

Summer Lady's Tresses

Regno: flora

Peatbogs

 [spyranthes.jpg](#) [1]

Summer Lady's Tresses - *Spiranthes aestivalis*

A curious and rather inconspicuous orchid, up to thirty centimetres tall, with three or four fleshy spindle-shaped roots. The floral scape is slender and rather frail, surrounded at the base by a few long linear leaves.

Further, small scale-like leaves more or less regularly spaced occur along the scape.

The inflorescence is characteristic and very original because of the spiral arrangement of the flowers. The flowers, unusually small for an orchid, are white with greenish hues and pleasantly perfumed.

Spiranthes aestivalis is a rare and protected plant which only grows in peat meadows.

In Italy it is only found in a few suitable habitats in the Alps, the Po areas, Tuscany, the Marche and Sardinia.

It does occur, but is rare, on the Sphagnum bogs at Sibolla but, like other orchids, it may be absent in some years.

Summer Lady's Tresses flowers in July, so it should not be mistaken for the similar and more common Autumn Lady's Tresses (*Spiranthes spiralis*) which flowers from September to November and is widespread all over Italy.

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Links:

[1] <http://zoneumidetoscane.it/sites/default/files/spyranthes.jpg>