

Ram's Head Lady Slipper

Cypripedium arietinum

STATUS

Not Listed

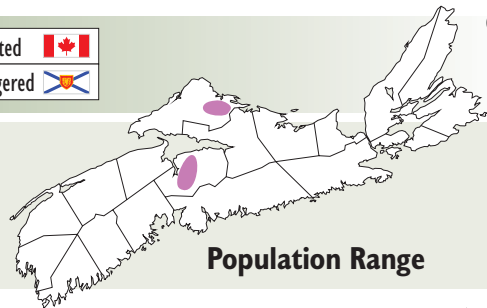


Endangered



95

Occurs at six sites in
Hants and Cumberland
Counties.



Population Range

Habitat

Found in moderately open forests with cool soils and a neutral pH. In Nova Scotia, it is often associated with areas underlain by gypsum bedrock that often have sinkholes, cliffs and steep slopes.



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Species Description

Ram's Head Lady Slipper is a small (10-40 cm tall), herbaceous, perennial, orchid. Its small white flowers are fuzzy, with purplish veins on top, and a pinkish-purple lip below. Three purple-green sepals droop from the flower, and three to five lance-shaped leaves are scattered on the stem.



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Ram's Head Lady Slipper has only been found in Hants and Cumberland Counties - it flowers in late May to early June

Interesting Points

- The genus *Cypripedium*, which is in the orchid family, has 47 species - many are uncommon or rare in the wild.
- Resembles a charging ram with its head down, hence the common name.
- Very long lived: matures 10 years after germination, and can survive up to 20!
- Seeds require the presence of specific fungi in the soil in order to grow.



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Threats to Survival

- Habitat loss and destruction, due to gypsum mining, forestry, agriculture, cattle grazing, housing developments, and other types of land conversion.
- Competition with exotic species.
- Collection by humans.
- Disturbance from off-highway vehicle traffic.



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Similar Species

Pink Lady Slipper:

Larger, pale-pink flower; two large, opposite leaves at the base of the flower stalk.



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Yellow Lady Slipper:

Large, yellow flower; hairy, usually two leaves per stalk.



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Showy Lady Slipper:

Royal appearance; pink, purple, and white flower; many leaves that are very hairy.



How You Can Help

This flower and its habitat are protected by law. It is illegal to disturb, pick, or remove Ram's Head Lady Slipper (which is the case for all legally protected plant species). If you find a new location, or know of one under threat, be sure to contact NS DNR as soon as possible.

Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: NS DNR (902) 679-6091

Info: www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife,
www.ontariowildflowers.com/main

Sighting Reports: 1-866-727-3447 or
www.speciesatrisk.ca/sightings