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R. J. Ferry

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### Early Spring Notes

As this spring-summer issue is printed, now is the time (even earlier is better!) to *seriously* plan for attending the early June conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. In fact, the editorial planning for this issue of “farther north orchids” was done before the printed copies of issue 14(1) had been received by your editor to be mailed to you! The first article in this issue dates back to the summer of 2005 when your editor and wife were youngsters, and the second article came in this last summer as an original manuscript hopefully to be published for the first time in this publication this last summer. Alas, other factors weighed in and it was printed in another journal composed for the most part of different readers. It is reprinted here inasmuch as several orchids (and close relatives) native to the Canadian latitudes are also found in the mountains of Sweden.

In order to present the figures and maps in the maximum sizes within this publication’s format, a few references applicable to the second article are given here.

1. WCSP (2014) “World Checklist of Selected Plant Families” Facilitated by the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew.
3. Maps with permission from The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, (SLU) in Uppsala, Sweden and the associated Artdatabanken - The Swedish Species Information Centre SSIC).

Additionally, in the smaller, general area maps, also shown by permission of the SLU, Sweden, the key is printed in Swedish and its translation is as follows:

Saknas (white field)	Not present
Osäker (yellow field)	Uncertain
Tillfällig (blue field)	Occasional
Utdöd (black field)	Extinct
Bofast (green field)	Confirmed localities & presence

The author of the second article, Fred Campbell, is presently not quite in the age bracket of your editor, but as a small child, he was fortunate enough to have been “relocated” from Coventry, England to the countryside in advance of the heavy Blitz raid of mid-November 1940. At present he and wife Jola (from Gdansk, Poland) are “southerners” living in Kristianstad, Sweden. Probably of even greater significance for this publication is that they’ve been native orchid people for several years and are still active (winter snows permitting).

One of Fred’s neighbors, Sven Birkedal, is very active “in the field” and your editor thought it might be of particular interest for this group to see his work and read about an orchid that spends its entire life cycle within the Arctic Circle.

Here in south-central Texas, despite our frigid winter weather (days 77F/25C), nights still as low as 40F) plans are underway for your editor and wife to meet with friends in Winnipeg, Manitoba in early June, 2017. We hope to see you there!

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## Of Bogs and Fens and Winnipeg Friends

R. J. Ferry

The annual Native Orchid Conference is scheduled for early June, 2017 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. After greeting old friends and trying to remember names of the new ones, what might one see in a bog, en route to a relatively near fen? Early June might be a little too early, but along in mid-late June *Goodyera tessellata* (Fig. 1), might be out, or one might spot a cluster of Indian pipes, (*Monotropa uniflora*, Fig. 2).

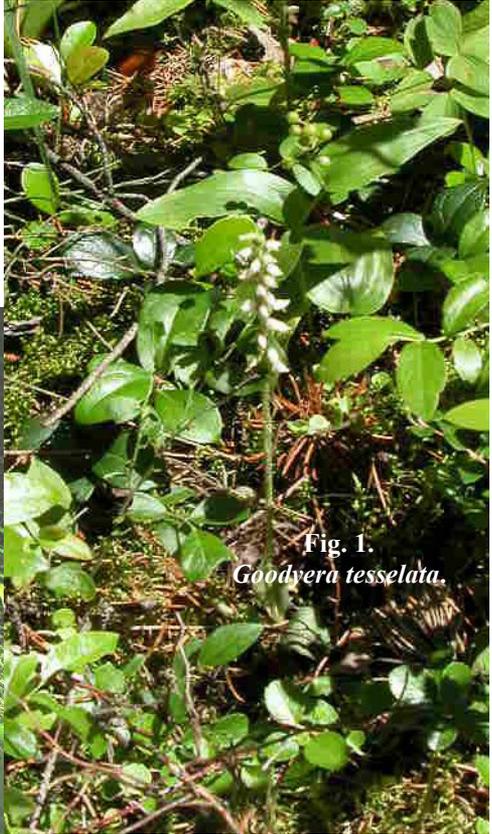


Fig. 1.  
*Goodyera tessellata*.

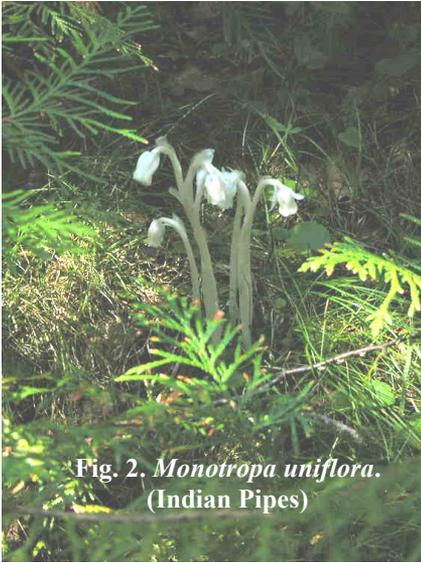


Fig. 2. *Monotropa uniflora*.  
(Indian Pipes)

Indian Pipes are fairly good-sized photo subjects, but if one really wants to get a close-in look at *Goodyera tessellata* and many of the *Spiranthes* and *Platanthera* plants (and especially the flowers!), it can make for some “hands and knees” or “flat-on-belly” positions and a good macro lens to look “down the throat” of a flower! Bogs and fens are decidedly not the country for female explorers to wear their best high heels and mini-skirts!

