

TWO INTERESTING VASCULAR PLANT COLLECTIONS FROM A PEATY COASTAL FRESHWATER MARSH IN SOUTHWESTERN LOUISIANA

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ABSTRACT

Recent fieldwork has resulted in the first collection of *Lachnanthes caroliniana* west of the Mississippi River and the second overall record of *Rhynchospora inundata* from Louisiana.

Lachnanthes caroliniana (Lam.) Dandy (Haemodoraceae) is a perennial herb of wet, acidic bogs, savannahs, pocosins, and pond margins (Robertson 2002; Weakley 2020) and is nearly restricted to the North American Coastal Plain (Noss et al. 2015). It is reported to extend as far west as the eastern Florida Parishes of southeastern Louisiana (Kartesz 2015; USDA, NRCS 2020; Weakley 2020). In August 2014, I collected apparently the first record of this species west of the Mississippi River, in Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, in the southwestern part of the state. The specimen cited below documents an approximately 225 km disjunction from nearest known populations in southeastern Louisiana. Whereas the habitat of *L. caroliniana* in the Florida Parishes is typical, i.e. wet depressions in acid pine savannahs and bayhead swamp margins, the record collection came from a broad, peaty, freshwater coastal marsh. This marsh was generally dominated by *Panicum hemitomon* and included some other elements typical of acidic, older coastal plain grasslands such as *Oxypolis filiformis* (Reid 8934 (LSU)) and *Fuirena breviseta*. Label data below state that *Lachnanthes caroliniana* was uncommon but I spent little time trying to census the population. It could very well be more common and widespread in the marsh, which was expansive. In terms of rarity, *L. caroliniana* is vulnerable in Louisiana (S3) and apparently secure globally (G4) (NatureServe 2020).

Voucher. Louisiana. Vermilion Par.: Deer Island, White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area, S of Intracoastal Canal, ca. 10 air mi SSW of Gueydan, marsh on N side of island, 29.88968, -92.54726; uncommon, ca. 15 plants observed in freshwater marsh (burned in April 2014) with *Eleocharis equisetoides*, *Ipomoea sagittata*, *Sagittaria lancifolia*, *Fuirena breviseta*, 4 Aug 2014, Reid 8936 (LSU). Figure 1.

Rhynchospora inundata (Oakes) Fernald (Cyperaceae) is an emergent sedge of various types of isolated ponds (Kral 2002; Weakley 2020) and has a geographic range similar to that of *Lachnanthes caroliniana* (Kartesz 2015; Noss et al. 2015; USDA, NRCS 2020). Confirmed records of *R. inundata* west of the Mississippi River are very few, with three reported from Texas (Singhurst et al. 2010) and one previous record from Louisiana (Reid & Urbatsch 2012). The first Louisiana record was from the sandy peat margin of an apparently natural isolated pond in Sabine Parish, in the west-central part of the state (Reid & Urbatsch 2012). The specimen cited below represents the second confirmed record of this species from Louisiana. I discovered *R. inundata* in the same peaty marsh with *Lachnanthes caroliniana*. While I attempted no census, it was obviously plentiful and widespread in the marsh. *Rhynchospora inundata* is critically imperiled in Louisiana (S1) and apparently secure globally (G4) (NatureServe 2020).

Voucher. Louisiana. Vermilion Par.: Deer Island, White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area, S of Intracoastal Canal, ca. 10 air mi SSW of Gueydan, marsh on N side of island, 29.88851, -92.54426; common over a large area of freshwater marsh (burned in April 2014), with *Panicum hemitomon*, *Eleocharis equisetoides*, *Ludwigia sphaerocarpa*, *Sagittaria lancifolia*, and *Fuirena breviseta*, 4 Aug 2014, Reid 8935 (LSU). Figure 2.

Deer Island is composed of mineral soil and supports a unique expression of coastal prairie. A report on the coastal prairie flora and vegetation is forthcoming. The discoveries reported here underscore the need to also focus attention on the marsh and aquatic habitats on White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area.

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Figure 1. Voucher specimen of *Lachnanthes caroliniana*, documenting the first record of this species west of the Mississippi River.



Figure 2. Voucher specimen of *Rhynchospora inundata*, documenting the second known record of this species from Louisiana. Note the elongate rhizomes and open inflorescence with widely distributed spikelets.