

## ORCHIDACEAE

### **Renanthera imschootiana** Rolfe

*Common English name* : Red Vanda.

*Trade name* : Red Vanda.

*Distribution* : INDIA: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram; S. CHINA; MYANMAR; LAOS and VIETNAM.

*Habitat* : Grows as an epiphyte on tree trunks at altitudes ranging from 1000-2000 m, preferably in sunny areas. In India, it is distributed in the areas receiving moderate to high rainfall of ca 250 cm.

*Fl.*: May - July.

*Population status / Cause for RET* : Critically Endangered due to indiscriminate collection and destruction of habitat. Also introduced in the National Orchidaria of Botanical Survey of India at Shillong and Yercaud. They are also cultivated in several private/public orchid nurseries and botanic gardens in India. This is a highly desirable species in breeding works and already parented many lovely hybrids.



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Photo Courtesy: C. Sathish Kumar

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*Description* : Stems woody, up to 90 cm high. Leaves oblong, 10 × 1.5 cm, bilobed at apex, deep green. Inflorescence up to 30 cm long, horizontally spreading, 15-30-flowered. Flowers bright red, ca 5 cm in diam.; dorsal sepal linear-lanceolate, 20 × 4 mm, lateral sepal 25-30 × 15-20 mm, elliptic-ovate, clawed, divergent; petals spatulate, 14 × 2 mm; lip sessile, ca 5 mm long, 3 lobed with short spur, bright red.

*Fl. & Fr.* : March - September.

*Parts used commercially* : Flowers. Spectacular, long lasting orange-red flowers of *R. imschootiana* is highly valued in horticulture as an ornamental. It is traded mostly in local markets. Arunachal Pradesh State Forest Research Institute has established Orchid Research Centre at Tipi in West Kameng District for conservation and cultivation of rare and ornamental native orchids. This institution is selling Orchids at subsidized rates. Three months to 1-year old seedlings of *R. imschootiana* is sold for Rs. 30/- and 2-years old plant with flowering is sold for Rs. 60/-.

*Legal* : Listed in Appendix I of CITES. Also included in Negative List of Exports and 'Schedule VI' of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 of India.

*References* :

Jain, S.K. & A.R.K. Sastry (1980). Threatened Plants of India. A State-of-the Art Report. P. 35.

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Nayar, M.P. & A.R.K. Sastry (1990). Red Data Book of Indian Plants. Vol. 1, p. 278.

Selvam, A.B.D. (2012). Pharmacognosy of Negative Listed Plants. Pp. 194-203.

Walter, K.S. & H.J. Gillett (1998). 1997 IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants. P. 721.