Good hiking boots and jeans are in order, as well as some sort of decent “in the brush” head cover, and the novice quickly learns how wonderful it is to carry along a good supply of insect repellent! There’s one other safety device the non-Canadian should not be without, and that’s a local individual who knows his or her way around the local bogs and fens! For those who may have never learned, or have forgotten what a fen can be, it can be a layer of *Sphagnum* and other mosses

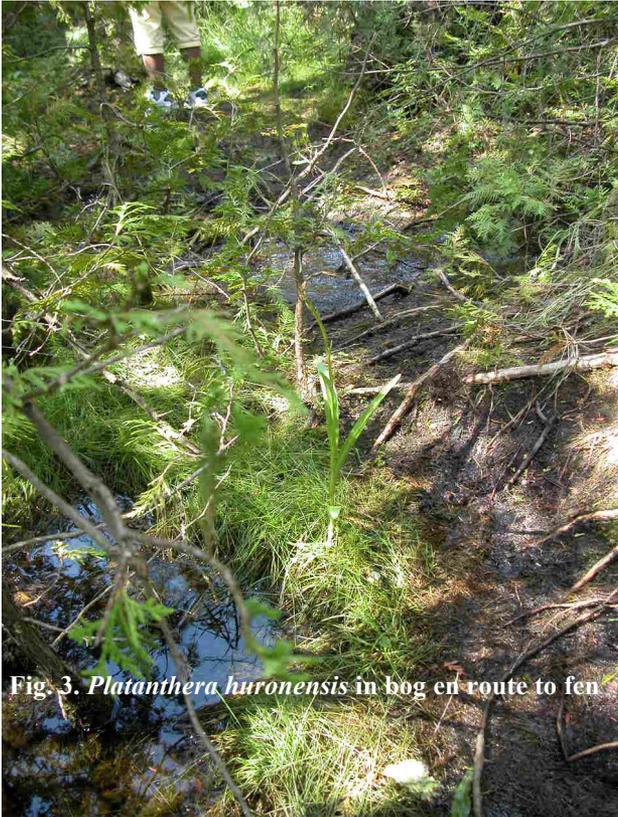


Fig. 3. *Platanthera huronensis* in bog en route to fen

atop a lake or a relatively slow moving stream. Over the years, the mosses, growing atop the water can become thick enough to support the weight of a human, but what looks like an innocent moss cover may see the unwary explorer swiftly plunged into water 3-4 meters deep, and if there's any current, the explorer may just come up *under* the moss overlay and be unable to reach air quickly! The short story is: *explore with locals who know*, and even then, don't barge ahead! You might just be barging in where angels literally fear to tread!!

Above (Fig. 3) lower center, is *Platanthera huronensis* in a bog en route to a fen in the Winnipeg area. The image provides a good idea of what type of territory will be hiked. Yes, much of this is "old information" to veterans, but new or old, this worker would hate to see a conference see a fatality because "we all knew" or *thought* we did! These images were taken 22-24 July, so some species may not be within the conference's time frame, but instead of complaining about what might be missed, most of us are happy to photo-capture what *is* available and use what was missed as an excuse for another trip at a later date!

*Platanthera dilatata* (Fig. 4) is a species that can still be hard to find in a tall grass prairie.

In one of the bogs, en route to a fen we

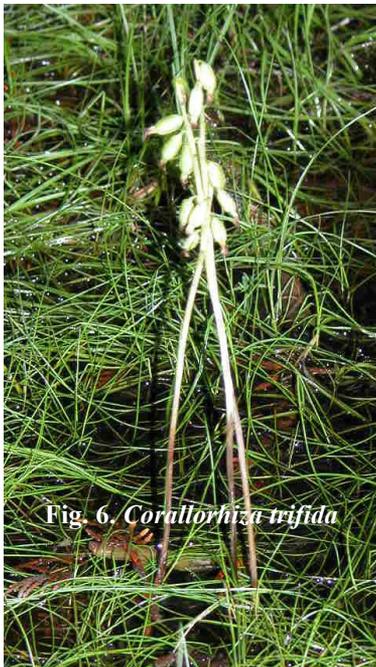


Fig. 4. *Platanthera dilatata*

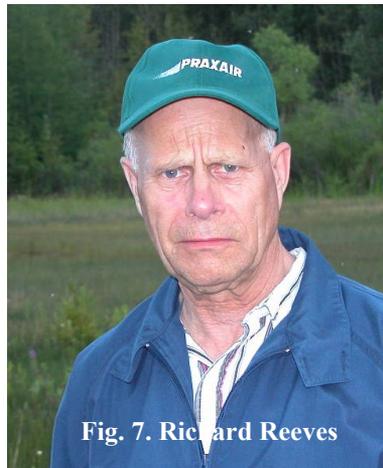


**Fig. 5. *Corallorhiza maculata* v. *maculata* with seed capsules. (plants in bog, en route to fen.)**

happened across a truly beautiful group (Fig 5): several plants of *Corallorhiza maculata* var. *maculata* with seed capsules! Then, a little farther along, there were plants of *Corallorhiza trifida* with seed capsules (Fig. 6). It seemed that the farther we went, the more we saw! It was so rich it almost made one of our guides, Richard Reeves, smile outright,...



**Fig. 6. *Corallorhiza trifida***



**Fig. 7. Richard Reeves**

...well almost (Fig. 7).

Actually, Richard's lack of cheerfulness may have had something to do with stepping into a rather deep hole, or some similar setback a short time earlier. Maybe it had something to do with the way the insects seemed to delight in especially attacking him (it's been a few years, and my memory fails about some things now and then). At any rate, once Richard could shed the jacket, he obviously became more cheerful as we see in the group photo of the three specialists and your editor's wife (a native Texan!!) who was the relatively novice orchid hunter (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. L to R, The Orchid Hunters:  
Doris Ames, Richard Reeves Eugene Reimer Wilma Ferry

Then there was the last photo Richard missed by being camera shy (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. Doris Ames and Eugene Reimer

Eugene, The world lost a great man when you left this life, and we still miss you!  
But know this: whenever anybody searches for Canadian orchids you'll be there!

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## The Native Orchids of Sweden. The Five Mountain Orchids.

Fred Campbell  
Kristianstad, Sweden  
email: frederickcampbell127@gmail.com

Images of *Calypso bulbosa* are by the author. Other images are credited to Sven Birkedal of Ahus Sweden, and are published here by permission.

