

GREEN FLY ORCHID

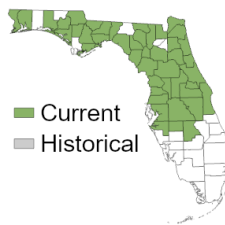
Epidendrum conopseum Ait. f.

Synonyms: *Epidendrum magnoliae* Muhl.

Family: Orchidaceae (orchid)

FNAI Ranks: G4/S4S5

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Commercially Exploited



Epiphytic on limb of live oak (*Quercus virginiana*). Hydric hammock at Caravelle Ranch Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Epiphytic **orchid** with erect stems; **inflorescences** racemose or corymbose; plants smaller, to 26 (-38) cm long; vegetative portions of stems 2 - 23 cm long; **roots** 3 - 5 mm in diameter; stems 2 - 5 cm in length; **petiole** not exceeding 1.5 cm in length; **leaves** distributed near apex of stem; **inflorescence** racemose, **flowers** pale green to bronze-colored.

Similar Species: See Related rare species section.

Related Rare Species: All other native *Epidendrum* species in Florida are considered endangered by the state, but these are restricted to the southern peninsula and do not generally overlap the range of green fly orchid.

Habitat: Swamps and moist hammocks; epiphytic, especially on live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) and southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*).

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall.

green fly orchid

Epidendrum conopseum

Range-wide Distribution: The northernmost epiphytic orchid: Southeast NC south to central peninsular FL, west to western LA; disjunct in northeastern Mexico (Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas). In FL, green fly orchid is found from Escambia County south to Brevard, Highlands, and Manatee counties. In the panhandle and North FL it is the only epiphytic orchid.

Conservation Status: Apparently secure in Florida. Although not a rare species, populations are often small and may be vulnerable to collection and destruction from forestry operations.

Protection and Management: Protect from collection and forestry operations in hammocks and swamps.

References: Luer 1972, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2024, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.



Central lobe of lip green, sepals and lateral petals bronze. Hydric hammock at Caravelle Ranch Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Fragrant flowers are greenish-yellow with slightly purple sepals and petals. Taken at Salt Lake Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Epiphytic on live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) in mesic hammock at Salt Lake Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.