

## ORCHIDACEAE

**Paphiopedilum insigne** (Wall. ex Lindl.) Pfitzer

*Common English name* : Lady's slipper Orchid.

*Distribution* : INDIA: Meghalaya (Khasia Hills); BANGLADESH; NEPAL; MYANMAR.



**Paphiopedilum insigne** (Wall. ex Lindl.) Pfitzer  
Photo Courtesy: C. Sathish Kumar

*Habitat* : Grows along open hilly slopes and rock crevices and in areas receiving moderately high or high annual rainfall. It also prefers well drained soils rich in humus. Pradhan (Indian Orchids: Guide to Identification & Culture, 1976) recorded it from dolomitic limestone outcrops near waterfalls and in light shade of shrubby vegetation; found between 1000-1500 m.

*Population status/Cause for RET* : Critically Endangered. This species is of great horticultural value due to its beautiful flowers. Lindley described this species based on Wallich's collection from Sylhet. Griffith later found it in Khasia hills. Once this was plentiful in Meghalaya but due to over collection and loss of its habitat it is becoming rare. Presently the species is under cultivation in several orchidaria and nurseries.

*Description* : Terrestrial herbs. Leaves up to 2.5 cm long, broadly linear, ligulate, acute, pale green. Scape ca 30 cm long. Flowers variable in colour; dorsal sepal with white apical portion spotted purple, base light green; petals linear-oblong, margin wavy, glabrous, yellowish-green. Lip helmet shaped, light or yellowish-green with brown shade.

*Fl. & Fr.* : October-December.

*References* :

Jain, S.K. & A.R.K. Sastry (1980). Threatened Plants of India. A State-of-the Art Report. P. 30.

Jain, S.K. & A.R.K. Sastry (1984). The Indian Plant Red Data Book - 1, p. 124.

Nayar, M.P. & A.R.K. Sastry (1987). Red Data Book of Indian Plants. Vol. 1, p. 268.