



Rare Orchids in India

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Why in News

Recently, two **rare orchid species** i.e. **Tiger orchids** (*Grammatophyllum speciosum*) and **Ground orchids** (*Eulophia obtusa*) have been found to be blooming in different parts of the country after a gap of many years.

Key Points

- **Tiger Orchid:**



- **Scientific Name:** *Grammatophyllum speciosum*
- **Characteristics:** It has **large and resplendent flowers** which resemble the tiger skin.

It flowers in **alternate years** and remains in bloom for about a month.
- **Geographical Distribution:** These epiphytic plants are **not native to India**, and are **endemic to southeast Asia** i.e. Indonesia and Philippines.
 - An **epiphyte** grows on the surface of a plant and derives its moisture and nutrients from the air, rain, water or from debris accumulating around it.
 - It is found to be in full bloom at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) Kerala, where it was introduced in the 1990s.

- **Ground Orchid:**



- **Scientific Name:** Eulophia obtusa
- **Rediscovery:** It has been rediscovered in **Dudhwa Tiger Reserve**, Uttar Pradesh after 118 years.
It was last recorded in Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh in 1902.
- **Geographical Distribution:** The species is originally from **Uttarakhand**.
It was collected by botanists from Gangetic plains but there have been no sightings in the past 100 years. In 2008, the plant species was sighted in Bangladesh for the first time.
- **Characteristics:** It has white flowers and bright pink hues.
- **Protection Status:** Listed as “**critically endangered**” in the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** Red List of endangered species.

Source: TH