

How *YOU* Can Help To Protect Wild Orchids

Orchids including lady's-slippers are very sensitive plants that need unique conditions to grow and very specific kinds of habitat. For this reason they are easily damaged or destroyed and do not transplant well. Trampling around them and even nitrogen from the remains of your picnic lunch can interfere with their necessary connection to trees and surrounding plants through fungi in the soil. Many other kinds of rare plants grow alongside them in their specific habitats and these plants need protection as well. We are lucky to have 38 species of native orchids in Manitoba, many of them within an hour's drive from the City of Winnipeg. However this close proximity to a large city is both a blessing and a curse. It makes it possible for many people to enjoy their beauty, but it also leaves the orchids susceptible to damage from trampling, picking and digging and from habitat loss due to ditch work, roadwork and especially wetland drainage. Help us save and protect the species you love!

Be Orchid friendly...

When viewing wildflowers:

- stay on designated trails if possible
- do not trample plants
- do not touch plants
- help to educate others

When taking pictures:

- try to avoid kneeling or placing a tripod on the roots at the base of the plant
- use a long lens if possible
- do not remove surrounding vegetation, tie it back temporarily if necessary
- do not step backward, turn around so you can see where you step
- help to educate others

Gardeners:

- never transplant orchids from the wild
- buy only from reputable sources that do not transplant from the wild (see our handout on nurseries where you can buy lab-propagated plants)
- help to educate others

Please report any sightings of rare orchids to the Manitoba Conservation Data Centre at 204-945-7775. For more information on native orchids and their conservation and for a schedule of the field trips we offer view our website at www.nativeorchid.org or telephone 204-223-8209. Thanks for doing your part to conserve Manitoba's native orchids.

