

Common spotted orchid

Dactylorhiza fuchsii (Druce) Soó.

DESCRIPTION

Common spotted orchid is 10–60 centimeters in height. The inflorescence is a dense-flowered spike, which is at first conical and later cylindrical. The flower color can vary from white to pale purple with purple spots, symmetrical patterns of dark purple loops or dots, and dashes. The lip has three lobes. The bracts are usually shorter than the flower. The middle lobe is more than half as large as the lateral lobe. The leaves are narrowly lanceolate, keeled, and often dark-spotted. The flowers are hermaphrodite and insect-pollinated. The flowering from July through August.

HABITAT

This orchid prefers sunny places on lowlands to mountains. It can be found in slightly damp meadows but also in the undergrowth of dry forests. They grow on the siliceous and calcareous substrate from 900 to 2300 meters above sea level.

DISTRIBUTION

This orchid is widespread over Europe from Ireland in the west eastwards to Mongolia and across northern Asia.

ENDANGERMENT

This species is endangered by habitat destruction by unplanned urbanization, natural successions in open habitats, and underground fires. Also, a special threat is the disappearance of insects adapted for pollination of the species.

PROTECTION

It is on the CITES list of species and is also listed in the red books of several countries.

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