

Platanthera chorisiana (Cham.) Rchb. f.

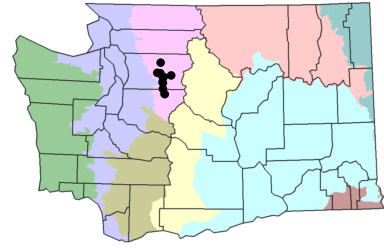
synonym: *Habenaria chorisiana* Cham.

Choris' bog-orchid

Orchidaceae - orchid family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G3G4 / S2



General Description: Perennial from firm, fleshy, spindle-shaped roots; stem 4-20 (30) cm tall when flowering. Leaves usually 2 (sometimes 1 or up to 4), nearly opposite, positioned toward the base of the stem. Blade elliptic, lanceolate, or suborbiculate, 2-9 x 1-4 cm. Stem bracts (0) 1 (2), lanceolate, up to 2 cm long.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers several in solitary terminal spikes, inconspicuous, greenish. Sepals about 2 mm long, 1-nerved, oblong, the upper slightly hood-shaped. Petals strongly 3-nerved, broadly ovate, slightly shorter and broader than the sepals. Lower petal (lip) 1.5-2.5 mm long, projecting forward, orbicular, obovate or broadly elliptic, concave, margins entire. Spur at base of lip is stoutly cylindrical to pouchlike, 0.7-1.25 mm long.

Fruits: Ellipsoid to cylindrical capsules. Flowers July to August.

Identification Tips: *Platanthera chorisiana* is distinguished by its short stature, very short spur, and usually 2 nearly basal leaves. *Platanthera orbiculata** is a taller plant, has a much longer spur (at least 14 mm long), longer lip (10-20 mm), and nearly round leaves that lie flat on the ground. *P. stricta** has 3 to several leaves scattered along the stem, becoming reduced above.

Range: Japan, Aleutian Islands, southern AK to western Vancouver Island, B.C., and WA.

Habitat/Ecology: In the wettest regions of sphagnum bogs, along streams, seeps, wet meadows, gravel outwashes, moist areas with fine soils, on moss-covered rocks; often at or just above the water table. Elevations in WA: 774-1300 m (2540-4300 ft). Associated species include mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), Alaska yellow cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*), spirea (*Spiraea* spp.), skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*), shooting star (*Dodecatheon* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), mosses (*Sphagnum* and other species), marsh marigold (*Caltha biflora*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*), and other bog-orchids (*Platanthera dilatata*, *P. stricta*).

Comments: All known WA sites are within the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Current threats include timber management, mining, recreational use (hikers, collectors), and hydrologic alteration. This taxon is also rare in B.C. and AK.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 26.



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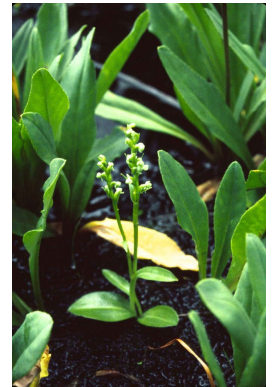
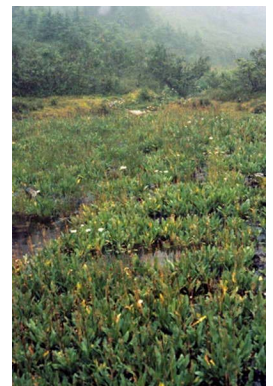


photo by Mark Sheehan



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