

# UCBG Carnivorous Plants Care Sheet



- **WATER:** these are swamp plants. Keep the pot in at least 1 inch pure water at all times. Pure water is distilled water or EBMUD or Hetchy water (if Bay Area).
- **SUN:** full sun (at least 5 hours per day)
- **SOIL:** 3 parts peat/1 part perlite (or ½ part perlite + ½ part sand)
- **HARDINESS:** tolerate winter freezes
- **NEVER** use pesticides or fertilizers on these plants - they will die!
- **NEVER** let these plants dry out - this is the most common way to lose your plant.
- **PLANTING SUGGESTIONS:** American Pitcher Plants, Sundews and Venus Flytraps may share one large pot, as they grow in similar conditions.
- **REFERENCES:** The Savage Garden by Peter D'Amato (sold in UC Botanical Garden Shop) or the International Carnivorous Plant Society website ([camivorousplants.org](http://camivorousplants.org))

## AMERICAN PITCHER PLANTS (*Sarracenia*):

There are eight species of *Sarracenia*, all of which require similar growing conditions (*Sarracenia alata*, *S. flava*, *S. leucophylla*, *S. minor*, *S. oreophila*, *S. psittacina*, *S. purpurea*, and *S. rubra*). All of these are propagated by the UC Botanical Garden.

All types of pitcher plants do best when grown outside, in full sun, in a saucer of pure (or EBMUD/Hetch Hetchy) water. Each plant can catch enough insects to provide all its nutrients. Although the pitcher plants have a winter dormancy, they often hold their pitchers in our mild Bay Area climate. In the fall, they often grow a set of (flat) winter leaves. In the spring, the flowers will appear often a month before new pitchers are produced. Early spring is the best time to remove unattractive pitchers. Keep water in saucer year-round. Repot into bigger pot when it has outgrown its current pot. If you choose to keep your plant inside, keep it inside, in bright sun, for only a limited period of time, as it needs the outdoors to catch sufficient bugs, receive proper sunlight, & experience a cold winter. Only transplant during the winter dormancy period once plant has outgrown its pot.

## SUNDEWS (*Drosera*):

Sundews are the easiest carnivorous plant to grow in the Bay Area. All types of sundews do best when grown outside, in full sun, in a saucer of pure (or EBMUD/Hetch Hetchy) water. Each plant can catch enough insects to provide all its nutrients. Some varieties of sundews have a winter dormancy (and die back), but also may hold onto their leaves all year. The flowers will appear in the spring or summer. These plants may reseed prolifically and produce many babies! Keep water in saucer year-round. Repot into bigger pot when it has outgrown its current pot. If you choose to keep your plants inside, keep it in bright sun, although all sundews grow very well and prefer outdoors. Easy growers include *Drosera capensis* (prolific grower), *Drosera binata* (prolific grower with forked branches) and *Drosera spatulata* (easy to grow indoors).

## VENUS FLYTRAP (*Dionaea muscipula*):

Flytraps do best when grown outside, in full sun, in a saucer of pure (or EBMUD) water. Each trap can catch enough insects to provide all its nutrients. However, each trap opens & closes only about 4 times. (So don't touch too much and wear them out before they eat a bug!) The natural cycle of this plant includes a winter dormancy (it will blacken & die back) - but it will regrow bigger & better each spring. Keep water in saucer year-round. Although the spring flowers are beautiful, your plant will grow more quickly if you remove flower stalks as they emerge from the base. Repot into bigger pot when it has outgrown its current pot. If you choose to keep your plant inside, keep it inside, in bright sun, for only a limited period of time, as it needs the outdoors to catch sufficient bugs, receive proper sunlight, & experience a cold winter. Both the flytrap cultivars 'B-52' and 'Red Dragon' ('Akai Ryu') sold at the UC Botanical Garden are propagated using tissue culture methods by UC Botanical Garden volunteer propagators.