

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### Research Note

#### 1. FIRST RECORD OF *Paphiopedilum venustum* (Wall. ex Sim ) Pfitz. - AN ENDANGERED SLIPPER ORCHID FROM PAPUM PARE DISTT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH.

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#### Abstract

The paper presents detail distributional and phenological accounts of *Paphiopedilum venustum*, its occurrence in the Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh along with view to help in identification and growing, for the foresters and the *Paphiopedilum* lovers.

#### INTRODUCTION

*Paphiopedilum venustum* (Wall. ex Sim) Pfitz. was first collected from Arunachal Pradesh by Dr. S.N. Hedge from Tippi area (Pagla Nalah) under Doimara Reserve Forest in the year 1991. Since then there is no any further report on finding of this rare, highly ornamental and commercial orchid species from any other parts of Arunachal Pradesh. During my first plant exploration trip to Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh on 15th December, 2010 present species has been located and one plant was collected out of 40 numbers, for further observation from adjoining areas of upper reaches of river Chimpu which is still growing and blooming as shown in the photo. This was followed by my second trip along with Dr. A. N. Rao, Orchidologist; Dr. L. R. Bhuyan, Systematic Botanist; both from SFRI, Itanagar for confirmation of occurrence of this species on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 and the species was confirmed to be *Paphiopedilum venustum*, by the orchidologist. Further on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2013 for further confirmation of the species, myself along with Dr. A.A. Mao, HOO, Botanical Survey of India, APRC, Itanagar plan a tour program and reached the area and found that the number was increased to 90, and confirmed

that to be *Paphiopedilum venustum*. Later on in my fourth trip to the same area on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 I have collected 40 numbers of plants in vegetative condition. which later on attained flowering on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2014. The collected plants are presently cultivating at Orchid Research Centre, Tippi and Sessa orchid nursery. The present report of occurrence of this beautiful orchids from Papum pare district of the state shows extent of distribution further eastward in the state. The detail information on phenology and distribution are described below:

***Paphiopedilum venustum*:** Tropical undergrowing, shaded plant, loosely clumped. Leaves elliptic-lanceolate, pale green, heavily tessellated and mottled with roundish irregular markings and parallel broken lines of darker green to silver. Leaf margins smooth, undulate with age, heavily over laid with redish purple dots of fairylarge-tessellate to almost plain beneath. Stem habit upright, single flowered. Flowering period-January to March.

Chromosome No.  $2n=40$ .

**Distribution:** Southern slopes of Himalaya, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam in north Brahmaputra river and adjoining areas of Arunachal Pradesh upto 500 msl.

**Habitat:** Grows in dense forests, undergrowth, base of cliffs and shaded ledges in humus or in dense bamboo thickets, also in muddy river banks or in the crotches of trees in moss or humus pockets.



Vegetative condition in wild habitat



Flowering in cultivation



Flowers with bud

**Photo: *Paphiopedilum venustum*.**

**Flowering:** January to March.

**Fruiting:** May to September.

**Present occurrence:** India, Arunachal Pradesh, District Papum Pare, Chimpu nah, 27°02.891'N and 093° 35.019'E, 500 to 600 msl.

**Conservation Status:** The plants is growing under dense bamboo thickets (*Bambusa pallida*). Due to commercialization activities of this bamboo species in Itanagar and its adjoining area, the habitat has been badly disturbed. Hence, there is immediate threat for the survival of this species due to human interference.

**Comments:** This is the first *Paphiopedilum* brought to Europe and being such a strange looking flowers, it is no wonder that it piqued the imagination of horticulturist of that time. It is an easily cultivable plant and can grow in moist and potting soil as long as there is sufficient drainage and air flow with proper watering during summer and never let the plants completely dry. It will bloom under various lighting conditions but the leaves appear their best when kept under shade than other *Paphiopedilum* species.

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