

PITCHER PLANT FAMILY.

SARRACENIACEAE.

Pitcher Plant. Huntsman's Cup. Side-Saddle Flower.

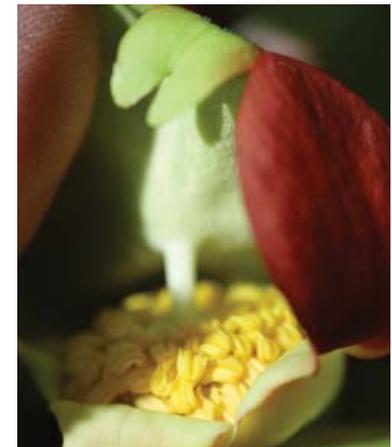
Sarracenia purpurea.

Found in swamps in early June.

The leaves and flower-stems grow directly from the root.

The curious leaf is in the form of a deep cup or pitcher, with a broad wing on one side, and a flaring top which answers to the lip of the pitcher; the outer surface is smooth while the inner surface is set with many short, downward-pointing bristles; the texture, especially, of the old pitchers, is tough and leathery, and the color is a strong green more or less veined with dark red. A number of leaf-cups grow in a cluster close to the ground.

The large flower has 5 long dull red petals rounded at the ends, and folded over the large umbrella-like top of the pistil; beneath this spreading green top is the large seed-case encircled by the many yellow stamens; the 5 spreading parts of the calyx are thick and leathery, of a dull reddish-brown on the outside, and green on the inside, with the brown striking through in places. A single nodding flower grows on the top of a long, smooth, light green stem.



The pitchers are often found half filled with water, and sometimes contain the remains of small insects upon which the plant is said to feed. There is no apparent resemblance to a "side-saddle" in the flower unless it lies in the leathery texture of its parts. It might fittingly be called "the Russia-leather flower."

Top photo on left: ©David G. Smith, <http://delawarewildflowers.org>

Lower photo on left: Geoff Gallice from Gainesville, FL, USA - Pitcher plant flower, *Sarracenia purpurea*, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22476043>

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Lower photo on right: kbarton

Text and drawing excerpted from *Wildflowers from the North-Eastern States* by Ellen Miller and Margaret Christine Whiting, 1895
Nomenclature and Families updated.



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