

Creeping lady's-tresses

Goodyera repens (L.) R.Br.

DESCRIPTION

Creeping Lady's-tresses is an evergreen plant that grows to around 20cm in height when in flower. At other times of the year the only visible part of the plant is a basal rosette of leaves which remain green and are easily spotted among surrounding dead, brown vegetation. Another distinguishing feature of the leaves is the veining which fans across their surfaces and is quite unlike the leaves of other orchid species where the veins are parallel.

The inflorescence carries around 15-25 pure white flowers which are extremely hairy. The flowers open in a spiral. The flower spike of Creeping Lady's-tresses appears more one-sided once the majority of the flowers open.



HABITAT

Creeping Lady's-tresses is found mainly in mature, undisturbed conifers woods sometimes mixed with broadleaved trees, in particular. It grows in woodland clearings and other open sites where there is plenty of light but not too much direct sunshine. It spreads via numerous stolons and new plants form in loose humus close to the parent plants. This method of spreading, as well as its habitat, are two of the factors that sets it aside from other similiar species.

DISTRIBUTION

It is also found in Central Europe, and in the Western and Southern Balkans at higher altitudes.

ENDANGERMENT

Disappearance of coniferous forests and wet mountain habitats through logging, fires and urbanization.

PROTECTION

In many European countries, it is on the list of endangered species, and as such it is permanently protected. It is on the CITES list of species and is also listed in the red books of several countries.

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