

RIGHTS OF WAY ENDANGERED SPECIES SURVEY FOR SOUTHEAST REGION OF GEORGIA

The Southeastern Region of Georgia includes the following 13 counties: Emanuel, Jenkins, Screven, Candler, Bulloch, Treutlen, Montgomery, Toombs, Tattnall, Evans, Bryan, Effingham and Chatham.

Based on the Georgia Natural Heritage Inventory records, the following plants and animal habitats were searched for on Georgia Power Company rights of way.

Plants:

Flame Flower *Macranthera flammea*
Parrot Pitcher Plant *Sarracenia psittacina*
Purple Pitcher Plant *Sarracenia purpurea*
Yellow Fly Trap *Sarracenia minor*
Hooded Pitcher Plant *Sarracenia flava*
Georgia Plume *Elliottia racemosa*
Sandhill Milkvetch *Astragalus michauxii*
Silky Camellia *Stewartia malacodendron*
Ochoopee Bumelia *Sideroxylon sp. 1*

Animals:

Wood Stork (Rookery) *Mycteria Americana* (Federal Endangered)
Gopher Tortoise (Burrows) *Gopherus polyphemus*

Field verification identified 11 locations that have possible maintenance concerns: Emanuel (3) 2 yellow fly-trap & 1 gopher tortoise locations, Jenkins (1) wood stork, Bulloch (2) hooded pitcherplant, gopher tortoise, Tattnall (2) purple pitcherplant, gopher tortoise, Evans(3) purple pitcherplant, hooded pitcherplant and gopher tortoise.

Discussion and Recommendations: The counties comprising the Southeastern Region are situated in the lower coastal plain geological province of Georgia.

Deep sand upland ridges, intermingled with wetlands, swamps and river bottom floodplains provide a variety of habitats. Pitcherplant bogs, longleaf pine forests and gopher tortoise colonies are the main habitats of concerns in this region. Much of the wetlands have been drained for agriculture/silviculture use. Uplands have been cleared also, primarily for pine plantation, but also for residential development over the past two decades.

Two counties (Ebenezer and Chatham), are served by Savannah Electric and only 1 Georgia Power Company line (500Kv) is located in these counties. The right of way crossing at Ebenezer Creek Swamp is protected as a "no-cut zone" due to the uniqueness of this cypress-tupelo swamp. Although it is not noted in the mapped information, this agreement is well know.

For all Pitcher Plants: The following recommendations are made:

1. The bog or wetland supporting the plants should be protected from maintenance vehicle traffic and access roads as much as possible.
2. Provide a buffer (10 feet) around pitcher plant bogs when broadcasting herbicides on a line that has Pitcher Plant bogs occurring on it
3. Hand clear or selectively herbicide woody shrubs on the line within the areas where the pitcher plant colonies are found
4. Continue maintenance clearing as it provides opening for pitcher plant growth.
5. Provide maintenance crews with locations as well as directions precautions to take, in and around Pitch Plant bogs and other wetlands.
6. Consider the feasibility of burning certain bogs if it can be done in such a way as to not harm the conductor or towers.

Maintained ROWs provide continuing habitat for Pitcher Plants because periodic clearing mimics the effects of burning that is required to sustain an open area for the light loving pitcher plants to exist. There are a number of places in South Georgia where Pitcher Plant population remnants survive only on Transmission Line ROWs. Georgia Power Company Transmission Maintenance and Environmental Affairs should consider an educational program for maintenance personnel that would assure their knowledge of what to look for and how to handle sensitive areas such as pitcher plant bogs. Such a class should consist of visual aids for identification, lists of recommendations for type of maintenance as well as contact persons to answer questions.

The following recommendations are made for Gopher Tortoise/active burrows on Transmission ROWs:

1. Avoid driving maintenance vehicles over active dens wherever dens occur.
2. Possibly survey areas for active dens before maintenance clearing begins.
3. Environmental and Transmission Maintenance should consider the practicality of educating maintenance personnel to identify active burrows so that precautions could be used during all maintenance operations anywhere that burrows are likely to be found. This could eliminate flagging burrows as some biologists feel that marking locations of active burrows may lead to the unlawful collecting of the animals.

