

Endangered Species Act 40th Anniversary Success Stories Swamp Pink



Mountain bog restoration and safeguarding of rare plant species is critical to maintaining 8 federally and state listed species in Georgia including the federally listed swamp pink (*Helonias bullata*). Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance has coordinated conservation activities and volunteers between government agencies and private institutions. Key to the success of the GPCA is the Atlanta Botanical Garden and State Botanical Garden of Georgia.

Swamp pink is a great success story for safeguarding populations and mountain bog restoration in the Southern Appalachian mountains. Swamp pink was propagated from the only remaining site in Georgia by the Atlanta Botanical Garden. GPCA volunteers and partners out planted material to mountain bogs on the Chattahoochee National Forest starting nearly two decades ago.

Working with the botanical gardens and GPCA volunteers, the Forest Service used a variety of restoration techniques in the mountain bogs. In the past 5 years, tools included prescribed fire, removal of woody vegetation, and invasive species control (both plants and wild hogs).



Figure 2. Swamp pink seedling recruitment at safeguarding site.



Figure 1. Swamp pink (*Helonias bullata*)

Safeguarding of swamp pink has been successful with 88% survival rare for out planted plants. After over 15 years and increased habitat management, swamp pink seedlings were seen in 2011. This successful restoration was due to the GPCA partnership and working together to restore these rare mountain bog habitats and conserve the federally listed swamp pink.



**Chattahoochee-Oconee
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