

A NEW FUTURE: CARNIVOROUS PLANT CONSERVATION AND THE ICPS

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<https://doi.org/10.55360/cpn524.ct397>

Readers might know little of carnivorous plant conservation work were it not published in CPN. Conservationists themselves may not have time to interact with organizations like the ICPS without us taking the initiative. It has taken an effort for the ICPS to finally rediscover and meet with active workers after years of lapsed interaction.

We are all familiar with the unremitting tide of challenges and fears about the future of wild carnivorous plants that resurges with new urgency every year. Many fear that we do not challenge it back. The ICPS represents grassroots concerns about carnivorous plants at a global scale. Aside from habitat protection, poaching and human development remain largely unaddressed by the global community of enthusiasts. It may come as a surprise to find that projects exist to counter these challenges which the ICPS and its members can support.

The following report from Auburn University gives us important insights into on-the-ground work to protect the critically endangered *Sarracenia oreophila* under a recovery plan drafted and ratified by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists. The report details work performed by an expert crew of biologists and their students from Auburn, itself an institution with longstanding ties to carnivorous plant conservation and species status assessment in the Southeastern U.S. Thanks to their kind collaboration with the ICPS, we stand to learn much more from their conservation work in this critical age.

Projects supporting the recovery of critically endangered taxa and their habitat are ranked in the highest priority amongst the projects the ICPS will endorse in the coming years. Not only is our support effective protection for these critically endangered plants, projects such as *S. oreophila* habitat recovery are also secure choices. They are carried out with exacting federal guidelines and expert oversight. The workers are devoted and passionate about the plants and the projects have been active for over 20 years.

With the necessity of following exact protocols to be successful, nearly all conservation efforts are spread thin. Initiatives are prone to those crises that go hand-in-hand with shoestring budgets. The ICPS can find great purpose supporting conservation in this age of extinction. As a global forum, workers in diverse regions can learn much from each other, for their common mission is rife with challenges and goals. Showcasing these goals, challenges, and successes is important to the development of new practices. There are also prospects beyond habitat and plant protection. Collaboration between groups can strengthen our community. A unified approach may indeed attract the attention of new collaborators whom we do not yet know. The study of protected species and habitat, a long-term goal, becomes feasible when work to conserve them is put in.

More stories of conservation work will be published in CPN as our scope expands. There is no other journal more appropriate for it. Beyond CPN, these reports enrich a global study and effort to protect rare plants. There are many across the globe who are unaware that such projects exist, and are doubtful of the short- and long-term efficacy of conservation. The following report reveals much to the contrary.



Carson Trexler at a protected natural *Sarracenia oreophila* site in Alabama, May 2022. The entire population is framed within the image.

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