Like pitcherplants, gopher tortoise probably benefit from ROWs as it provides a stable habitat while much of the habitat adjacent to the lines is being plowed for agriculture and timber operations. Managing ROWs for gopher tortoises will take little extra effort other than preventing destruction of active dens with mowing equipment and vehicles.

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All the counties within the Southeast Region are summarized below. The GPC number is listed along with the common name of the plant/animal. The numbered line items refer to locations within the county; only those in bold print were considered close enough to the rights of way to field survey. Line items in regular print refer to animal species not considered in the survey or locations too far from the line to be of concern; usually 500-700 feet.

Emanuel County: (3 locations Required Field Surveys, 2 New locations, 1 Location to be Field Surveyed, some concerns).

#384 – Flame flower - 46Kv line, north of Swainsboro. (MAP/CHECK)***

#391 – Parrot Pitcher Plant - 230Kv line, southwest of Swainsboro. No plants were found, however, Yellow Fly Trap was found. The habitat is a wet area that is becoming overgrown. Minor maintenance concern. (Field Note #121/24 April 2002).

New – Yellow Fly Trap - 230 Kv line, southwest of Swainsboro. 3 clumps were found. Minor maintenance concern. (Field Note #122/24 April 2002).

#883 – Georgia plume - Near 115Kv line, southeast of Swainsboro, near county line. The line crossing in the Canoochee River dune areas was checked for Rosemary. Rosemary was not found on ROW, but abundant adjacent to the line. No Georgia Plume was found. No maintenance concern. (Field Note #119/25 April 2002).

New – Gopher Tortoise - 115Kv line, southeast of Swainsboro, near county line. Six active burrows were found between towers 210 and 212. Some maintenance concern. (Field Note #120/25 April 2002).

- #547 – Rosemary
- #648 – Balduina, in a Pitcher Plant Bog
- #333 – Yellow flytrap

Jenkins County: 1 Location required field survey. Undetermined maintenance concern).

#562 – Wood stork Rookery - The Chew Mill Pond Rookery North of highway 17 and west of Millen Georgia is active (150 nests) as of 2002, but drought seems to have drastically affected the rookery size over the years. The exact location of the rookery needs to be determined.

- #800 – Sandhill Milkvetch
- #1047 – Night Heron
- #1129 Atlantic Pigtoe Mussell
- #1130 Yellow Flytrap

SCREVEN COUNTY (1 Location Required a Field Survey. No Maintenance Concern.

#924 – Sandhill milkvetch - Across the road from a 115KV line. Checked but the location is in error or a home has been built on the site. No maintenance concern. (No Field Note was completed).

- #641 - Silky Camellia
- #422 – White Fin Shiner
- #799 – Hooded Pitcher
- #204 – Savannah Darter

CANDLER COUNTY (No Locations Required Field Surveys).

- #547 – Rosemary
- #648 – Purple Honey Comb Head
- #1071 – Green-Fly Orchid

BULLOCH COUNTY (6 Locations were Field Surveyed, 2 New Locations, 2 Locations to be Checked, 2 Maintenance Concerns).

#329 – Silky Camellia - Near 115Kv line on Bryan/Bulloch county line (Maybe in Bryan County). No plants or habitat seen. No Field Note was made for silky Camilla, but gopher tortoise burrows were found at the location. No maintenance concern. (No Field Note).

NEW – Gopher Tortoise - 3 active burrows found on 115Kv line on Bryan/Bulloch county line. Minor maintenance concern. (Field Note #33).

#1111 – Hooded Pitcher Plant. Near 115/46Kv lines, No plants found on line. Habit at location has been altered to house, apartments, parking lots, etc. No habitat in areas of lines. No maintenance concern. (No Field Note).

#1067 – Parrot Pitcher Plant - About 300 feet west of a 46/115Kv line, south of Statesboro. No maintenance concern. (No Field Note)

#1062 – Stokes Aster - Near 230/46Kv line south of Statesboro (Map and check during blooming season)***

NEW – Hooded Pitcher - Plants are under 230/46Kv lines on either side of Highway 67, south of Statesboro. This is a “Special Management Zone” and there is a board road on ROW. Some maintenance concern. (Field Note #31/23 April 2001)

#537 – Yellow Fly Trap. 115Kv line on proposed by-pass east of Statesboro. No plants or habitat were found. No maintenance concern. (Field note #32/23 April 2001).

