

## orchid-gami

NATIVE TO THE U.S. AND CANADA

## Triphora trianthophoros Three Birds Orchid

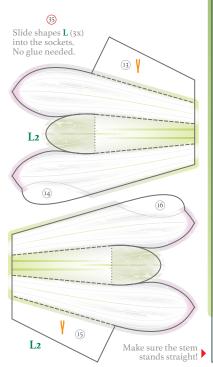




The Three Birds Orchid has this unusual name because robust plants often have three open flowers at once, each flower tilted upward like the beak of a

small, hungry bird in a nest. Rarely seen, this small orchid grows in forests throughout much of eastern North America, from Ontario south to Florida and westward to Texas. In late summer or early fall, a few days after a sudden drop in nighttime temperatures, the whole population of this orchid suddenly flowers at the same exact time. The pale pink flowers remain open for a single morning, just long enough for the bright green crest on the lip to attract hungry bees. This crest reflects ultraviolet light and guides the bee to the back of the flower in search of nectar. The bee leaves, coated with pink pollen, to pollinate the next flower it visits as it searches for nectar. Plants, like the Three Bird Orchid, increase their chances of cross-pollination when they flower simultaneously over a short period of time, a common strategy used by small populations that rely on insect pollinators.

To learn more about the Three Birds Orchid, scan the QR code with your phone or visit the species page on *Go Orchids* at *goorchids.northamericanorchidcenter.org* 



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