

## Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*)

### Status

Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid is listed as an endangered species and, along with its habitat, receives protection in Ontario under the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* (ESA) and in Canada under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). Protection prohibits actions such as killing, harming, possessing, selling or trading of the plant.

### Description

Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid is a perennial orchid generally found in mesic (moist) prairie and old fields. This tall orchid (0.5 to 1.0 metre) has a spike of 10 to 40 white flowers, each with a fringed petal and long spur. Lanceolate leaves are arranged alternately up the stem. Typically, this species takes three to seven years to reach maturity and in Ontario, flowers generally bloom from June 25 to July 20.<sup>i</sup>

### Distribution

Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid occurs from Maine south to Louisiana, and westward to Iowa in the United States. In Canada, Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid occurs naturally in southern Ontario, with the most concentrated occurrences in Lambton and Essex Counties.<sup>ii</sup>

### Habitat

Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid is predominately found in fens (dominated by sedges), mesic (moist) prairies and old field habitat.



<sup>i</sup> COSEWIC 2003. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid *Platanthera leucophaea* in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vi + 27 pp.

<sup>ii</sup> COSEWIC 2003. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid *Platanthera leucophaea* in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vi + 27 pp.