

Rock orchid

Orchis scopulorum Summerh.

DESCRIPTION

Tuberous geophyte plant, with a stem 30 to 60 cm tall. Rosette with 3 to 5 basilar leaves and smaller cauline leaves. Inflorescence conical to cylindrical, around 10 cm, with 8 to 25 large flowers and pale pink lip, stained with purple. Sepals and petals lilac to purplish pink.

HABITAT

Rocky slopes, cliff fissures at the highest altitudes, over 1700 m, but appear sporadically along some levadas at altitudes around 1000 m. In moist and acid soils.



DISTRIBUTION

Endemic plant to the Central Massif of Madeira Island, Portugal.

THREATS

Recreational activities, invasive species, fire and grazing of livestock. Illegal harvesting.

PROTECTION

CITES Washington Convention – Annex II
IUCN Red List of Threatened Species – Data Deficient
Habitats Directive – Annex IV
Bern Convention – Annex I.

Text: Américo Pereira, Joaquim Pessoa, Luísa Borges
photos: Américo Pereira