



**Common Name:** SIMPSON'S RAIN LILY

**Scientific Name:** *Zephyranthes simpsonii* Chapman

**Other Commonly Used Names:** Simpson's zephyr-lily, Florida atamasco-lily, rain zephyr-lily, rain lily

**Previously Used Scientific Names:** *Atamasco simpsonii* (Chapman) Greene

**Family:** Amaryllidaceae (amaryllis) or Liliaceae (lily)

**Rarity Ranks:** G2G3/S1

**State Legal Status:** Special Concern

**Federal Legal Status:** none

**Federal Wetland Status:** FAC

**Description:** Perennial **herb** with an underground **bulb**, often growing in clumps. **Leaves** grass-like, slightly fleshy, up to 12 inches (30 cm) long and less than  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (2 mm) wide, shiny green and sometimes tinged with red, margins smooth. **Flower stalk** hollow, round or flattened, 4 - 8 inches tall. **Flower** 2 - 4 inches (5 - 10 cm) long, with 6 erect or slightly flaring tepals (3 petals + 3 sepals), white or pink, sometimes turning purple with age; the tubular section green and more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  the length of the flower; the 3-pronged stigma as long as or shorter than the tips (pollen-bearing anthers) of the 6 **stamens**; base of the flower with a divided, reddish-brown bract. **Fruit** a 3-lobed capsule with shiny, flat, black seeds.

**Similar Species:** Rain-lily (*Zephyranthes atamasco*) leaves are larger, up to 15 inches (38 cm) long and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (1 cm) wide; the flowers are seldom pink and the stamens are shorter than the stigma; the tubular section is less than  $\frac{1}{3}$  the length of the flower, the tepals more than  $\frac{2}{3}$  the length and curved backwards.

**Related Rare Species:** None in Georgia.

**Habitat:** Pine flatwoods with saw palmetto, wet savannas, pastures and roadsides in these habitats.

**Life History:** Little is known about pollination and dispersal in this species; the fact that the pollen-bearing anthers are at about the same level as the stigma suggests that both self- and cross-pollination occur. Flowers are likely pollinated by small bees and butterflies.

**Survey Recommendations:** Surveys are best conducted during flowering (February–April).

**Range:** Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

**Threats:** Fire suppression, conversion of habitat to pine plantations and agricultural fields; ditching, draining, and filling wetlands.

**Georgia Conservation Status:** Two populations have been found in Georgia, but neither has been seen in more than 50 years.

**Conservation and Management Recommendations:** Apply prescribed fire to flatwoods and savannas every 2 - 3 years during the growing season. Avoid placing roads and firebreaks through habitat. Avoid ditching, draining, and filling wetlands. Protect flatwoods and savannas from development and conversion to pine plantations.

**Selected References:**

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Kral, R. 1983. A report on some rare, threatened, or endangered forest-related vascular plants of the South. Technical Publication R8-TP2. United States Forest Service, Atlanta.

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NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer. Arlington, Virginia. <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>

Radford, A.E., H.E. Ahles, and C.R. Bell. 1968. Manual of the vascular flora of the Carolinas. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Weakley, A.S. 2007. Flora of the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, and surrounding areas. University of North Carolina Herbarium, Chapel Hill. <http://www.herbarium.unc.edu/flora.htm>

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**Date Compiled or Updated:**

L.Chafin, Oct. 2007: original account

D.Weiler, Jan. 2010: updated status and ranks, added pictures

Z. Abouhamdan, April 2016: updated link





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Lower side of tepals

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*Zephyranthes simpsonii*



J.C. Putnam H.