

ORCHID FAMILY

ORCHIDACEAE.

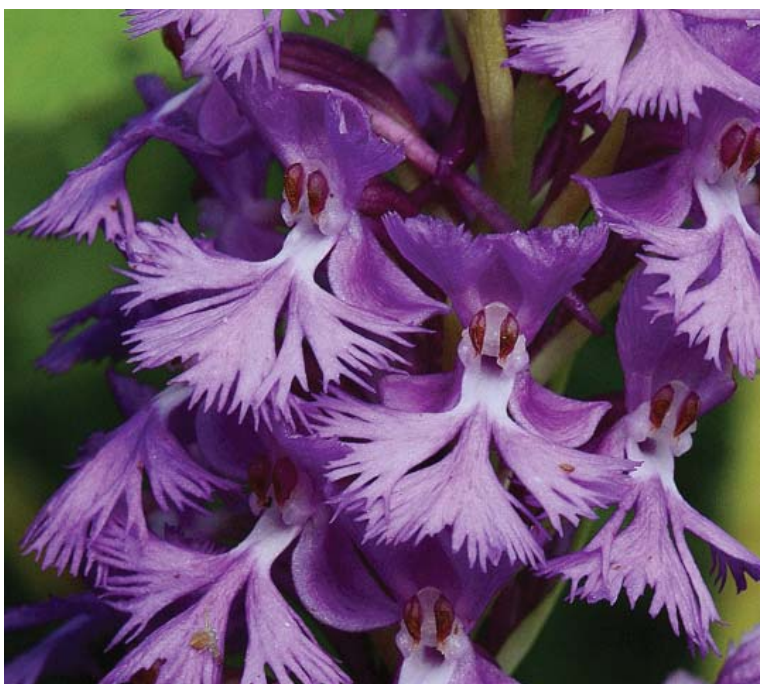
Small Purple Fringed Orchid

Platanthera psycodes

Found by roadside springs, or in low damp meadows, during July and August.

The stalk is sparingly leafy, round and smooth, and varies in height from 1 to 3 feet; light green in color.

The long leaf is sharp-pointed at the tip, thin but tough in texture, and smooth; in color yellow-green, not dark. The leaves are few in number, clasping, and near the top somewhat sheath-like; they are placed alternately.



The flower is small; the lip fan-shaped, 3-cleft, and fringed; the other petals erect and fringed; the slender spur is curving, and longer than the foot-stem; the calyx-parts are small and rounded, one being erect and the two others spreading at the sides. The texture is fine, and the color is a clear light lilac, the spur being purplish-green. The curious little foot-stem looks like a rolled leaf; it is green, or slightly tinted pink. The flowers are placed in a terminal spire, springing from the angles of small pale green leaves (bracts).

Green at first, the lilac flush, overspreads the buds as they swell before the blossoms expand. It is an odorous flower, and

fortunately not uncommon. The spur is more curving than that of the Large Purple Fringed (*Platanthera grandiflora*), and the whole plant is more slender and less perfect in its details, yet it is sufficiently like its early sister to be taken for a belated specimen of *P. grandiflora* the when first espied amongst the tall grasses.

Top photo: Alan Cressler., Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Lower photo: R.W. Smith, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

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



SMALL PURPLE FRINGED ORCHID: *Platanthera psychodes*.

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