The three species of the genus *Anacamptis* that were presented in the previous article (MIOS article, Jan-16) are all confined to south Sweden. Similarly there are five “Mountain Orchids” that are only found in north Sweden, namely *Calypso bulbosa*, *Chamorchis alpina*, *Gymnadenia nigra*, *Gymnadenia runei* and *Platanthera obtusata*. *Gymnadenia runei* is in fact the *only* endemic orchid of Sweden if one does not take into account the accepted but unplaced species *Orchis angustifolia* var *robustior* (according to the WCSP list). The above five species are included amongst those that occur inside the Arctic Circle. Three of them are in fact only occur *inside* the Arctic Circle. The fifth, *Gymnadenia nigra*, has its distribution range throughout northern Boreal zone.

1. *Calypso bulbosa* (L.) Oakes, Cat. Vermont Pl.: 28  
(1842) var. *bulbosa*.

### Synonyms:

- Calypsodium boreale* (Sw.) Link, *Handbuch 1*: 252 (1829), nom. superfl.
- Cymbidium boreale* Sw., *Nova Acta Regiae Soc. Sci. Upsal.* 6: 76 (1799), nom. superfl.
- Cypripedium bulbosum* L., *Sp. Pl.*: 951 (1753).
- Cytherea borealis* (Sw.) Salisb., *Trans. Hort. Soc. London 1*: 301 (1812), nom. superfl.
- Cytherea bulbosa* (L.) House, *Bull. Torrey Bot. Club* 32: 382 (1905).
- Limodorum boreale* (Sw.) Sw., *Neues J. Bot. 1*: 85 (1805), nom. superfl.
- Norna borealis* (Sw.) Wahlenb., *Fl. Suec.*, ed. 2: 561 (1833), nom. superfl.
- Orchidium arcticum* Sw., *Summa Veg. Scand.*: 32 (1814), nom. inval.
- Orchidium boreale* (Sw.) Sw. in J.W.Palmstruch, *Sv. Bot.* 8: t. 518 (1816), nom. superfl.

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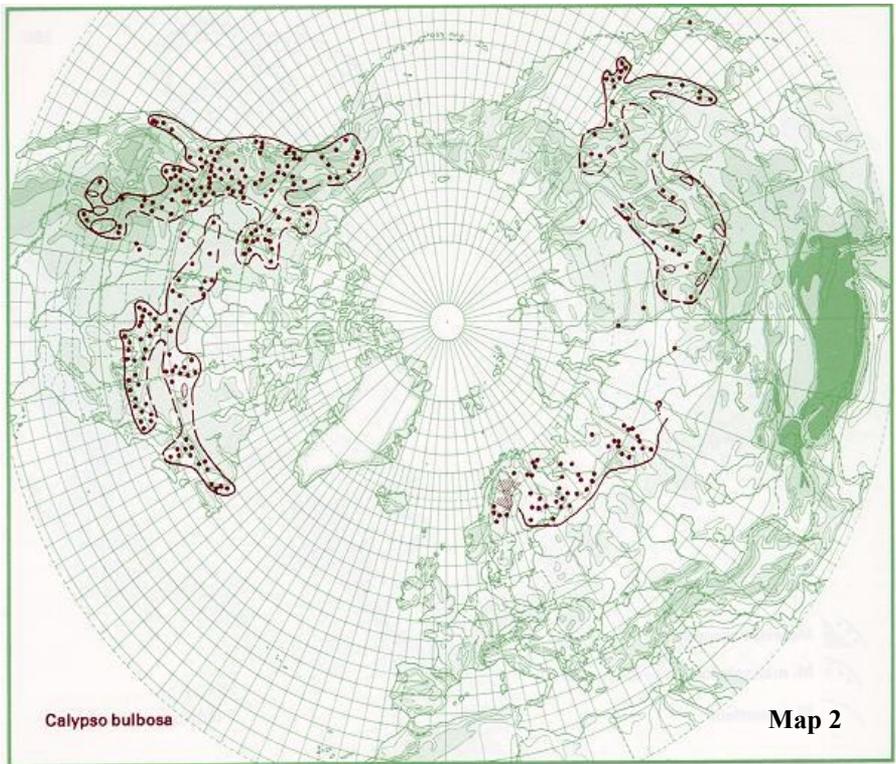
- Saknas
- Osäker
- Tillfällig
- Utödd
- Bofast



Map. 1. *C. bulbosa*.  
Sweden: Northern Range.  
(green shaded area)

In Sweden *Calypso bulbosa* is found throughout the northern half down to latitude 61° 47N including inside the Arctic Circle (Map 1. *Calypso bulbosa sensu lato* from Hultén 1964.).

The genus *Calypso* is composed of only one species, *Calypso bulbosa* and four accepted varieties: *C. bulbosa* var. *americana*, (confined to sub-arctic America to west-central and northeastern USA); var. *bulbosa*, (confined to Sweden to Russian Far East and not found in North America); var. *occidentalis* (confined to S.E. Alaska to W. USA); and var. *speciosa*. (confined to China & Japan).



**Distribution:** *Calypso bulbosa* is the only species (including the four varieties) that occurs in Europe as well as in North America. In Scandinavia var. *bulbosa* is only found in Finland and Sweden. Its distribution is circumpolar in the Subarctic zone and Temperate Northern Hemisphere (Map. 2.). The main distribution in Sweden is in the Province of Jämtland (around latitude 63°.50N) where *Calypso bulbosa* is honored by being chosen as the Province “flower” (Map 3).

**Common name:** Fairy Slipper, Calypso Orchid, Venus Slipper.

**Plant:** height commonly 10 to 20 cm, occasionally to 40 cm high. A beautiful and petite orchid.

**Stem & Leaves:** leaf solitary, 1 to 6 cm long. Stem brownish coloured with 2 to 3 sheathing scales.

**Flower:** (Figs. 1, 2) taken by author in Brunflo, Jämtland).



**Fig. 1**



**Fig. 2**

**Flower spike/inflorescence:** the solitary reasonably large showy and pendant flower hangs by a short stalk at the top of the stem. There are five distinct pinkish coloured petals and sepals, dim: 12 - 22 mm long x 2.5 - 4 mm wide, slightly twisted.

