

CYPRIPEDIUM REGINAE Walt.  
Showy Lady's-slipper

FAMILY: Orchidaceae

HABIT: Herbaceous perennial, 0.3-1.0 m.; flowering late May-mid June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: When in bloom, it is unmistakable. This is the largest native orchid in North America, both in stature of the plant and the dimensions of the flowers. When not in bloom, the leafy plants resemble the large yellow lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus* var. *pubescens*). Young shoots are similar to those of white hellebore (*Veratrum viride*).

TOTAL RANGE: Newfoundland and Quebec to ND, s. to NC, GA, and MO.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Champaign, Geauga, and Portage counties. Pre-1980 records are from Cuyahoga, Erie, Franklin, Fulton, Lake, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Pickaway, and Summit counties.

HABITAT: In full sun or semi-shade in a variety of open, wet situations in neutral or slightly alkaline substrates; shrub borders of fens, wet prairies, seepages, roadbanks, thickets; not found in acid sphagnum bogs, though occasionally reported from swampy woods nearby.

HAZARDS: Drainage of habitat; overshadowing by woody species; casual picking of the flowers; digging by nurserymen and wildflower gardeners; over-collecting.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: The species is more tolerant of disturbance and also transplants better than other Lady's-slippers, so its recovery potential should be high. On the other hand, it is far less common today in the state than formerly.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Avoid over-collecting. Data are very sensitive since whole populations have been collected.

COMMENTS: This is one of Ohio's largest and most spectacular wildflowers. The species is not likely to be overlooked, so our data probably reflects accurately its present distribution. Populations are sought by gardeners. The data should be protected so that these people do not further diminish the species in the state. Handling of the leaves may cause a severe dermatitis similar to that induced by poison ivy.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Case, F.W., Jr. 1964. Orchids of the western Great Lakes region. Cranbrook Institute of Sci. Bull. No. 48, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 147 p.

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