



Lady's-Slipper Exploration Challenge!

Visit any BHHT trails that you love and search for Lady's-Slippers. To complete this challenge, you must find Lady's- Slippers on at least 3 trails.

Your Name:

Trail Observation #1

Trail Name:

Number of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Type of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Trail Observation #2

Trail Name:

Number of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Type of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Trail Observation #3

Trail Name:

Number of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Type of Lady's-Slippers Sighted:

Lady's-Slipper Info Sheet & Important Information

Maine has four species of lady's-slippers (Genus *Cypripedium*). These include the [pink lady's-slipper](#), [ram's head lady's-slipper](#), [yellow lady's-slipper](#), and [showy lady's-slipper](#).

The lady's-slipper orchids are among the showiest orchids in the eastern United States and are vulnerable to collection. Lady's-slippers require highly specific habitats in order to grow, thus collecting lady's-slippers, even the common ones, is discouraged. Over-collecting of lady's-slippers could make even the common species rare over a short time period.

Lady's-slippers have a specific association with a beneficial fungus known as mycorrhizae. This fungus in the soil allows the lady's-slippers to obtain valuable nutrients and energy from organic matter that would otherwise be unattainable. This association is especially beneficial for the germination and seedling stage of lady's-slippers growth, allowing the seedlings to obtain more nutrients and energy than what are available from the tiny seed.

Pink Lady's-slippers (*Cypripedium acaule*)



Left: *Cypripedium acaule*, typical pink form; Right: *C. acaule*, white form, photo by C. Pendergast

Pink lady's-slipper is the most common lady's-slipper in Maine. Blooming through June, it is typically found thinly scattered in the understory of dry, mixed woods and boggy areas. Pink lady's-slipper produces a pink (occasionally white), 1 to 3 inch long pouch-like flower that grows singly on a stalk emerging from 2 broad, fuzzy leaves at the base of

the plant.

Yellow Lady's-slippers (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) Yellow lady's-slippers are uncommon in Maine. As the name implies, this species is best identified by the yellow pouch-like flowers that bloom from late May through mid July. Unlike the pink lady's-slipper, the yellow lady's-slipper has leaves along the stem of the plant and the flower is sometimes fragrant. In Maine, yellow lady's-slippers are found in mesic (moderately moist) nutrient rich forests as well as in bogs and swamps.





Showy Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*)

This is Maine's largest lady's-slipper. The plant has become increasingly rare due to over collecting and habitat reduction. It has a tall, leafy stem that bears 1-2 white-petaled flowers with a brilliant pink pouch, blooming in late June and into July. It is found in constantly moist habitats, including cedar swamps and cedar glades. It prefers a pH near neutral and some sunlight. The plant's hairs along the stem and leaves may cause a rash on the skin similar to that of poison ivy.

Ram's-head Lady's- slipper (*Cypripedium* *arietinum*)

Known from only a handful of sites in Maine, this is our rarest lady's-slipper as well as a globally imperiled plant (ranked G3). This species is identified by its small reddish-veined lower lip on the flower blooming in late May through mid June. The flower has 3 separate sepals (all other lady's-slippers have 2) and the plant has 3-4 leaves. It prefers cool, moist, partially shaded, acidic areas, most often in northern white cedar swamps with well drained soils.



Happy Exploring, and please remember to never pick or attempt to transplant Lady's-Slippers.