

Plant Data Sheet



Markku Savela

Species (common name, Latin name)

Fairy Slipper, Calypso bulbosa

Range

Nearly circles the globe in the northern hemisphere, ranging throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. In North America, calypso is found from Labrador to Alaska, south to New England, Minnesota, the Great Plains, Arizona, and along the west coast to California.

Climate, elevation

?

Local occurrence (where, how common)

The western form seems to be more aggressive, growing in denser colonies, and has been successfully cultivated for one to two years when carefully tended (Case 1964).

Habitat preferences

An inhabitant of moist coniferous forests with cool soils. When found in boggy areas, it inhabits drier hummocks or the bases of old trees or stumps. It is nearly always in the shade, Caljouw (1981) found it under canopy covers of no less than 60% and in soils no warmer than 15° C.

Plant strategy type/successional stage (stress-tolerator, competitor, weedy/colonizer, seral, late successional)

?

Associated species

Of the Orchidaceae family, may see resemblance to species of Cypripedium.

May be collected as: (seed, layered, divisions, etc.)

Seed. Needs a certain mycorrhizal fungus in the soil in order to grow, and will only be found where this particular fungus is available. seeds are very small, and contain few nutrients. This makes it virtually impossible to transplant.

Collection restrictions or guidelines

Due to its rarity and extremely small size, calypso orchid is notoriously difficult to find. Although its tiny, basal evergreen leaf could potentially be recognized and found with extremely diligent searching. In all practicality one is limited to collecting when the showy flower is present. This survey window varies depending upon the location and specific weather conditions, but is usually from late May through early June, varying according to locality and latitude. The western form seems to be more aggressive, growing in denser colonies, and has been successfully cultivated for one to two years when carefully tended (Case 1964).

Seed germination (needs dormancy breaking?)

?

Seed life (can be stored, short shelf-life, long shelf-life)

?

Recommended seed storage conditions

?

Soil or medium requirements (inoculum necessary?)

Enjoys rich, moist soil enriched with leaf mold or bark chips in a neutral to acid soil in partial shade. (The Plant Database website) According to Alec Pridgeons book "The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Orchids", it needs open mix of leaf mold with crushed quartzite grit or, alternatively, living Sphagnum moss to survive (The orchid growing website)

Installation form (form, potential for successful outcomes, cost)

Divide corms very carefully to propagate.

Recommended planting density

24-36 in. (60-90 cm) (The Plant Database)

Care requirements after installed (water weekly, water once etc.)

Average Water Needs; Water regularly; do not overwater. Conservation of nearby bee populations could promote fertilization and seed-set. In frost prone areas grow in a cold shaded greenhouse. (The Plant Database website)

Normal rate of growth or spread; lifespan

?

Sources cited

<http://www.botany.wisc.edu/Orchids/Calypso.html> accessed 04-15-03

The orchid growing website <http://www.geocities.com/orkoti/calypsoe.html> accessed 04-15-03

Case, F.W., Jr. 1964. Orchids of the Great Lakes Region. Cranbrook Inst. Sci. Bull. 48. Bloomfield Hills, MI.

Data compiled by

Roger Whalley 04-08-03