



## FYN Garden Q & A Series

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### FYN TOPIC: Alva Flower

**Question:** What is the Alva flower? Is it present at Lakes Park? P. Myers

**Answer:** Named by its town's founder, a Dutch botanist named Captain Peter Nelson,. The small white flower people refer to 'the Alva flower' once bloomed along the banks of the Caloosahatchee River one hundred years ago. A native wildflower that is now commonly called short-leaved rosegentian or White Marsh Pink, *Sabatia brevifolia* has flowers similar to it cousin, *Sabatia decandra* or Bartram's rosegentian.

Bartram's also prefers un-disturbed soil and marshy places like those along the CREW Marsh Trails. To my knowledge, the Alva flower is not in cultivation and by law it cannot be collected from the wild. However, you can photograph it if found in somewhat drier, occasionally wet places like preserves, pinelands and dry prairies.

See it growing near Alva at Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park. At Lakes Park, it should still be present in the northern habitat places and be visible on the edges of woodland clearings. Unfortunately, other more aggressive and prohibited invasive plants like Wedelia may keep you from finding it quickly.

### Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>  
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>  
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>  
<http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>



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<http://davesgarden.com/members/Floridian>

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing [Extgardener@leegov.com](mailto:Extgardener@leegov.com). Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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