

Native Orchid of the Month—June

Calopogon pallidus
(pale grass-pink)

The pale grass-pink (*Calopogon pallidus*) orchid bears one leaf and a slender, wiry flowering stem (6 to 20 inches tall) with medium-small (one inch) tall flowers often a pale pink color. Flowers have narrow floral segments, giving a much more 'spidery' appearance compared to other members of this genus. It can easily be distinguished by its smaller flowers borne on a slender stem with much narrower floral segments and flowers that tend toward a paler pink to white color and often have a slight fragrance. The petals often tend to reflex forward and the lateral sepals tend to reflex

backward, giving the flower an overall narrow, elongated appearance. It

also tends to have one or two flowers open at a time on a spike, more often than just one solitary flower.



and the reproductive parts below in order to escape, hopefully pollinating the flower in the process.

The lip portion is on the top of the flower, not the bottom, as is common with most other genera. The brushy, yellow protuberances on the lip are also designed to attract pollinators, but the attempt may not succeed. The flower snaps closed when a potential pollinator lands on it, and the insect has to crawl out of the tight quarters between the lip



Jim Fowler

It flowers March through June, rarely into July or August. It is typically found on moist to wet acid pine savannas and grasslands and flowers abundantly several weeks after late winter to early spring fires.

