

TIPS I HAVE FOUND USEFUL IN GROWING SARRACENIA PLANTS

Joe Cumbee
215 Lower Rebecca Road
Fitzgerald, Georgia 31750

When making *Sarracenia* rhizome cuttings, use a child's wading pool for growing them (which can be purchased cheaply at the end of the summer from discount stores). Overfill the pool with pine straw, cover the straw with a scrap piece of plywood, then place bricks or concrete blocks on top of the plywood for weight. Fill the pool with water and let the pine straw soak for 4 to 8 days. During this time the straw will soak up water and settle to within an inch or two of the top of the pool. Spread a half to three quarters of an inch of dried long fiber sphagnum moss over the top of the pine straw and let it soak for a few hours. Next, spread one half of an inch of sand over the top of the sphagnum moss. The sand that I use is the kind that is used to make concrete (It can be bought for \$ 14.00 a ton, delivered.) The Sphagnum moss acts as screen to hold the sand on top of the pine straw and prevent it from settling to the bottom. The moss also acts as a wick to keep the sand moist.

The rhizomes are cut into one and one-half inch lengths or left whole (minus the growing tip), dusted with a fungicide, and placed in the wet sand. Leave the top most portion of the rhizome above the sand. By mid to late summer the rhizomes have roots and can be transplanted, or left in the pool for a complete season. I have no scientific evidence, but the roots seem to be longer and healthier than those rooted in a sand and peat moss mixture. The plants are easily removed from the pine straw and have fewer broken roots compared to other soil mediums I have used.

Most of the plants I root are placed back in the environment; either in the yard, around the pond, or in a wetland area on the family farm. About midsummer I carefully remove the plants from the wading pool and place each plant in a 12 or 16 ounce styrofoam cup in a 50-50 mixture of peat moss and sand. I do not punch holes in the cups for drainage, as the *Sarracenias* have no problem handling standing water for a few days. The plant is watered with one-fourth recommended strength solution of Benlate and one-eighth teaspoon per gallon of Peters 20-20-20 fertilizer. Plants are given this solution every four weeks. Interval waterings are with regular tap water or rain. Plants are usually transplanted in November or December. Plants that have been given this treatment seem to thrive better than those transplanted bare rooted back into the wild.

I use a homemade tool to transplant the plants from the 12 or 16 ounce styrofoam cups back into the environment. The tool is a combination between a pine tree dibble, a bulb planter, and a soil sample tube. The handle is made from a 4 foot section of three-fourths inch metal pipe or bar. A five inch foot rest is welded six inches from the bottom of the metal pipe. The hole producing section is made from a seven inch long length of two and one-half inch metal pipe. The cutting edge is sharpened around the entire circumference with a file or bench grinder. From the non cutting end the pipe is split three-fourths of its length with a metal cutting band saw or a hack saw. The two

sections are pried one inch apart or flared using a hammer or strong vise-grip pliers. This piece is then welded to the bottom of the handle below the foot rest. This tool works well when large numbers of plants are to be transplanted. First a hole is made with the planting tool, then the plant is tapped or gently pushed from the bottom of the styrofoam cup so that the soil and plant come out intact. The shape of the hole that the planter makes is the same size and shape of the plant with its soil. When planted this way, many more plants can be planted with less labor and the plant has a little added protection from diseases and a little extra grow power than when transplanting bare root plants.

***Sarracenia flava* Seed Data**

25 Oct 94

From a random sample of 200 *S. flava* seed pods, ten seed pods were selected to conduct a count of the number of seeds per lobe and the number of seeds per pod. The findings were as follows:

Each pod contained five lobes

One lobe contained sufficiently fewer seeds than the other four.

Each lobe contained different amounts of seed. On and average:

Lobe 1 had 19% fewer seeds than lobe	2
Lobe 2 had 6% fewer seeds than lobe	3
Lobe 3 had 8% fewer seeds than lobe	4
Lobe 4 had 9% fewer seeds than lobe	5
Lobe 5 had 36% more seeds than lobe	1
The pod with the most seed contined	992
The pod with the least amount of seed	508
The average number of seed per pod (mean)	683
The median was	675

On an average there were approximately 1,000 dry seeds per gram, or 28,400 seeds per ounce. That would be 454,300 seeds per pound. (rounded off approximately one half million seeds per pound.)

On an average, one teaspoon of seeds weighed 2.53 grams, or 2500 seeds per teaspoon. Information compiled by Joe Cumbee and Ben Hill County Middle school students.

Sarracenia minor Seed Data

03 Nov 94

From a random sample of 200 *S. minor* seed pods, twenty seed pods were selected to conduct a count of the number of seeds per pod.

The findings were as follows:

Each pod contained five lobes

Each lobe contained different amounts of seed

The pod with the most seed contained 547

The pod with the least amount of seed 150

The average number of seed per pod (mean) 297

The median was 291

On an average there were approximately 1,800 dry seeds per gram, or 51,110 seeds per ounce. That would be 817,760 seeds per pound. On an average, one teaspoon of seeds weighed 2.45 grams, or approximately 4400 seeds per teaspoon.

Information compiled by Joe Cumbee and Ben Hill County Middle school students