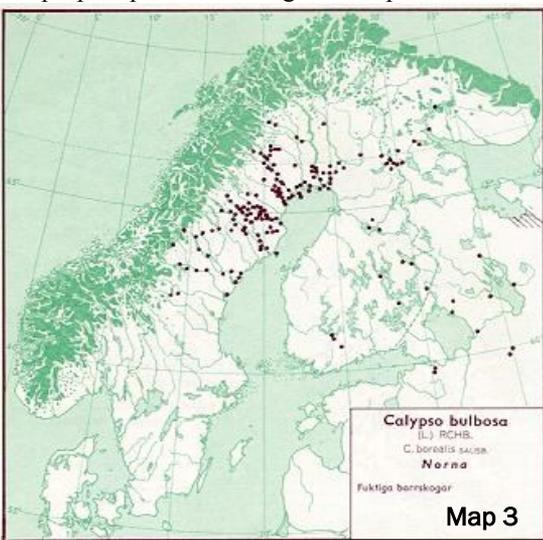
**Lip:** a large whitish mottled coloured inflated “slipper” shoe-like lip with darker purple spotted markings and a prominent tuft of yellow hairs; frontal surface flattened, while the posterior is extended and is indented to make a double spur.

**Ovary:** elongated

**Pollinators:** reports suggest bumble bees, with the flower relying on pollination by deception; attracting insects to the anther-like yellow hairs at the entrance of the throat of the pouch lip which resembles forked nectar-like structures. However the flower produces no reward for visitors.

**Flowering season:** May - June, with duration approximately three weeks.

**Habitat:** undisturbed and sheltered acid and damp loose moss and in rotting humus, on swampy soils and in



*Sphagnum* bog areas in boreal northern and mountain coniferous forests

**Distribution Range:** subarctic & temperate Northern Hemisphere; N. Scandinavia and northern European Russia for var. *bulbosa*, but the species is circumpolar and boreal, China and Japan, Northern N. America from Alaska to New Mexico.

**2. *Chamorchis alpina* (L.) Rich. Die Orchid. Eur.: 35 (1817)(Maps. 4, 5, 6)**

The genus *Chamorchis* consists of a single species: *Chamorchis alpina* (Figs. 3, 4, and the inside back cover).

Ed. note: Photos were taken in Lapland and also in Finnmark, Norway by Sven Birkedal and are published here with his permission.

**Synonyms:**

*Aceras alpinum* (L) Steud. Nomencl. Bot. ed. 2, 1:12 (1840)

*Arachnites alpinus* (L) F.W.Schmidt. Fl. Boem. 1: 74 (1793)

*Chamaerepes alpina* (L.) Spreng. Syst. Veg. 3: 702 (1826)

*Chamorchis albida* (L.) Dumort., Fl. Belg.: 133 (1827)

*Chamorchis viridis* (L.) Dumort., Fl. Belg.: 133 (1827)

*Epipactis alpina* (L.) Schrank, Prim. Fl. Salisb.: 30 (1792)

*Herminium alpinum* (L.) Sweet, Hort. Brit.: 382 (1826)

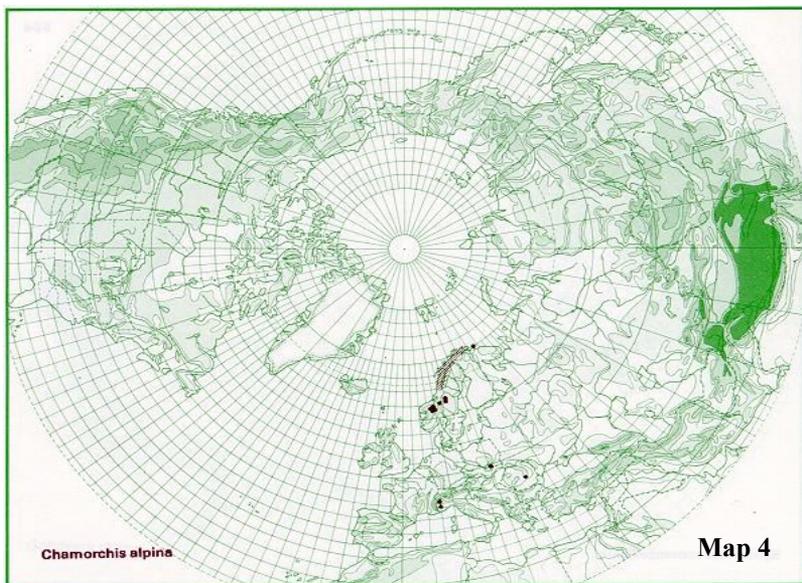
*Herminium alpinum* (L.) Lindl., Edwards's Bot. Reg. 18: t. 1499 (1832)

*Ophrys alpina* L., Sp. Pl.: 948 (1753)

*Orchis alpina* (L.) Scop., Fl. Carniol., ed. 2, 2: 196 (1772), nom. illeg.

