

SARRACENIA DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

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If you are an enthusiastic *Sarracenia* collector, read this article!

At a meeting the ICPS funded to help stewards of rare *Sarracenia* populations exchange information on management techniques (Meyers-Rice, 2001), I discovered that hobbyist interest in rare pitcher plants, especially *Sarracenia alabamensis*, *S. jonesii*, and *S. oreophila*, might contribute to poaching pressures. I resolved to develop legal ways to make these plants more available to carnivorous plant enthusiasts. These *Sarracenia* species are not easily available because their interstate trade is prohibited without permits from the United States States Fish and Wildlife Service (US F&WS), and international trade is prohibited without CITES permits.

As a first step in making rare *Sarracenia* available, the ICPS needed to complete the process of obtaining its 501(c)3 nonprofit status. Former ICPS President David Gray guided that process to fruition last year. With our nonprofit status affirmed, I was then able to apply for two trade permits from the US F&WS. The first permit was to give our seed bank permission to distribute seed from cultivated specimens of endangered species (see the new guidelines on page 29). The second permit was to give the ICPS the chance to experiment in a short-duration, live plant distribution program in which rare plants would be provided to ICPS members. I am pleased to announce that both permits were approved. Read on to learn more about the live plant distribution program, and how you can apply to legally obtain rare *Sarracenia*.

The plants being distributed are all specimens of *Sarracenia alabamensis* (i.e. *Sarracenia rubra* subsp. *alabamensis*). *Sarracenia alabamensis* is believed to occur in only twelve locations in the wild, and the ICPS has been given seeds by the land owners from three of these locations. As described in Meyers-Rice (2001), we are referring to these locations using site codes: AL001, AL002, and AL003. (General descriptions of these sites are on the ICPS web site and the carnivorous plant FAQ, e.g. <http://www.sarracenia.com/faq/faq3978.html>).

These seeds were germinated in my own and John Brittnacher's terraria, and as they developed were transferred to the Botanical Conservatory greenhouses at the University of California at Davis, with the kind cooperation of Tim Metcalf, the greenhouse manager. Additional support has been provided by University of California at Davis staff Ernesto Sandoval, Doug Walker, and also many interns and volunteers (my wife Beth Salvia, for example!). ICPS board member John Brittnacher has in particular contributed many additional hours to the cultivation of these plants.

More Details On These Plants

The seedlings have different cultivation histories so they are of different sizes. However, even the smallest are at least 4 cm (1.5 inches) tall. Since each plant in the program was grown from a separate seed, they are all genetically distinct. The plants are all responding well to standard *Sarracenia* horticultural methods. Prior

to shipping, the plants were housed in greenhouse facilities that use integrated pest management practices, so pests are at a minimum. However, the fastidious cultivator should be on the watch for pests.

Using the distribution protocol described below, we will send pairs of plants to as many people as possible until our stock is depleted. I encourage growers to request plants from two different provenances. It is my hope that this will supply growers with plants genetically distinct enough to avoid inbreeding depression and to produce a great amount of seed if the two plants are crossed.

Prior to shipping, the plants will be removed from their pots and have their roots washed free of soil. They will be packed in sphagnum moss. Even though we will take every possible precaution to treat the plants delicately, this treatment may result in damage or even the death of some plants. Treat the plants with care upon their arrival and pot them immediately.

Each plant will be accompanied by paperwork indicating they originated from this ICPS poaching abatement distribution program. I will retain records on who was sent plants in this program; this information will help document the success of the program so that future permits can be obtained from the US F&WS.

Request Processing And Fulfillment

Here are the instructions on how to request plants. Please note that requesting a pair of plants does not guarantee you will receive them—I expect demand may exceed supply on this first trial of the program. This is why I use the terminology “plant requests” instead of “plant orders” throughout this article. We have set a request-cost of US\$7 for two plants to be an at-cost proposition to pay for shipping materials. Any profit from this program will be directed to the ICPS conservation program, any deficit will be paid for by the ICPS conservation program.

We regret that only US members may request plants on this trial program. If it is successful, we may repeat it with larger membership participation.

