

## Lady Slipper Orchid

Family: Orchidaceae  
 Subfamily: Cypripedioideae  
 Genus: Cypripedium

- Cypripedium
  - Found across much of North America, as well as in parts of Europe (one species) and Asia.
  - Lady slipper Orchids are by far, the showiest and most popular of the hardy terrestrial orchids
  - literally means “Aphrodite's slipper or sandal
- There are 48 species total in northern temperate land masses around the world...the majority in East Asia



### Found in the United States

- There are 11 species of Cypripedium native to the United States, found in every state except for Florida, Hawaii, and Nevada.

### Key Elements

- Poor soil preparation.
  - well-drained, organically rich soil with a slightly acidic pH
- Incorrect planting techniques.
  - Cypripedium roots don't actually grow into the ground
  - Their roots lay flat on top of the ground and are then covered with natural compost



### Soil/ Planting

- Unlike some Orchids, these Lady's Slippers prefer soil pH range of 6.5 to 7.0 is best.
- Planting instructions
  - Prepare the soil
  - Bare root the plants
  - Stretch the roots out horizontally on the soil
  - Cover with compost and followed by mulch.
  - Since the roots are shallow, be sure they
  - Don't dry out until the plants are well established.

### Growth Rate & Habits

- For reasons still not fully understood, a Cypripedium may simply decide not to grow one season, but will return just fine in subsequent seasons.
- Cypripedium grown from seed usually take from 6-8 years to reach flowering size
- Plant has only two leaves, which branch out from the center where its single flower stalk also grows

### Flowers/Season

- The *Cypripedium* orchids of North America are hardy terrestrial plants that can grow in cold climates and flower in early to mid-spring when there is plentiful moisture and cool temperatures.
- Normally a lady slipper orchid in south Florida will flower from autumn to spring, and in some cases even through summer.
- Flowers should last in good condition on the plants for two to three months.

**Cultural Management**

Watering/Irrigation

- Maintain soil moist, do not allow to dry
- Do not get water in the pouches, as that will cause the flowers to deteriorate and the orchid plant to rot

Exposure/Light

- Lady slippers prefer to grow in areas that mimic their natural environments — shady woodlands.
- When grown as houseplants, these orchid plants need good light to do their best.
- Do not put them in full sun or dry locations.

Temperature & Humidity

- Will be comfortable at any temperature that is comfortable for humans like 14 to 28 °Celsius (57 to 82° Fahrenheit)
- Avoid cold or warm drafts - such as near an open window or heat vent

Maintenance

- Feeding
  - Diluted (about a quarter of the normal concentration), balanced 20-20-20 fertilizer once or twice between spring and early summer.
- Mulch
  - Top dressing the plants with about 2 to 3 inches of shredded leaf mulch is also ideal.
- Propagation:
  - Seed, extremely difficult to have good survivability with young seedlings

**Common Disorders**

Nutrition	Pest & Insects	Diseases	Cultural	Other
Overfeeding	Mealybugs	Erwnia Bacteria	Improper watering	
	Scales		Planted too deep	
	Mites		Sunlight	