#584 – Hooded Pitcher Plant (Map/Check?)

#1156 – Balduina
#507 - Hooded Pitcher Plant
#440 – Hooded Pitcher Plant
#829 – Swallow-tailed Kite
#29 – Inland Siverside
#767 – Wire-leafed Dropseed
#799 – Hooded Pitcher Plant
#507 – Sandhill Milkvetch
#452 – Sandhill Milkvetch

TREUTLEN COUNTY (No Location Required Field Survey)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY (No Locations Required Field Survey)

#368 – Bumelia.

TOOMBS COUNTY (No Locations Required Field Surveys)

#249 – Yellow Flytrap
#328 – Balduina
#1015 – Bumelia,
#159 – Gopher tortoise

- #1052 – Georgia Spiny Mussel
- #1039 – Sherman Fox Squirrel
- #13 – Mudfish river
- #472 – Parrot Pitcher Plant

Tetra-Tech records in Toombs County (reported to DNR)(Include in Maintenance Report)

V-4 – Hooded Pitcher Plant. Located on 230/115Kv line, 2 miles north of Highway1-Highway 56 Junction

V-3 Yellow Fly Trap. Located on 230/115Kv line, 1 mile south of Vidalia Municipal Airport.

TATTNALL COUNTY (2 Locations Required Field Surveys. Some Maintenance Concerns).

#927 – Purple Pitcher Plant - 46 Kv line in northeastern part of county, near county line. This is part of Manassas Bog; a special area that has been marked by Georgia DNR for Special Management. Plants were found but a year later the area on the line where the plants were located was found destroyed by 4-wheeler. There is maintenance concern because of the States interest in the area. Some maintenance concern. (Field Note #38/24 April 2001).

#1142 – Gopher Tortoise - 115 Kv line .8 miles North of Ohoopsee River. 4 active burrows were found. Some Maintenance concerns. (Field Note #110/24 April 2002)

- #764 – Say's Spiketail
- #332 – Marshallia,
- #347 – Sweet Pitcher plant
- #793 – Purple Pitcher Plant
- #242 – Dwarf Witch Alder
- #1093 – Savannah Lilliput
- #1157 – Altamaha Pocketbook

EVANS COUNTY (3 Locations Required Field Surveys, 2 New Locations, 1 location to be checked/Some Maintenance Concerns).

#300 – Ohoopsee bumelia - 46Kv line Near Tattnall County line. No plants found. No maintenance concern for bumelia; however a Purple Pitcher Plant was found in the site. (Field Note # 37/24 April 2001).

NEW – Purple pitcher plant - 46 Kv line near Tattnall County line. Pole 951 – 953. Occurs in a Bog area. Minor maintenance concerns. (Field Note #34/24 April 2001).

#370 – Flame Flower - 46Kv line near Tattnall County line between poles 952 & 953. No plants were found, but the area should be checked when plants are in bloom. (Field Note #36/24 April 2001, Recheck area during flowering stage)***

#948- Ochoopee bumelia - 46 Kv line near Tattnall County line. No plants found. No maintenance concerns. (Field Note # 35, 24 April 2001)

#639 – Hooded Pitcher plant - 46Kv line near Tattnall county line between poles #498 and 497. Pitcher plants look unhealthy, may have been hit by herbicide. Minor maintenance concern. (Field Note #40/24 April 2001).

NEW – Gopher Tortoise - 46 Kv line near Tattnall County line. Saw 2 tortoises and 4 active burrows between poles #936 and 937. Minor maintenance concern. (Field Note #39/24 April 2001).

#269 – Grit-beard Tongue

#712 – Banner Fin Shiner

BRYAN COUNTY (2 Locations Require Field Surveys)

#988 – Georgia Indigo bush - 500/115Kv line on Fort Stewart, 1927 record, check with Fort Stewart (CHECK AFTER THE WAR)***

#329 – Silky Camellia - 115Kv line in extreme northwest corner of the county. An effort was made to reach the area, but failed to find access. (Map and Check)***

EFFINGHAM COUNTY (No Locations Required Field Surveys)

CHATHAM COUNTY (No Locations Required Field Surveys)