



# The Herb Society of America

## Promising Plants Profiles

### ***Bletilla striata* 'Variegata'**

syn. *Bletia hyacinthina*, *Bletilla hyacinthina*

**Genus:** *Bletilla*

**Specific Epithet:** *striata*

**Cultivar Name:** 'Variegata'

**Common Name:** variegated Chinese orchid

**Family:** Orchidaceae

**Flower Color:** purple/magenta

**Form:** deciduous terrestrial orchid

**Hardiness Zone:** 6-7

**Height:** 1-2'

**Soil:** well-drained, rich, loamy soil with added leaf mold

**Sun:** shade or partial shade

**Uses:** ornamental, medicinal\*

**Parts Used:** pseudobulbs



"This hardy orchid is a true workhorse in the garden and can be grown as cold as Zone 6. Placed in a shady to partly shady area, it will naturalize into a swath of architecturally shaped foliage and early in the growing season will reward you each year with exotic purple orchids reminiscent of the tender *Cattleya* type bloom. This plant thrives in well-drained, rich, loamy soil with added leaf mold and is easily propagated by division early in spring.

The variegated form of this medicinal herb has broad pleated sword-shaped leaves that are brilliantly edged with white and can reach a foot and a half long, giving interest in the garden long after the flowers have faded. You can also find pale pink, white and even yellow flowering forms of this orchid.

This East Asian native terrestrial orchid is very important in traditional Chinese medicine. The pseudobulbs, just below the ground, have been used internally for hemorrhage of the lungs or stomach, uterine bleeding and nosebleeds and externally for burns, bleeding injuries, abscesses and sores." – Scott Kresge, Promising Plants Presentation, 2005

\* Note: Toxicity has been reported due to frequent or large doses.

**Plant Source:** Wayside Gardens - Hodges, SC (available in spring only)

Photo by Scott Kresge

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