



CARNIVOROUS PLANTS 101



PINGUICULA If you want to fill a kitchen window or tiny bathroom ledge, go for *pinguicula*, rosette-style plants that catch insects on their sticky leaves. They don't mind drying out between waterings and, in fact, enjoy being overlooked in the winter.



SARRACENIA Perfect for a sunny spot outdoors, *sarracenia* are tall, slender trumpets that catch flies, beetles, and other large-fliers in their conical tubes. They live naturally in bogs and are happiest in sitting water.



NEPENTHES VENTRATA If you've got a shaded patio, look for *nepenthes ventrata* and *nepenthes alata*, which grow large, liquid-filled cups that hang heavy, awaiting victims.



DROSERA For a spot with lots of bright sunshine, choose *drosera*, which have sticky arms that look like squid tentacles and seize more mosquitoes, moths, and flies than you can imagine. They grow best sitting in water.



DIONAEA Better known as Venus' flytraps, *dionaea* also like direct light and a home in water. Their "jaws" snap shut, trapping anything that dares cross their path.

feed me, seymour

MAKE A BUG-KILLING GARDEN WITH CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

IT'S THAT TIME of year again—summer soirée weather is finally here. Unfortunately, my skin may as well be a neon "all-you-can-eat buffet" sign for mosquitoes, but I keep bugs at bay with a uniquely green solution: carnivorous plants. Not only are they freakishly beautiful, surprisingly affordable, and relatively easy to care for, but this family of flora also ingests insects, helping to keep your arms from becoming a game of Connect the Dots. Depending on how buggy your home or yard is, a few of nature's coolest carnivores might not leave you bite-free, but you'll certainly see a difference. To buy your own crop of non-vegetarian vegetation, visit local nurseries, major hardware stores, or even carnivorous-plant club meetings (find one near you at sarracenia.com/faq/faq6100.html). The ones featured here grow beautifully inside or out, and if your thumbs show any trace of green, you can be successful with them. Read on for my tips.

1. Pick the plant family that's right for you (see above).
2. Don't use potting soil. Try peat (partially decayed vegetation found in bogs), sand, sphagnum moss, perlite (volcanic glass), or a combination of the four.
3. Use only purified water (distilled, reverse-osmosis-filtered, or rain water). For plants that need to be constantly wet, keep their pots in a tray filled with water.
4. Carnivorous plants grow naturally in marshy areas where the soil lacks nutrients, which is why they eat bugs. Don't feed them hamburger or any other protein. Whether they are indoors or out, they'll catch their own meals.
5. Read up. If your plant comes without a care card, there are hundreds of online forums, books, and local clubs that can provide new growers with information and answers. [MEGAN O. ANDERSEN]