- 1) Send above a payment of \$7 US dollars to my ICPS P.O. box address (given above); send either a check (written to “ICPS”) or cash (at your own risk).
- 2) Include with your payment the request form (on page 6) that will guide our fulfillment of your request (photocopy the form to avoid having to cut apart your issue of the journal). Include your name so we can compare it to the ICPS membership roster—you must be a current member of the ICPS to participate in this program. Also, include a copy of your mailing address on a piece of paper 5 cm × 10 cm (2 × 4 inches). This will be used as a mailing label, so make sure it is legible, extremely clear, and smear-proof.
- 3) Requests will be accepted until 1 June 2003. At that time, we will randomly assign a number to each request. Requests for plants will be filled in this order. Requests received after 1 June will not be processed. You may only request two plants.
- 4) Plants will be selected randomly to complete the requests. The plants are of various ages and cultivation histories, so while the smallest are only 4 cm (1.5 inches) tall, others are substantially larger.
- 5) If the plant request demand exceeds our supply, your payment will be returned in June or July. Cash payments will be returned as cash—you assume all risk related to money lost in the mail.

6) You may choose to include an additional charitable, tax-deductible donation to the ICPS conservation fund with your plant request; such donations will have no affect on your chances of obtaining plants if the demand exceeds our supply. If you pay by check, please make this donation on a separate check.

7) Do not include correspondence regarding the seed bank or your ICPS membership with your plant request.

8) Please do not mail, e-mail or phone me about the status of your request. This will be a very time-intensive project, and I will not have time to answer your questions.

9) Although we will be gentle with the plants, they will probably suffer some shock in the trip from our facilities to yours. We can not afford to offer refunds for plants that do not survive.

ICPS Rare Plant Request Form

Your name: _____

Plant selection preference: choose one

- I would prefer two plants from the same site
 I would prefer one plant each from two different sites
 I have no preference

Payment enclosed as: Cash Check (Payable to ICPS)

Optional charitable donation to ICPS conservation program

Amount: _____ Paid as: Cash Check (Payable to ICPS)

Remember to include your payment and legible copy of your name/address that will be used as a shipping label.

Future plans

Those who obtain plants through this program are encouraged to keep the paperwork that will accompany each plant. This paperwork will be useful in case you are ever questioned by authorities about where and how you obtained your plants. (Anyone who grows endangered species should maintain documentation regarding their plants.) I encourage everyone to cross pollinate their plants and glut the ICPS seed bank with seed. The CP listserv on the internet would be an excellent way for people to share news of excess pollen.

This is a trial program. I am organizing this to both help the plants by decreasing poaching, and to help the carnivorous plant grower community by making plants more easily available. As with all first-attempts at innovative programs, I expect we will encounter some difficulties and snags—I truly hope those who participate in this program are willing to be understanding if and when we encounter problems.

I will probably conduct a follow-up survey to discover how many plants survive the shipping process. These survey questions will probably be included on the ICPS membership renewal form. The feedback from participants who obtain plants through this program would be helpful.

If this program is a success, and if it is not too burdensome, we may repeat it in the future with other rare taxa, or plants from other locations. Extending the program to include our ICPS members who are not located within the USA would be

excellent, but this would involve obtaining CITES permits. Whether this program is revived mostly depends upon whether it appears to benefit the plants, and whether or not these best-laid plans, created with the best intentions, are not devastated by unintended consequences.

Meyers-Rice, B. A. 2001, Rare *Sarracenia* poaching and the ICPS, Carniv. Pl. Newslett., 30:43-50.



Figure 1: Plants in our University of California facilities, awaiting distribution. Photograph by John Brittnacher.

LOOKING BACK: CPN 25 YEARS AGO

David Moran described an experience he had with *Nepenthes* under adverse conditions: "I have one *Nepenthes kampotiana* growing in a 7-inch (18 cm) pot outdoors under a lath along with my orchids....In January, 1977, the temperature dropped to 25°F (-4°), and the plant suffered freeze damage but did not perish. I took several cuttings which rooted and are not growing satisfactorily at this time. I was surprised that this tropical plant survived a 'hard freeze.'"