

Native Orchids

From *Perennial Notes*, Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, April 2002

Want to try something a little different? Grow orchids in your garden. They can be more temperamental than some plants, but they're worth the effort. The most important thing to remember is **DON'T DIG PLANTS FROM THE WILD**. The Native Orchid Conservation Committee of the Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society (NEWOS) has put together a source list of vendors who sell laboratory-grown native orchids (see below). Native orchids are usually expensive because they can be temperamental and may require several years of care before they're blooming size.

There are a number of interesting native orchids you can try. The yellow lady slippers (*Cypripedium calceolus*) are fairly easy to grow. They're not as hardy as some others and can benefit from a winter mulch. The Flower Factory used to sell them, but they haven't for several years now. Expect to pay about \$18 for a plant.

The showy lady slippers (*Cypripedium reginae*) are hardier than the yellows, but may require some special planting media. At least three of the growers listed below (Cyp Haven, Vermont Lady Slippers and Bluestem Farms) recommend mixtures containing bark, peat moss, sand and other material. Expect to pay about \$35 for a blooming size showy lady slipper. However, if you're willing to wait a few years for blooms, Scott Weber of Bluestem Farms sometimes sells seedlings at the Farmer's Market at a lower cost.

Cyp Haven also sells lady slippers, including some hybrids. Carson Whitlow, the owner of Cyp Haven, has been working for many years to develop *Cypripedium* hybrids that are easier to grow in a garden. Most cost about \$20 to \$35. The Vermont Ladyslipper Company specializes in a lady slipper called *Cypripedium acaule*, (the pink lady slipper) which is considered a difficult plant to grow. They sell for about \$35, but are not recommended for beginners.

Spiranthes (the Ladies Tresses orchid) is easier to grow than the slippers. It has small, white, fragrant flowers that bloom in September. It's also more affordable than the lady slippers. It's usually available from the Flower Factory for about \$6.

Several nurseries sell Bletillas, which come in lavender and white. They're easily grown but not as hardy. You should give them a winter mulch or else dig up the bulbs and store them in your refrigerator. They cost about \$6.

The rattlesnake orchid (*Goodyera*) is usually grown for its foliage, which is dark green with light-colored veins. It doesn't like competition and doesn't stand up well to squirrels. It's usually available from the Flower Factory for about \$5.

Go to the Web site of the Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society (NEWOS) to learn more.

Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society: www.familyshoebox.com/family/NEWOS, or Kip Knudson, Native Orchid Committee E-Mail: knudy@cybrzn.com.

—Submitted by Jill Hynum, Orchid Growers' Guild

List of vendors who sell laboratory-grown native orchids

ArrowheadAlpines
POBox 857
Fowlerville, MI 48836
(517)223-3581, (517)223-8750 FAX Catalog \$2.00
(*Cypripedium acaule* & *alveolus* *Goodyera pubescens*, *Habenaria*)

Bluestem Farm, Scott Weber, 5920 Lehman Rd.
Baraboo, WI 53913 (608) 356-0179
E-Mail: bluestem-farm@juno.com

Cyp Haven, Carson Whitlow
2291 280th St., Adel, IA 50003-8233
www.orchidmall.com/cyp.haven/ (515)993-4841
SlipperGuy@aol.com (*adult Cyps*, *calopogons*, *arethusa*)

Great Plants PO Box 1041
New Hartford, CN 06057
(800)441-9788 (860)379-8488 FAX
www.greatplants.com
(*rescued Cypripedium, Pleione*)

Green Canyon Orchids, Peter Croezen
576 Greenbrook Drive
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2M 4K6
(519)578-1617
E-Mail: orchids@golden.net <http://home.golden.net/~orchids>
(*seed grown Cypripedium reginae*)

Vermont Ladyslipper Company
Elizabeth & Scott Durkee
56 Leduc Road
New Haven, VT 05472-1000
E-Mail: VTLSCOTogether.net www.vladyslipper.com
(*lab-propagated Cypripedium reginae, acaule, pubescent*)

Orchid Gardens, Carl Philips
6700 Splithand Road
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Raising Rarities, Owen Robinson
PO Box 405
Jacksonville, VT 05342
(802)368-7273
(*adult Cyp parviflorum, Cyp pubescens, Cyp kentuckiense, Pogonias*)

Red's Rhodies, Dick Cavender 5920 S.W. Oberst Lane Sherwood, OR 97140
(503)625-6331
E-Mail: rhodies@pcez.com
(*Cyp franchetii & segawai, Pleiones Bletilla, Dacylorhiza*)

Roberts Flower Supply
Wayne & Nancy Roberts
12390 Root Road Columbia Station, OH 44 028
(440)236-5571 (*Cypripedium*)

Rocky Mountain Orchids
Rodd J. May, PhD
PO Box 105
Bigfork, MT 59911
Fax: (406)837-6441 (*Cypripedium montanum, Cyp parviflorum & Cyp reginae*)

Roslyn Nursery
211 Burrs Lane
Dix Hills, NY 11746
(*adult Cyp alveolus, Spiranthes*)

Spangle Creek Lab, Dr. William Steele
21950 County Road 445 Bovey, MN 55709
(218)247-0245
E-Mail: scl@uslink.net; www.uslink.net/~scl/
(*lab grown Cypripedium seedlings*)

Sunshine Farms, Barry Glick
Renick, WV 24966
E-Mail: barryg@slip.net
(*hardy perennials, Spiranthes, Aplectrums, Tipularias*)

Taida Orchids
No. 100 Sec. 3, Chung Shan Rd.
Da Tsun, 51506
Chang Hwa, Taiwan, ROC
(*Asian Cypripediums*)

Van Bourgondien Bros.
245 Route 109, PO Box 1000
Babylon, NY 11702 -9004
(800)622-9959 (516) 669-1228 FAX
E-Mail: blooms@dutchbulbs.com
(*Bletilla striata, Habenaria radiata*)

We-Du Nurseries
Route # 5, Box 724
Marion, NC 28752