



CASE STUDIES - ESPC Target 7

60% of the world's threatened species conserved in situ

Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*)

Conservation in Europe

GSPC Target 7 (ESPC targets 2.2-2.3)

Date of case study

Project coordinators

Partner organisations

Funding mechanisms



Description

Distribution: the species is distributed throughout Eurasia from Britain to the Pacific. In Europe the species is found in the mountains and hills of the nemoral and boreal regions and in the lowlands of the Baltic. The present strongholds are in Fennoscandia, the Alps, parts of the Carpathians, and the Podolian Plateau.

Threats: in most of its range it is rare in numbers of stations and individuals, which is indicative of a high extinction threat. The main threats are changes in forest regime and water table; closing of the forest canopy and increased undergrowth; soil eutrophication (nitrification in particular), trampling, grazing, cutting of flowers and digging up of bulbs

Conservation actions in the Council of Europe Plan:

- Managed protected areas
- Diffuse habitat measures
- Individual protection
- Population reinforcement and reintroduction
- International Integration and Information Exchange

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(*Cypripedium calceolus*) Conservation in Europe

Description (II)

Current Conservation Projects:

8 EU LIFE Projects have included Lady's Slipper Conservation since 1996

Sweden (2006) – Restoration of the wetland area of Hejnum Kallgate

Austria (2006) – Bisamberg habitat management

Austria (2005) – Conservation strategies for woodlands and rivers in the Gesäuse Mountains

Finland (2000) – Conservation of *Cypripedium calceolus* and *Saxifraga hirculus* in Northern Finland

Finland (2000) – Herb-rich forests, forests of *Dencrocopos leucotus* and western taigas in Karelia

Austria (2000) – Wild river landscape of the Tyrolean Lech

France (1999) – Forests and linked habitats in Burgundy

Spain (1996) – Conservation of 13 endangered plant species in Aragon

A series of research projects into *Cypripedium calceolus* populations in North East **Poland** have also been carried out. (see references)

In the **United Kingdom** an ex situ propagation methodology was developed at Kew Gardens (see references) through the Sainsbury Orchid Conservation Project, and a targeted reintroduction has been carried out at 12 sites in England. Until this project the plant was known from only one site in the UK and had been thought to be extinct at the start of the twentieth century. This successful project has shown the potential for reintroduction and reinforcement of Lady's slipper populations at other sites in Europe.

Publications

Brzosko, E., 2002, Dynamics of island populations of *Cypripedium calceolus* in the Biebrza river valley (north-east Poland). Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society, Number 1, May 2002, pp. 67-77(11)

Nicole, F., Brzosko E., Till-Bottraud I., 2005, Population viability analysis of *Cypripedium calceolus* in a protected area: longevity, stability and persistence. Journal of Ecology 93 (4), 716–726.

Ramsay, M.M. & Stewart J., 1998, Re-established of the Lady's Slipper Orchid (*Cypripedium calceolus*) in Britain, Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society 126 (pp. 173-181)

Terschuren, J. 1999, Action Plan for the Conservation of *Cypripedium calceolus* in Europe, Nature and Environment No.100, Council of Europe Publishing (www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/environment/nature_and_biological_diversity/publications/SN100-E.pdf)

Contacts

Website

LIFE projects database www.ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm

Sainsbury Orchid Conservation Project (www.kew.org) (education, information sheets)

UK Biodiversity Action Plan for Lady's Slipper (www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=255)

