

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WADESBORO

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR

First Baptist Church of Wadesboro, NC is currently seeking a part-time Music Director to oversee a comprehensive music program including all areas of music in Adult Choir, Youth and Children's Choirs and Handbells.

Organ experience is preferred. First Baptist is seeking a Music Director who will embrace a blended style of worship that includes traditional, contemporary and praise music. This includes all worship services, special services, and any church related events where music is needed.

Experience in a church setting is preferred. This position will include assisting the Pastor in planning worship services, plan, organize and promote camps, programs, etc. for the various choirs. Salary & hours are negotiable.

Please send resume with a cover letter to:

Personnel, First Baptist Church, PO Box 423, Wadesboro NC 28170

Or email: fbcwadesboronc@gmail.com

**North Carolina Native Plant
Venus Flytrap is an Endangered Species**

The Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*) is a carnivorous plant native to subtropical wetlands on the East Coast of the United States in North Carolina and South Carolina. It catches its prey - chiefly insects and arachnids - with a trapping structure formed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves, which is triggered by tiny hairs (called "trigger hairs" or "sensitive hairs") on their inner surfaces.

When an insect or spider crawling along the leaves contacts a hair, the trap prepares to close, snapping shut only if another contact occurs within approximately twenty seconds of the first strike. Triggers may occur with a tenth of a second of contact. The requirement of redundant triggering in this mechanism serves as a safeguard against wasting energy by trapping objects with no nutritional value, and the plant will only begin digestion after five more stimuli to ensure it has caught a live bug worthy of consumption.



Dionaea is a monotypic genus closely related to the waterwheel plant (*Aldrovanda vesiculosa*) and sundews (*Drosera*), all of which belong to the family *Droseraceae*.

Although widely cultivated for sale, the population of the Venus flytrap has been rapidly declining in its native range. The species is currently under Endangered Species Act review by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

On 2 April 1759, the North Carolina colonial governor, Arthur Dobbs, penned the first written description of the plant in a letter to English botanist Peter Collinson. In the letter he wrote: "We have a kind of Catch Fly Sensitive which closes upon anything that touches it. It grows in Latitude 34 but not in 35. I will try to save the seed here." A year later, Dobbs went into greater detail about the plant in a letter to Collinson dated Brunswick, 24 January 1760.

"The great wonder of the vegetable kingdom is a very curious unknown species of Sensitive. It is a dwarf plant. The leaves are like a narrow segment of a sphere, consisting of two parts, like the cap of a spring purse, the concave part outwards, each of which falls back with indented edges (like an iron spring fox-trap); upon anything touching the leaves, or falling between them, they instantly close like a spring trap, and confine any insect or anything that falls between them. It bears a white flower. To this surprising plant I have given the name of Fly trap Sensitive. - Arthur Dobbs"

A large-scale survey in 2019, conducted by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, counted a total of 163,951 individual Venus flytraps in North Carolina and 4,876 in South Carolina, estimating a total of 302,000 individuals remaining in the wild in its native range. This represents a reduction of more than 93% from a 1979 estimate of approximately 4,500,000 individuals. A 1958 study found 259 confirmed extant or historic sites. As of 2016, there were 71 known sites where the plant could be found in the wild. Of these 71 sites, only 20 were classified as having excellent or good long-term viability.

Plants can be propagated by seed, taking around four to five years to reach maturity. More commonly, they are propagated by clonal division in spring or summer. Venus flytraps can also be propagated in vitro using plant tissue culture. Most Venus flytraps found for sale in nurseries garden centers have been produced using this method, as this is the most cost-effective way to propagate them on a large scale. Regardless of the propagation method used, the plants will live for 20 to 30 years if cultivated in the right conditions.

Although widely cultivated for sale as a houseplant, the Venus flytrap has suffered a significant decline in its population in the wild. The population in its native range is estimated to have decreased 93% since 1979.

The Venus flytrap is only found in the wild in a very particular set of conditions, requiring flat land with moist, acidic, nutrient-poor soils that receive full sun and burn frequently in forest fires, and is therefore sensitive to many types of disturbance. A 2011 review identified five categories of threats for the species: agriculture, road-building, biological resource use (poaching and lumber activities), natural systems modifications (drainage and fire suppression), and pollution (fertilizer).

Habitat loss is a major threat to the species. The human population of the coastal Carolinas is rapidly expanding. For example, Brunswick County, North Carolina, which has the largest number of Venus flytrap populations, has seen a 27% increase in its human population from 2010 to 2018. As the population grows, residential and commercial development and road building directly eliminate flytrap habitat, while site preparation that entails ditching and draining can dry out soil in surrounding areas, destroying the viability of the species. Additionally, increased recreational use of natural areas in populated areas directly destroys the plants by crushing or uprooting them.

Fire suppression is another threat to the Venus flytrap. In the absence of regular fires, shrubs and trees encroach, outcompeting the species and leading to local extirpations. *D. muscipula* requires fire every 3-5 years, and best thrives with annual brush fires. Although flytraps and their seeds are typically killed alongside their competition in fires, seeds from flytraps adjacent to the burnt zone propagate quickly in the ash and full sun conditions that occur post a fire disturbance. Because the mature plants and new seedlings are typically destroyed in the regular fires that are necessary to maintain their habitat, *D. muscipula*'s survival relies upon adequate seed production and dispersal from outside the burnt patches back into the burnt habitat, requiring a critical mass of populations, and exposing the success of any one population to metapopulation dynamics. These dynamics make small, isolated populations particularly vulnerable to extirpation, for if there are no mature plants adjacent to the fire zone, there is no source of seeds post-fire.

Poaching has been another cause of population decline. Harvesting Venus flytraps on public land became illegal in North Carolina in 1958, and since then a legal cultivation industry has formed, growing tens of thousands of flytraps in commercial greenhouses for sale as household plants. Yet in 2016, the New York Times reported that demand for wild plants still exists, which "has led to a Venus flytrap crime ring." In 2014, the state of North Carolina made Venus flytrap poaching a felony. Since then, several poachers have been charged, with one man receiving 17 months in prison for poaching 970 Venus flytraps, and another man charged with 73 felony counts in 2019. Poachers may do greater harm to the wild populations than a simple count of individuals taken would indicate, as they may selectively harvest the largest plants at a site, which have more flowers and fruit and therefore generate more seeds than smaller plants.

Additionally, the species is particularly vulnerable to catastrophic climate events. Most Venus flytrap sites are only 2-4 meters (6.5 -13 feet) above sea level and are located in a region prone to hurricanes, making storm surges and rising sea levels a long-term threat.

In 2005, the Venus flytrap was designated as the state carnivorous plant of North Carolina.

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