*Orchis graminea* Crantz, Stirp. Austr. Fasc., ed. 2, 2: 480 (1769)

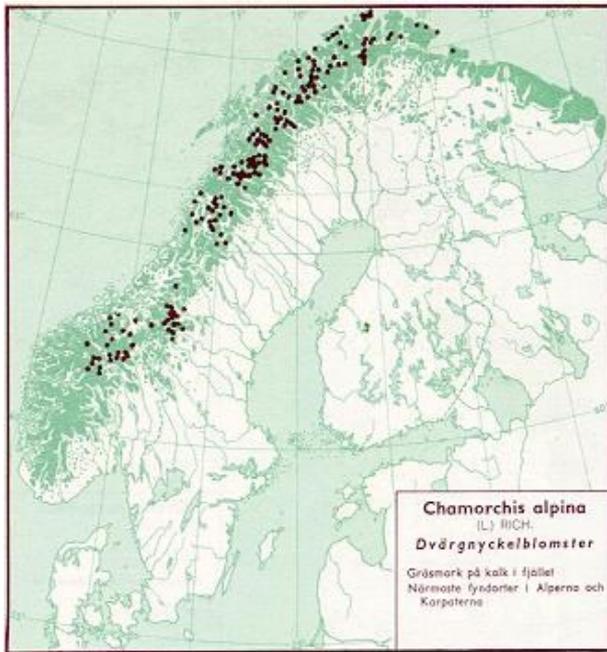
*Satyrium alpinum* (L.) Pers., Syn. Pl. 2: 507 (1807)



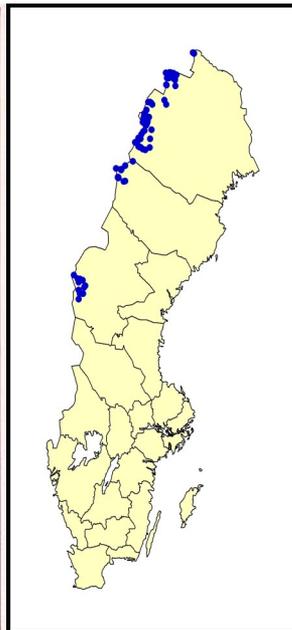
**Distribution:** *Chamorchis alpina* is confined to the subarctic and subalpine parts of Europe: Scandinavia (Finland, Norway and Sweden), the Alps & the Carpathians and northern European Russia.

**Common name:** False Orchid, Alpine Chamorchis, or False Musk Orchid

**Plant:** One of the smallest of European orchids; dainty and petite. Because of its small size and overall greenish appearance it is often very hard to see to the



Map 5. Distribution of *C. alpina* in Scandinavia.



Map 6. Distribution in Sweden of *Chamorchis alpina*.



Fig. 3. *Chamorchis alpina*.  
Image credit: Sven Birkedal.

untrained eye. It is usually 4 to 15 cm tall, but seldom over 10 cm. However, occasionally can be up to 40 cm high.

Stems: yellowish-green. (Fig. 3)

Leaves: 4 to 12 narrow pointed basal leaves, dim: 3 – 7 cm, that often reach almost to the top of the flower. Small green bracts are among flowers.

Flower spike/inflorescence: inflorescence lax, between 1.5 – 3 cm, consisting of 2 – 12 flowers; flowers are similar to those of the Frog Orchid, *Dactylorhiza viridis*; mostly greenish with some tinges of brown and purple. Upper perianth segments converge to form a loose hood. The sepals are of equal length and longer than the petals (Figs. 4, 5).

Lip: tongue-shaped 3 – 4 mm long in similar colour to the sepals and petals.

Spur & Ovary: spur absent.

Pollinators: Some reports of it being pollinated by small insects.

Flowering season: one of the latest flowering orchids starting end-July, lasting to late August.

Flowering duration: approximately 3 weeks.

Habitat: prefers dry calcareous or alkaline short grasslands and alpine meadows in open positions.

Distribution Range. *C. alpina*: subarctic and subalpine parts of Europe: Confined to the high mountain regions of Europe; Scandinavia: northern mountain regions of Finland, Norway and Sweden; the Alps & the Carpathians in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, France (mainland), Italy (mainland), Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia and northern European Russia.



Fig. 4. *Chamorchis alpina*.  
Image credit: Sven Birkedal.

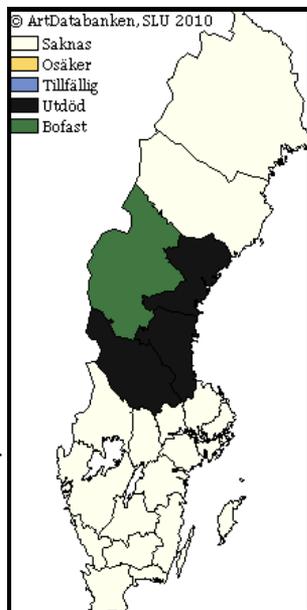
The international database, espousing the molecular taxonomic approach, and recognized by Kew, gives the species tagged “*Nigritella nigra*” on the map as follows:

### 3. *Gymnadenia nigra* (L.) Rchb. f., Bonplandia (Hannover) 4: 321 (1856)

Common name: The Black *Gymnadenia* (Maps 7, 8, 9).

Flowering Period: May.

Note: The two *Gymnadenia* species; *G. nigra* and *G. runei*, covered here, are two of a total 14 species formerly identified as belonging to the genus *Nigritella* which were subsequently moved to the genus *Gymnadenia*. However many Europeans regard these 14 *Gymnadenia* species as belonging to the genus *Nigritella* especially as none of *Nigritella* species seem to resemble *Gymnadenia* species as far as the design of the flowers. Taxonomists of Kew, the U.S., and other countries follow the molecular data while precedence to the floral (visual) similarities remains favored by many Europeans. As an aside, it might be of interest to note that each of the Swedish provinces have symbols associated with, provincial coats of arms, and the



Map. 7. Distribution in Sweden of *Gymnadenia nigra* (*N. nigra*).

provincial flower of the Province of Jämtland is *Gymnadenia nigra*.

