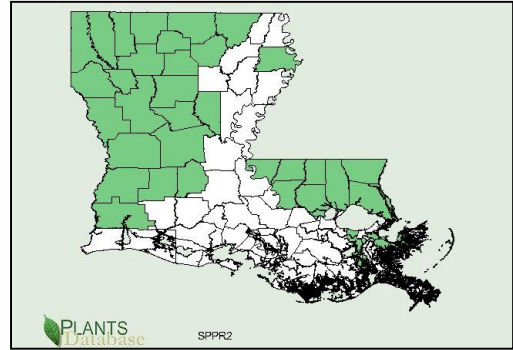


## Native Orchid of the Month—February

### *Spiranthes praecox* greenvein lady's tresses

*Spiranthes praecox* (greenvein, also known as grass-leaved, lady's tresses) is an early spring bloomer first observed in February, but may flower as late as June. The common form has a lip with green veins, lateral sepals that are appressed to the corolla, club-tipped pubescence and the tendency to have browning at the edge of the sepals and petals, presumably caused by the visiting pollinators. Plants can reach heights of more than 24 inches and their 5 or 6 leaves may be as long as 10 inches and persist through flowering.



The flowers spiral around the stem with variable degrees of twisting from a loose spiral that does not even complete one turn to a spiral so tight that the flowers appear to be in 2 to 3 ranks straight up the stem. Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of this species is a set of green veins on the lip.



Greenvein lady's tresses are found primarily in the Gulf Coastal Plain in dry to moist roadsides and frequently in damp meadows, sparse woods, and road banks where frequent mowing discourages competing vegetation.

