New Cultivars

Keywords: cultivar: *Sarracenia* 'Leah Wilkerson', *Utricularia* 'Jitka'.

Sarracenia 'Leah Wilkerson'

Submitted: 12 April 2004

This naturally occurring *Sarracenia* hybrid was a chance find while visiting a bog on private property—with permission—in Walton County, Florida in May of 2002. Actually it was hard to miss this outstanding *S.* × *moorei* cross, as it stood head and shoulders above all the *Sarracenia flava* and *Sarracenia leucophylla* plants in the bog because of its sheer size. I have observed this plant in the field for two years and in cultivation for one year. Unlike most *S.* × *moorei* crosses, it displays unbelievable hybrid vigor. The original genet measured over two meters (six feet) across with more than fifty pitchers; the tallest of these measured 130 cm (50 inches) tall, while the heights of the majority of the other pitchers measured between 86-97 cm (34-38 inches). The average lateral measurement of the hood was 17 cm (6.5 inches).

In addition to its gigantic proportions, this hybrid is outstanding because of its stunning coloration. The lower three quarters of the pitchers are lime green, and the pitcher tops are lemon yellow with large areoles and light red veining. The ala is lined in red. The nectar roll is pronounced, undulated and mottled with red; this pigmentation becomes more solid near the column, and forms a throat blotch typical of the *S. flava* var. *rugelii* parentage. The lid is particularly colorful with an overall pale yellow color (verging on white) with regularly spaced strong red veining throughout. From a distance the lid takes on a peachy golden cast. The edge of the lid is edged in red and ruffled, typical of the *S. leucophylla* parent.

This hybrid produces most of its pitchers in the spring—obviously an influence from the *Sarracenia flava* in its ancestry. In cultivation, these spring pitchers regularly reach 86-91 cm (34-36 inches) in height. A second flush of pitchers is also produced in the fall, and as in *S. leucophylla*, these pitchers are even larger, measuring up to 96 cm (38 inches) tall.

The cultivar name honors Mrs. Leah Wilkerson, who has lived her entire life on the property where this plant occurs. About one-third this property is bog habitat. As her father before her did, Mrs. Wilkerson makes sure that the wire grass pasture gets burned every winter. While the family conducted these burns to maintain the pasture for livestock, they were providing the exact conditions to allow the other native plants to thrive, including the pitcher plants. So the name *Sarracenia* 'Leah Wilkerson' honors both Mrs. Wilkerson and her stewardship.

Vegetative propagation is necessary to maintain the unique features of this hybrid. I obtained written permission to collect a sample of this specimen, and it is presently in a private tissue culture lab. Those interested in obtaining specimens of this plant should contact me using the address below.

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Utricularia 'Jitka'

Submitted: 10 July 2004

This plant, created in 2000, is a hybrid made by crossing *U. quelchii* (female) with *U. praetermissa* (male). The plant has the general floral and leaf structure of the paternal parent. The flower color, however, is quite different; while the flowers of *U. praetermissa* are typically white or pale pink with a yellow palate splotch, the flowers of this cultivar are a splendidly rich mauve, with a prominent vitelline palate splotch (see Back Cover).



Figure 1: *Sarracenia* 'Leah Wilkerson': side view (left), top view (right). Photographs by Brooks Garcia.

The leaves are petiolate, with obovate laminae. Each petiole is up to 7 cm long, the lamina measures up to 7 × 3 cm. Including the typical spray of 3-4 flowers, the entire inflorescence is up to 30 cm long. The flower stalk is stiff, and about 2 mm thick. A whorl of three narrow bracts is at the base of each flower pedicel; an additional whorl of bracts occurs on the peduncle, at about 2/3 of the distance from the ground to the lowermost flower. The whorls are rather strange, because they are serried, with two bracts crossed one over the other. The flowers open progressively from below, and thanks to their durability, the earliest flowers to open are still in good condition when the last flower opens, resulting in a very impressive and beautiful show! It is vigorous, and produces flowers frequently, time and time again.

The flowers are large—the lower lip of corolla measures 34 mm in length and 52 mm in width. The smaller, upper lip is shorter than the upper calyx lobe, and is mostly hidden by it. The spur is falcate—it reaches the margin of the lower lip, but does not curve backwards at the apex as does the spur of *U. praetermissa*.

The described cultivar is apparently infertile. However, it readily propagates asexually through division. Also, like both parents, the plant produces underground tuberous stolons bearing brood.

Because the temperature optimum for growing this cultivar is about 16°C, this is a plant best suited for cool and very damp greenhouses. Additional illumination during the winter is recommended. We use small perforated pots (10 cm in diameter), using the same soil mix as for the frequently cultivated *U. alpina*.

I am naming the novelty *Utricularia* 'Jitka' after my pretty friend Jitka Strasserová. The name is in Czech language; the tongue more familiar with English would pronounce it "yit-ka." According to article 32 of the ICNCP, the English translation of the name *Utricularia* 'Judith' may also be used.

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Front Cover: *Heliamphora sarracenioides*. Photograph by Andreas Wistuba. Article on page 4.
Back Cover: *Utricularia* 'Jitka'. Photograph by Miloslav Studnicka. See article on page 27.

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