The European System, following the visual-floral basis for taxonomy reasoning, classifies this species as

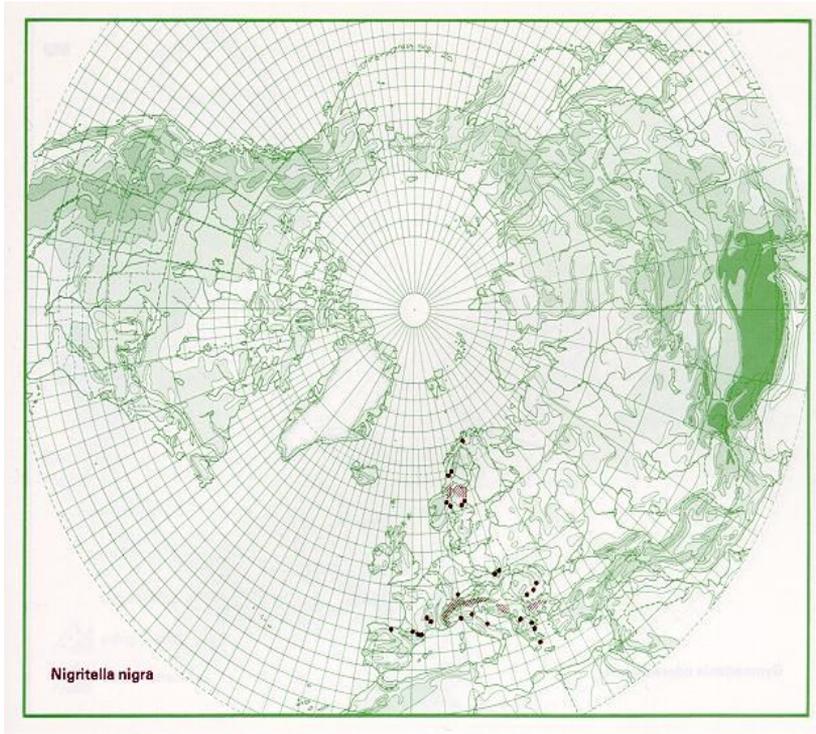
- 3. *Nigritella nigra*** R.Br. in W.T.Aiton, Hortus Kew. 5: 191 (1813) (Figs. 5, 6, Maps 7, 8)



Figs. 5, 6. The Common Black Orchid *Gymnadenia nigra* - Kew  
*Nigritella nigra* (European Classification). “stems are brownish green”  
These images were taken in Marieby, Jämtland by Sven Birkedal, Åhus, Sweden.  
They are used here with his permission.

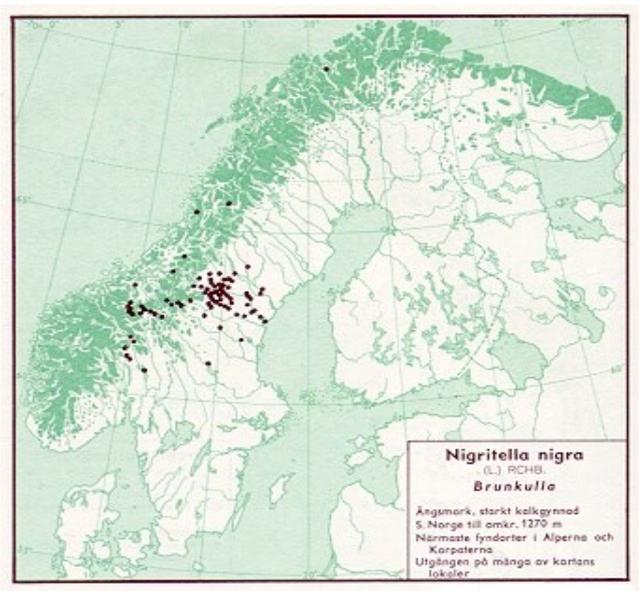
**Synonyms:**

- Gymnadenia nigra* (L.) Rchb.f., Bonplandia (Hannover) 4: 321 (1856).  
*Gymnadenia nigra* var. *longibracteata* Bblth. Bot. 26:92 (1892).  
*Gymnigritella brachystachya* (A.Kern.) E.G.Camus in E.G.Camus, P.Bergon & A.A.Camus, Monogr. Orchid.: 358 (1908).  
×*Gymnigritella megastachya* (A.Kern.) E.G.Camus in E.G.Camus, P.Bergon & A.A.Camus, Monogr. Orchid.: 359 (1908).  
*Gymnigritella brachystachya* Monogr. Orchid. 358 (1908).  
×*Gymnigritella brachystachya* Monogr. Orchid.: 358 (1908).  
*Habenaria nigra* Hortus Kew. 5; 192 (1813).  
*Nigritella angustifolia* Rich., De Orchid. Eur.: 34 (1817).  
*Nigritella angustifolia* f. *longibracteata* Beck, Ann. K. K. Naturhist. Hofmus. 5: 577 (1890).



**Map 8.** *Nigritella nigra* from Hultén and Fries 1986.

- Nigritella brachystachya* A.Kern., Verh. K. K. Zool.-Bot. Ges. Wien 15: 224 (1865).
- Nigritella fragrans* Saut. ex Rchb., Iconogr. Bot. Pl. Crit. 8: 1010 (1830).
- Nigritella hybrida* Schur, Enum. Pl. Transsilv.: 647 (1866).
- Nigritella megastachya* A.Kern., Verh. K. K. Zool.-Bot. Ges. Wien 15: 222 (1865).
- Nigritella nigra* (L.) Rchb.f. in H.G.L.Reichenbach, Icon. Fl. Germ. Helv. 24: 102 (1908).
- Nigritella nigra* f. *longibracteata* (Beck) Soó, Arch. Bot. (Leipzig) 23: 93 (1928).
- Nigritella suaveolens* W.D.J.Koch, Syn. Fl. Germ. Helv.: 690 (1837).
- Nigritella suaveolens* var. *nigroconopsea* Rchb.f. in H.G.L.Reichenbach, Icon. Fl. Germ. Helv. 13-14: 104 (1851).
- Orchis atropurpurea* Tausch, Flora 14: 223 (1831).
- Orchis nigra* (L.) Scop., Fl. Carniol., ed. 2, 2: 200 (1772).
- Orchis nigra* var. *flore-rosea* DC. in J.B.A.M.de Lamarck & A.P.de Candolle, Fl. Franç., ed. 3, 5: 331 (1815), contrary to Art. 23.6. (ICN, 2012).
- Orchis reichenbachii* Mutel, Fl. Franç. Herbor. 3: 245 (1836).
- Orchis variegata* Schrank, Baier. Fl. 1: 241 (1789), nom. illeg.
- Satyrium nigrum* (L.), Sp. Pl.: 944 (1753).
- Siberia nigra* (L.) Spreng., Anleit. Kenntn. Gew., ed. 2, 2(1): 282 (1817).



