



ORCHID FAMILY.

ORCHIDACEAE

**Large Purple Fringed Orchid.
Early Purple Fringed Orchid.
Greater Purple Fringed Orchid
Meadow Pink.**

Platanthera grandiflora

Found on moist and shaded banks, or beside wayside runlets, in June.

The single, erect, and leafy stalk, which grows from 15 inches to 2 feet in height, is sharp-angled, somewhat twisted, and smooth to the touch. In color it is a cool, pleasing green.



The lower leaves are sometimes 6 inches long and about 2 wide, above they are small and narrow; the shape is a long-pointed oblong, deeply indented on the strong midrib; with an entire margin, and a smooth shining surface. The color is a cool dark green, silvery with bloom underneath.

The flower is large and beautiful. The lower petal, or lip, is widely spreading and deeply 3-cleft with a fine fringed margin, and a long and slender, curving spur; the other petals are sharp-pointed, their outer margins notched; two of the calyx-parts flare like wings at either side, while the third part is erect between the upper petals; the texture is very fine, and delicate. The color is an exquisite pale lilac, the lip being slightly darker, and fading to a pure waxen white at the throat; the spur is pale pink, or nearly white. The flowers, on fine, twisted and curved, green foot-stems, are arranged alternately, and close together, in a large feathery spire, each foot-stem springing from the angle of a small leaf or bract.

The blossoms are slightly odorous, as though no gift had been refused to this lovely Orchid. Not least among its delightful qualities is the rich toned green of its leaf, contrasting with the fairy lightness of its blossoming spire.

Photos: Alan Cressler, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



LARGE PURPLE FRINGED ORCHID: *Platanthera grandiflora*.

Text and drawing excerpted from *Wildflowers from the North-Eastern States* by Ellen Miller and Margaret Christine Whiting, 1895
Nomenclature and Families updated.