

## *Eulophia graminea* a Potentially Invasive Ground Orchid

Keep an eye out for this potentially invasive plant, still rare but becoming more of a problem. Classified as a newly naturalized ground orchid in Florida, called *Eulophia graminea* (no common name yet), it is thought to be a possible escapee orchid from hobbyist growers. First discovered on the east coast in a residential garden in Miami in 2007, it is now beginning to spring up unexpectedly in Lee County beginning in September, 2011.

The orchid is native to the tropical and subtropical parts of Asia from Pakistan east through India, Nepal, Southeast Asia, Southern China to the Ryuka Island south of Japan. It favors open, warm and sunny spots, often seen partially buried in a thick woodchip mulch layer in South Florida. In its native range, the plants grow in many kinds of open habitats, including grasslands and even beaches.

Look for a bulb-like stem between two leaf nodes, called a pseudobulb. Once mature, the pseudobulb produces a long, slender, single shoot inflorescence with three to five grass-like leaves. The slender inflorescences range from one to five feet tall and bear up to 60 tiny orchid flowers.

The naturalized orchid plants can spread by airborne seeds and pseudobulbs moved in mulch and soil. The northern part of its native range has colder temperatures than Florida. This suggests the spread of the orchid throughout Florida and further north is likely to occur.

By growing this plant, you might be growing a future menace to your garden. Pull it out by hand to help to prevent it from spreading. You may need to remove more plants as they sprout up.



Mid October, Sanibel, Florida



Early September, Lee County, Florida





Late September, Lee County, Florida



Mid October, Sanibel, Florida



Early November, Lee County, Florida



Mid September, Lee County, Florida



E. Pinkerton





Late September, Fort Myers, Florida



Late September, Fort Myers, Florida

### References

Pemberton, Bob., et al. [A Newly Naturalized Orchid Found in Florida](#). June 2008. American Orchid Society, Coral Gables, Florida

Pemberton, Bob., Koptur, Suzanne. Alien Terrestrial Orchid, *Eulophia Graminea*, Invades Miami

Weaver, R.E. and Anderson, P.J. 2009. [Botany Section](#). Tri-Ology. FDACS, Tallahassee, Florida

### Useful Links

[Prohibited Plants of Lee County](#)

[Two-Leaf Nightshade](#)

[Air Potato YouTube](#)

[Australian Pine YouTube](#)

[Brazilian Pepper YouTube](#)

[Railroad Vine YouTube](#)

This fact sheet was reviewed by Robert Pemberton, Entomologist-Botanist; Karen Headlee, Lee County Extension.

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