**Map 9.** Scandinavian distribution of *Nigritella nigra* (*Gymnadenia nigra* - Kew).

**Distribution in Sweden:** the largest distribution is in the Boreal zone in the region around the Lake Storsjön in the Province of Jämtland (latitude: 61° N), but the species is found farther north in both Sweden and Norway where a few localities are inside the Arctic Circle ( ).

**Common name:** Common Black Orchid, Black Vanilla Orchid

**Plant:** mainly between 8 - 25 cms tall, seldom over 10 cms, but occasionally may be reported to 40 cms high. Stems are brownish -green (see Fig. 6).

**Leaves:** numerous, slender, channeled-shaped leaves emanate from the base of the stem.

**Flower spike/inflorescence:** a pronounced densely flowered pyramidal inflorescence comprised of dark red to purple flowers having a distinct scent of vanilla.; inflorescence is more cylindrical when lower flowers first open; the lance-shaped sepals are spread widely (see Fig. 7).

**Lip:** presented upward, similar to *Hammaraby paludosa*

**Spur & Ovary:** the spur is short, dim: 1 – 1.5 cm and is blunt-shaped

**Pollinators:** it has been observed that the flowers are visited by many species of insects attracted by its strong vanilla scent. It has been reported that grazing cattle find this orchid very tasty, often giving their milk with the faint taste and smell of vanilla!

**Habitat:** calcareous mountain pastures and meadows.

**Distribution Range:** The distribution stretches from the mountain regions of central Norway in Sweden to the European Alps including the Italian Alps, the Balkans and to Palestine.

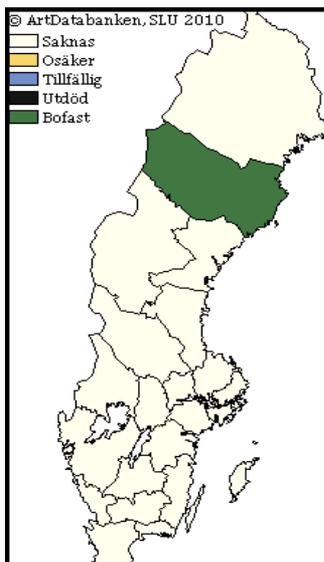
4. *Gymnadenia runei* (Teppner & E.Klein) Ericsson, Svensk Bot. Tidskr. 91: 142 (1997)

Description: *Gymnadenia runei* is almost identical to its close relative *G. nigra*, the exception being that the flowers are brighter red in colour (Figs. 8, 9) and that the spur is larger. Habitat: more frequent in cultivated mountain pastures and meadows.

The European Classification:

*Nigritella runei* (Teppner & E.Klein) Kreutz, Kompend. Eur. Orchid.: 79 (2004).

*Gymnadenia runei* was first discovered by the Swedish botanist, Olof Rune, in 1960 and was first scientifically described in 1989. It was first thought to be a hybrid between *Gymnadenia conopsea* and *Gymnadenia nigra*. *Gymnadenia runei* is the only endemic species to Sweden and is found only in a few localities in south Lapland in the Municipality of Tärnaby (latitude 65° 43N, just south of the Arctic Circle). One of rarest orchids in Sweden, it is Red Listed as VU = vulnerable.



Map 10. Northern boreal distribution zone in Sweden of *Gymnadenia runei*.



Figs. 8, 9. *Gymnadenia runei* (Teppner & E.Klein) Ericsson, Svensk Bot. Tidskr. 91: 142 (1997) Images were taken in Röddingenäset, Hemavan, Lapland by Sven Birkedal, Ahus, Sweden, and are used here with his permission.

**Synonyms (European system):**

*Gymnadenia runei* (Teppner & E.Klein) Ericsson, *Svensk Bot. Tidskr.* 91: 142 (1997).

×*Gymnigritella runei* Teppner & E.Klein, *Phyton* (Horn) 29: 163 (1989).

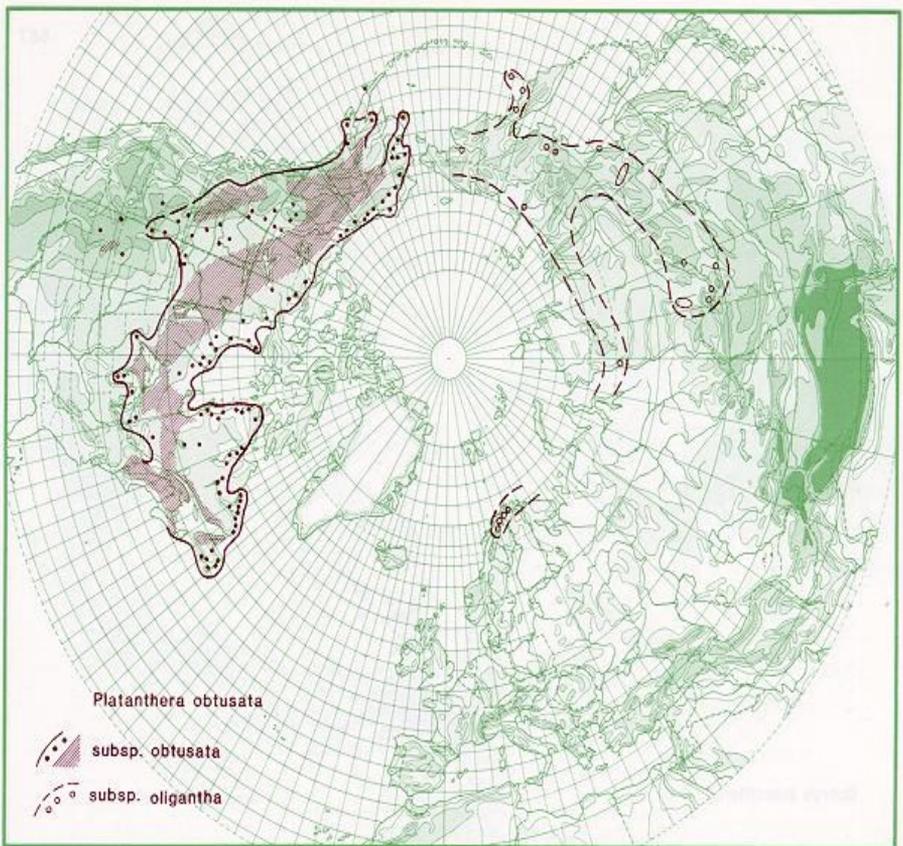
*Nigritella nigra* subsp. *runei* (Teppner & E.Klein) H.Baumann & R.Lorenz, *J. Eur. Orch.* 37: 717 (2005)

