

Carnivorous Plant Hunt

Carnivorous plants usually live in wet environments such as wetlands or swamps. Their natural habitat lacks some of the essential nutrients that they need to live. Over time, some plants living in those nutrient-poor soils evolved to get their nutrients from insects.

Visit the **Children's Garden Soggy Bog** and the **Native Bog Garden** to find the following carnivorous plants native to the Southeastern U.S.:**

- **Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia*)** – Pitcher plants are aptly named because their leaves are shaped like tall, cone-shaped pitchers and hold fluid. Gently peek inside one and look for bug victims.
- **Venus fly traps (*Dionaea muscipula*)** – These tricky plants move to trap and digest their prey, which are usually small insects like beetles, ants and flies. Notice how some of them are reddish in color to attract insects and if you look closely enough, you may even see the small trigger hairs inside the traps that signal the traps to close around an insect.
- **Sundews (*Drosera*)** – Look closely at these sparkling beauties. Notice how their leaves are covered with hairs. On the end of each hair is sticky glue like liquid that looks like sweet drops of nectar. Can you find small insects trapped in the sticky liquid?

Visit the **Fuqua Orchid Center High Elevation House** and **Orchid Display House** to find the following tropical carnivorous plants:

- **Nepenthes** – This gigantic carnivore eats many insects and has even been known to eat small mammals like rats! Notice how the Nepenthes pitcher is shaped like a cup. People have been known to use the Nepenthes to carry water and to even cook rice!
- **Heliamphora** – Native to the Tepuis, Heliamphora are sometimes referred to as sun pitchers. These carnivores use nectar to attract insects to a spoon like structure on the upper portion of the leaf.
- **Brocchinia** – In the Bromeliad family, these carnivores create a cup in the axle of their leaves that holds acidic water. This cup is the part of the plant that traps and digests insects. To find them, look in the Tepuis area in the High Elevation House. Note: not all plants in the Brocchinia family are carnivorous.

***Please note that the outdoor carnivorous plant collections are dormant during the cold winter months. If you are interested in native carnivores, visit the Garden May through October.*

