consideration and should not be distributed or propagules taken unless there is a sufficient local stock to successfully perpetuate the population. In most cases this means minimal or no collecting of rare material.

Further Notes on *U. calycifida*

By

Barry Meyers-Rice

Steward Observatory

University of Arizona

Tucson, AZ 85721

email: bmeyersrice@as.arizona.edu

In CPN 21:1—2, I wrote on forms of *U. calycifida*. I have since found that forms 'Spotted flower' and 'Purple veins' self and breed true but crosses between them have yet to provide viable seed. While one could argue that my failure to obtain seed from this cross suggests the forms are different species, I do not. I think the lack of success is due to failure on my part in this delicate procedure, and not because of a genetic barrier. I will continue trying. I have also obtained from Christoph Belanger a few other clones of this plant, especially one ('Mauve flower') which has foliage the same as 'Purple veins' and similar large flowers. The lower lip of its flowers has a reticulated pattern in the proximal palate region similar to the spots on 'Spotted flower.' I consider 'Mauve flower' to be a plant intermediate between 'Purple veins' and 'Spotted flower.' In this perspective, it argues against a species or even subspecies distinction for those two *U. calycifida* forms. Lastly, I have heard of white flowered forms in cultivation.