

ORCHIDACEAE

Paphiopedilum villosum (Lindl.) Stein

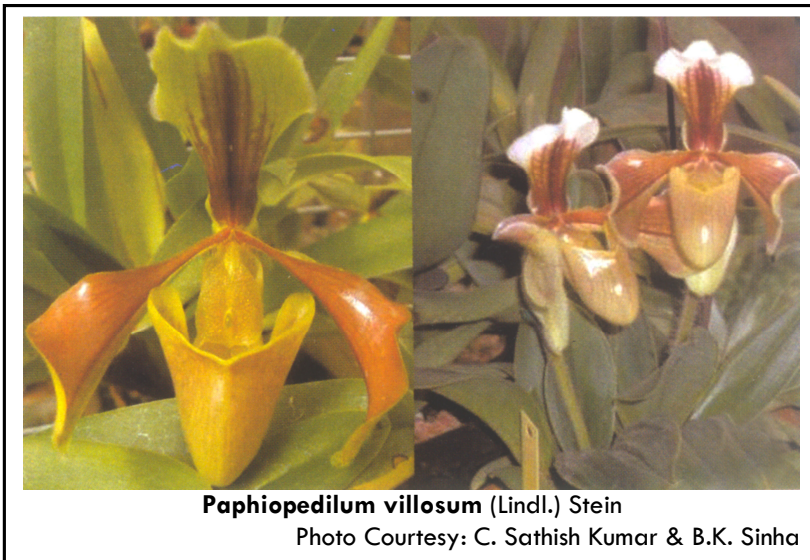
Common English name : Lady's slipper Orchid.

Distribution : INDIA: Assam and Mizoram; MYANMAR and THAILAND.

Habitat : In dense forests on cool humus rich forest floors or on moss covered rock boulders in areas receiving an annual rainfall of about 250 cm or as an epiphyte on trees at altitudes ranging from 1100-2000 m.

Population status/Cause for RET : Critically Endangered. Much exploited in commercial trade and indiscriminately collected from the wild. Loss of its natural habitat is another reason for its present status. It is being cultivated at the National Orchidaria of Botanical Survey of India at Shillong and Yercaud. Also at Dehra Dun.

Thomas Lobb discovered this species in 1853 growing at 1300-1600 m in the mountains near Moulmein in southeast Myanmar.



Description : Terrestrial or epiphytic herbs up to 30 cm tall. Leaves linear, ligulate, up to 25 x 5 cm, coriaceous, bright green above, pale green below, purple spotted at base, acute or bifid at apex. Scapes up to 30 cm long, 1 flowered, hirsute; bracts oblong. Flowers 7.5-13.5 cm across; dorsal sepal ovate-orbicular, lower margin revolute, white at apex, greenish-purple at base and centre, lateral sepals up to 6 cm long, green; petals spoon shaped, brown-yellow,

ciliate at margins curved above forward; lip tapering to apex; staminode obcordate-obovate, truncate, verrucose hirsute with a central glossy knob; ovary yellowish-green, densely covered with purple hairs.

Fl. & Fr. : October - February.

References :

Jain, S.K. & A.R.K. Sastry (1980). Threatened Plants of India. A State-of-the Art Report. P. 31.

Jain, S.K. & A.R.K. Sastry (1984). The Indian Plant Red Data Book - 1, p. 127.

Nayar, M.P. & A.R.K. Sastry (1987). Red Data Book of Indian Plants. Vol. 1, p. 272.