

Rare Plants of Louisiana



Nymphoides cordata - little floating-hearts Water-Lily Family (Nymphaeaceae)

Rarity Rank: SH/G5 (Historical in Louisiana)

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

Range: Ontario and Quebec, south to FL and west to LA

Recognition:

- Generic Description: an aquatic plant with floating leaves and aerial flowers; rhizomes are present in the mucky substrate from which slender petiole-like stems arise, producing petioled (stalked) leaves, and umbel inflorescences in the leaf axils; tuberous roots often present below inflorescences
- *Nymphoides cordata* is in general similar to *N. aquatica*, which is a common species of freshwater habitats in the Coastal Zone – the two species are here differentiated
- Leaf blades heart shaped, 3 to 7 cm long, green and often variegated with purplish above, smooth below (*N. aquatica* leaves are larger, to 15 cm long, green above, and appear rough below)
- Stems slender, less than 1 mm wide just below inflorescence
- Fruit a capsule, only slightly exceeding the calyx, versus considerably exceeding the length of the calyx in *N. aquatica*
- Seeds smooth and subglobose, rarely papillate (*N. aquatica* seeds are conspicuously papillate)



Jim Stasz @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

Flowering Time: July to September

Light Requirement: Full sun to part shade

Wetland Indicator Status:

OBL – almost always in wetlands

Habitat:

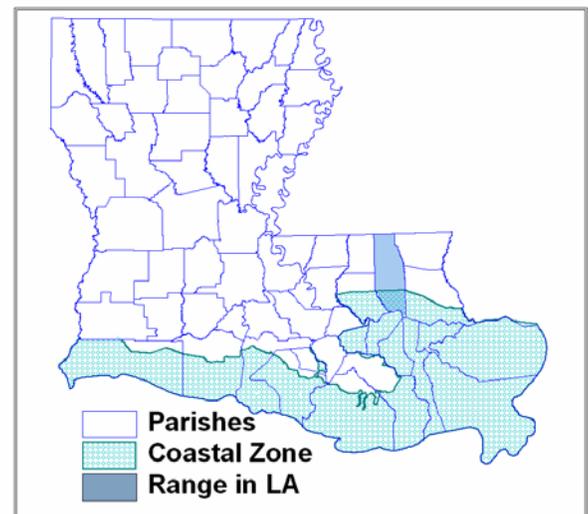
We have one historical record of *N. cordata*, collected from a pond within a cypress-swamp blackgum swamp near Ponchatoula. Louisiana is at the western edge of the range of *N. cordata*.

Threats:

Subsidence and potentially salt water intrusion

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Maintain open aquatic environments and habitats

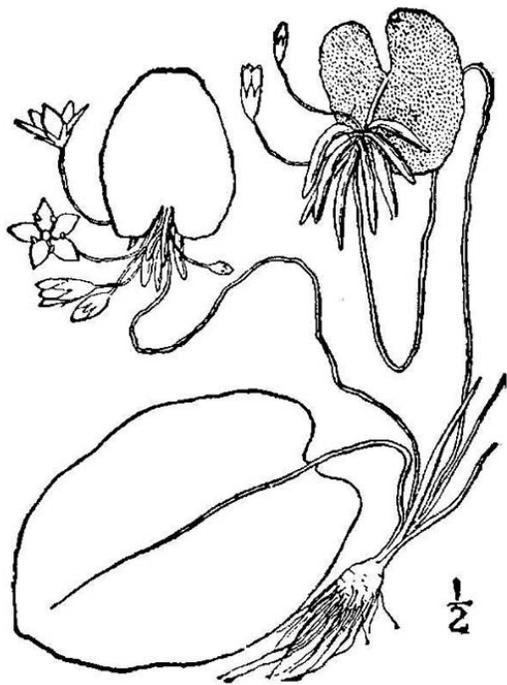


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- Keep an eye out for this species when traveling the swamps on and around Joyce WMA

LA River Basins: Pontchartrain



Above: Line drawing of *N. cordata*. USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *Illustrated flora of the northern states and Canada*. Vol. 3: 18.

Right: Herbarium specimen of *N. cordata* – this specimen was collected in 1938 and represents the only Louisiana record. Specimen image courtesy of LSU Herbarium.



References:

Clewell, A. F. 1985. Guide to the vascular plants of the Florida Panhandle. University Presses of Florida, Florida State University Press, Tallahassee. 605 pp.

Godfrey, R. K. and J. W. Wooten. 1981. Aquatic and wetland plants of southeastern United States: dicotyledons. University of Georgia Press. Athens, GA. 933 pp.

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USDA, NRCS. 2008. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA

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<http://www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program> or 225-765-2811

www.BTNEP.org or 1-800-259-0869