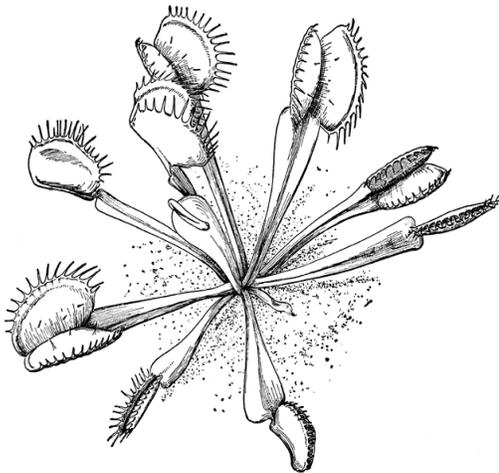


VENUS FLY TRAPS

The Venus flytrap or *Dionaea muscipula* is a carnivorous plant native to the subtropical wetlands of the East coast, North Carolina and South Carolina. They have adapted with traps that open and shut with a sweet secretion, hoping to capture small insects or arachnids. The traps are triggered by two tiny hairs within. When the hairs are triggered the trap shuts around its prey. These plants belong to the Droseraceae family and are closely related to sundew plants and *Aldrovanda vesiculosa*, or waterwheel plants. Venus flytraps were first described by colonial governor Arthur Dobbs, who wrote a letter to the English botanist Peter Collinson in 1760 who named it Fly Trap Sensitive. They typically grow as perennials along bogs or warm streams. They also need a dormancy period to grow successfully long term.



Latin Name: *Dionaea muscipula*

Type: Deciduous carnivorous plant

Soil: Nutrient poor soil

Size: 6" x 10"

Hardiness: Zone 8-10, tender perennial

Exposure: Direct sun

Growth Rate: Medium

Growth Habit: Spreading

Where should I plant my Venus flytrap?

Venus fly traps need full, direct sun to perform well. If you choose to grow your plants indoors, place them on a bright sunny windowsill somewhere they can receive direct light. Otherwise, placing plants outdoors in zones 8-10 is also acceptable. These plants also have a dormancy period and must receive a cold period to grow well. Here in the Pacific Northwest, Venus flytraps can be left outside if temperatures do not dip below 32 degrees. They grow exceptionally well during dormancy in unheated greenhouses or somewhere they can be protected from harsh elements. They appreciate a potting mixture of sphagnum moss, fine milled bark, perlite and sand at a ratio of 2:1. There are also carnivorous plant soil mixes currently available on the market.

How much water will my Venus flytrap need?

Venus flytraps need pure water, such as rainwater or distilled water to perform well. Filtered, tap, or bottled water can lead to salt build up in the plants root system and should be avoided if possible. These plants appreciate being watered from the bottom like African violets in water filled trays.

When should I fertilize my Venus flytrap?

If your Venus flytrap is going outdoors, then they are surely able to catch more than enough food to keep itself sustained. They do not need any additional nutrition. If you grow your plants indoors, however, they will occasionally need to be fed if they can't catch their own prey due to their environment. These plants need live prey to trigger the digestive process such as flies, arachnids or other small insects.

Are there any pests or diseases I should be aware of?

Venus flytraps are not susceptible to many pests or diseases; however, they could suffer from a few common houseplant ailments. These include aphids, fungus gnats, gray mold, or other cultural problems.