**Description:** *Nigritella runei* is almost identical to its close relative *G. nigra*, the exception being that the flowers are brighter red in colour, and that the spur is larger.

**Habitat:** more frequent in cultivated mountain pastures and meadows.

**5. The Genus *Platanthera***

Two species are represented *Platanthera obtusata* and *P. oligantha*.



**Map 11.** Circumpolar distribution, *P. obtusata* and *P. oligantha* from Hultén and Fries 1986.

***Platanthera obtusata* (Banks ex Pursh) Lindl., Gen. Sp. Orchid. Pl.: 284 (1835)**

*P. obtusata* is circumpolar and occurs in Subarctic America: the Aleutians and Alaska to Rocky Mountains to New Mexico (Map 11).

**Synonyms:**

*Habenaria obtusata* (Banks ex Pursh) Richardson, Bot. App.: 750 (1823).

*Habenaria obtusata* var. *collectanea*. Fernald

*Lysiella obtusata* subsp. *oligantha* (Turcz.) Tolm., Arktich. Fl. SSSR 4: 83 (1963)

*Lysiella oligantha* (Turcz.) Nevski in V.L.Komarov (ed.), Fl. URSS 4: 663 (1935)

*Orchis obtusata* Banks ex Pursh. Fl. Amer. Sept. 2:588 (1813)

*Platanthera parvula* Schltr., Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. 15: 301 (1918)

***Platanthera oligantha* Turcz., Bull. Soc. Imp. Naturalistes Moscou 27(2): 86**



Map 12. *Platanthera oligantha*.

The Small Northern Bog Orchid.

(1854)

**Synonym:**

*Platanthera obtusata* subsp. *oligantha* (Turcz.) Hultén, Acta Univ. Lund., 2, 39 (1): 481 (1943)

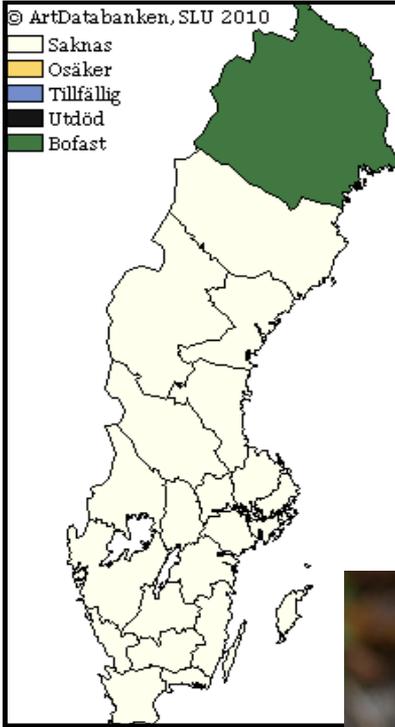
Distribution: Confined to arctic Norway, Sweden and Asian Russia. All localities for *P. oligantha* in Scandinavia (Norway and Sweden) are inside the Arctic Circle. This species is very rare! It is in the Abisko National Park, Torne Lappmark (latitude; 68° 21 N.) ([Maps 11, 12, 13](#)).

Common name: Blunt-leaved Orchid or Small Northern Bog Orchid

Plant: 6 – 25 cm normally 10 – 35 cm but can even be up to 35 cm tall.



Fig. 10. *Platanthera oligantha*,  
The Small Northern Bog Orchid.



**Left: Map. 13.** Northern area of Sweden.  
Arctic area of *Platanthera oligantha*

Leaves: normally only one rarely two, large solitary, broad.

Flower spike/inflorescence: only a few flowers normally 3 – 6 but sometimes as many as 15 in a lax inflorescence, greenish white to yellowish green. Petals and sepals rhombic, distally blunted, 2 – 3.5 mm long the upper ones forming a hood (Figs. 10, 11, 12).

Pollinia: two, pronounced, clearly visible in sacs as with other members of this genus.

Lip: narrow strapped & tongue-shaped.

Spur and ovary: club-shaped spur about equal -  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the ovary length.

Pollinators: Flowers have been visited by mosquitoes that *may* be vectors; no pollinator has ever actually been recorded.

Flowering: June – August

Habitat: marshes, fens and damp calcareous wetlands & grasslands, wet meadows and on the edges of rich fens and coniferous forests with dwarf birch trees

Distribution Range:



**Fig. 11.** *Platanthera oligantha*,  
The Small Northern Bog Orchid.



**Fig. 12.** The Small Northern Bog Orchid. *Platanthera oligantha*.  
Image: Sven Birkedal in Lapland, Sweden.  
Njulla, Törneträsk, Abisko, (Lat: 68.367901 N; 18.776953 E.)

Extremely rare! Only found in a few localities in the mountain areas of Norway



and Sweden, all reported are inside the Arctic Circle.

