

EULOPHIA GRAMINEA LINDL. - ORCHIDS AS INVASIVE WEED

Eulophia graminea Lindl. is a terrestrial orchid native to Asia that was first discovered as a new invader in the US in 2007 growing in mulched landscape in south Miami. Mature plants have large pseudobulbs whereas smaller plants may have smaller pseudobulbs and numerous root attachments, making them more difficult to extract. Leaves are narrow and flowers form in tall panicles and are green with brownish purple venation with a rose purple marking on the lip. The fruit is a capsule approximately 3 cm in length. Plants grow to a height of one metre and are hardy.

E. graminea forms a dense monoculture and has rapidly spread to thirteen counties in Florida. Although believed to have originally been spread by mulch, *E. graminea* is now found in rockland hammock and pine rockland habitats in the Florida Keys, and maritime hammock, pine flatwood, coastal strand, and cypress strand on the mainland; it has been found growing in rock, sand, mulch and bare earth.

E. graminea is sometimes called “The Beautiful Crown Orchid” or Mei Guan Lan in Chinese. Originally found in tropical and subtropical parts of Asia, including Pakistan, India, Nepal, southern China, and the Ryuku Islands south of Japan, it grows in grasslands, beaches, and other open habitats.

Eulophia is a genus of approximately 165 species of orchids. It was first described by John Lindley in 1821. The name "Eulophia" was derived from the Greek words "eu" (well) and "lophos" (plume), referring to the crested ridges of the labellum (lip) in most species. ■

