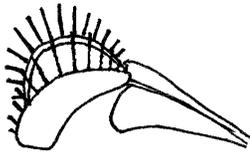


## What is a carnivorous plant?

A carnivorous plant is a plant that lures, captures, and digests insect prey. There are over 600 species of carnivorous plant worldwide, including about a dozen which grow natively in New England.

Carnivorous plants are found on every continent except Antarctica. They typically grow in nutrient-poor soil environments, such as sphagnum peat bogs. Capturing insects is actually an adaptation to these environments, allowing the plant to get nutrition which the soil lacks.

**Venus Flytrap**  
*Dionaea muscipula*



Native Range: North and South Carolina, USA

The Venus Flytrap is the most famous carnivorous plant. If an insect triggers the tiny hairs on the inside surface of the trap, the trap quickly closes. As the insect crawls around inside the closed trap, the hairs are further stimulated, signaling the plant to close completely and start digesting its prey.

**Cobra Lily**  
*Darlingtonia californica*



Native Range: Northern California and Oregon, USA

The Cobra Lily is a pitcher-type plant. It has a small entrance on the underside of its bulbous “head”. Insects are confused by the clear windows on the top of the head, thinking they are exits from the trap. When they climb towards them, however, they are actually lured further into the pitcher.

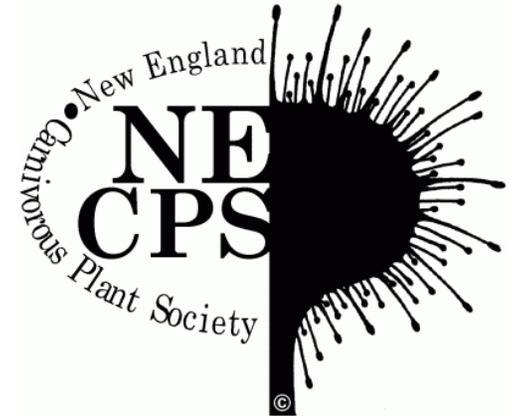
The New England Carnivorous Plant Society (NECPS) holds meetings on the second Saturday of every month at the Roger Williams Botanical Center. New members are always welcome and we encourage you to join us!

For more information, please visit our website at

[www.NECPS.org](http://www.NECPS.org)

This booklet may be reproduced for educational purposes only. Otherwise, no part of it may be reproduced without the permission of the NECPS.

# A Field Guide to CARNIVOROUS PLANTS



Brought to you by the New England  
Carnivorous Plant Society

## North American Pitcher Plant

*Sarracenia* spp.



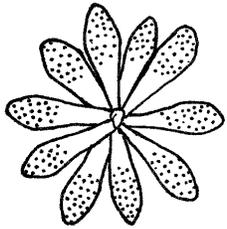
Native Range: Canada through the Gulf Coast

North American Pitcher Plants lure their prey with nectar. As the insects drink the nectar, they are led further into the pitcher by downward-pointing hairs. Eventually, the insect slips and falls into the trap.

*One species is native to New England!*

## Sundew

*Drosera* spp.



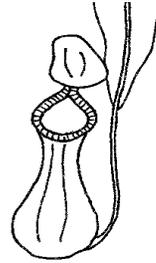
Native Range: Worldwide

Sundews are a large and diverse group of carnivorous plants, with some species as large as a foot high, and others smaller than a dime. Tiny follicles on the leaves secrete a clear, dew-like substance. This substance appears to insects to be water or nectar, but is actually a sticky enzyme which ensnares the prey and digests it.

*3 species are native to New England!*

## Tropical Pitcher Plant

*Nepenthes* spp.

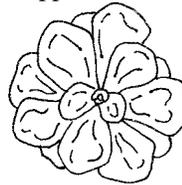


Native Range: Southeast Asia; the Indian Ocean Basin

Tropical Pitcher Plants grow as vines. Some can become large enough to capture small rodents and reptiles. Their traps grow off a tendril at the tip of their leaves.

## Butterwort

*Pinguicula* spp.



Native Range: Worldwide

Butterworts lure and capture their prey via sticky mucilage secreted by the leaves.

## Albany Pitcher Plant

*Cephalotus follicularis*



Native Range: Australia

This small, slipper-shaped pitcher grows close to the ground, capturing crawling insects.

## Sun Pitcher

*Heliamphora* spp.

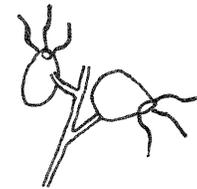


Native Range: South America

The Sun Pitchers feature a “nectar spoon” above their traps. Insects are lured by the secreted nectar, and are captured by the downward-pointing hairs lining the traps.

## Bladderwort

*Utricularia* spp.



Native Range: Worldwide

Bladderworts are the largest group of carnivorous plants, with over 200 species worldwide. Their tiny traps capture prey such as mosquito larvae. When an insect touches the hairs on the outside of the trap, the trap quickly sucks in the prey. *Several species are native to New England!*