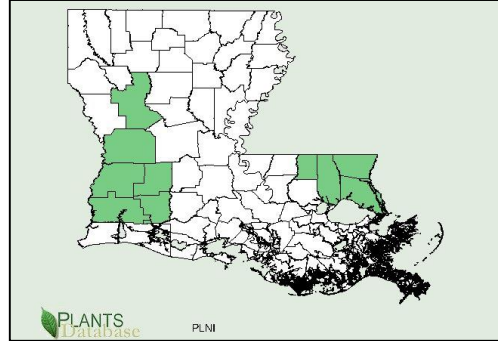


Native Orchid of the Month—July

Platanthera nivea (snowy orchid)

The snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*) is a slender, erect, one-stemmed plant that grows up to 3 feet tall. It has 2 or 3 leaves near the bottom, 4 to 12 inches long. The flower clusters are cylindrical, 4 to 5 inches long at the end of the stem and very compact, blooming from the bottom upward. Flowers are white, with 3 petals, the narrow lip at the top. The slender spur is conspicuous, 3/4 inch long, extending to the side and curving upward.



Platanthera nivea is distributed in the southeastern United States from Texas to Florida and in the southern mid-Atlantic region as far north as New Jersey. In Louisiana it is located in the woodlands, both in eastern and western portion of the State.

The snowy orchid is the earliest of the *Platantheras* to emerge in the moist, open pinelands and acid bogs, a harbinger of even more showy orchids to come in late summer. This species often shares the same habitat with numerous carnivorous plants. It flowers from May



through July, peaking in June.

