

Carnivorous Plants

Most plants gather nutrients directly from the soil, but some plants can survive in low-nutrient habitats. Carnivorous plants live in areas with abundant sun and water, but with low levels of vital nitrogen in the soil. They have an incredible adaptation: the ability to trap and digest insects and small animals. Their leaves attract insects with bright colors and sweet nectar, once the insects arrive, the plants trap them in several ways:



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Pitfall traps, such as pitcher plants, trap things in deep slippery pools filled with digestive enzymes.



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Adhesive traps, such as sundews, have leaves with glands on the ends of stalks that have a sticky substance to grab small insects.



Snap traps, such as the Venus flytrap, have leaves that snap shut when trigger hairs are touched more than once.



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Suction traps, such as bladderworts, have empty bladders covered by trap doors. When an insect touches the door, they are sucked into the bladder and digested.



Photo: Janet Utech



Photo: Blair Bazarich

Tropical pitcher plant
Nepenthes species



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Butterwort
Pinguicula species



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Sundew
Drosera species



Photo: Damon Collingsworth

Bladderwort
Utricularia species

For more information on carnivorous plants, visit: www.californiacarnivores.com

PLANTS



Photo: Marianne Hale

Reed palm
Chamaedorea seifrizii



Photo: Marianne Hale

Lady palm
Rhapis excelsa



Photo: Marianne Hale

Kentia palm
Howea forsterana



Photo: Marianne Hale

Orchids *Various species*



Photo: Janet Utech



Photo: Janet Utech



Photo: Janet Utech



Photo: Marianne Hale

Leather leaf fern
Rumohra adiantiformis



Photo: Janet Utech

Mother fern
Asplenium bulbiferum



Photo: Marianne Hale

Bronze anthurium
Anthurium superbum



Photo: Marianne Hale

Bromeliad *Various species*



Photo: Marianne Hale



Photo: Janet Utech



Photo: Janet Utech

Aerial Roots

Roots that form above ground are called “aerial roots” and have many important functions to help plants survive. If you look closely, you’ll be able to see several examples of aerial roots inside this building.

On woody trees and vines, such as the one pictured to the right, they can function as supports, helping to anchor the plant. Other aerial roots can help absorb moisture and nutrients. This allows plants, such as orchids, to live off of the forest floor on other plants and away from the fierce competition for space and sunlight. Some plants that live in wet marshes and bogs have underground roots but they need aerial roots to help with air exchange.



Aerial root of orchid



Variegated sweet flag
Acorus gramineus 'Variegatus'



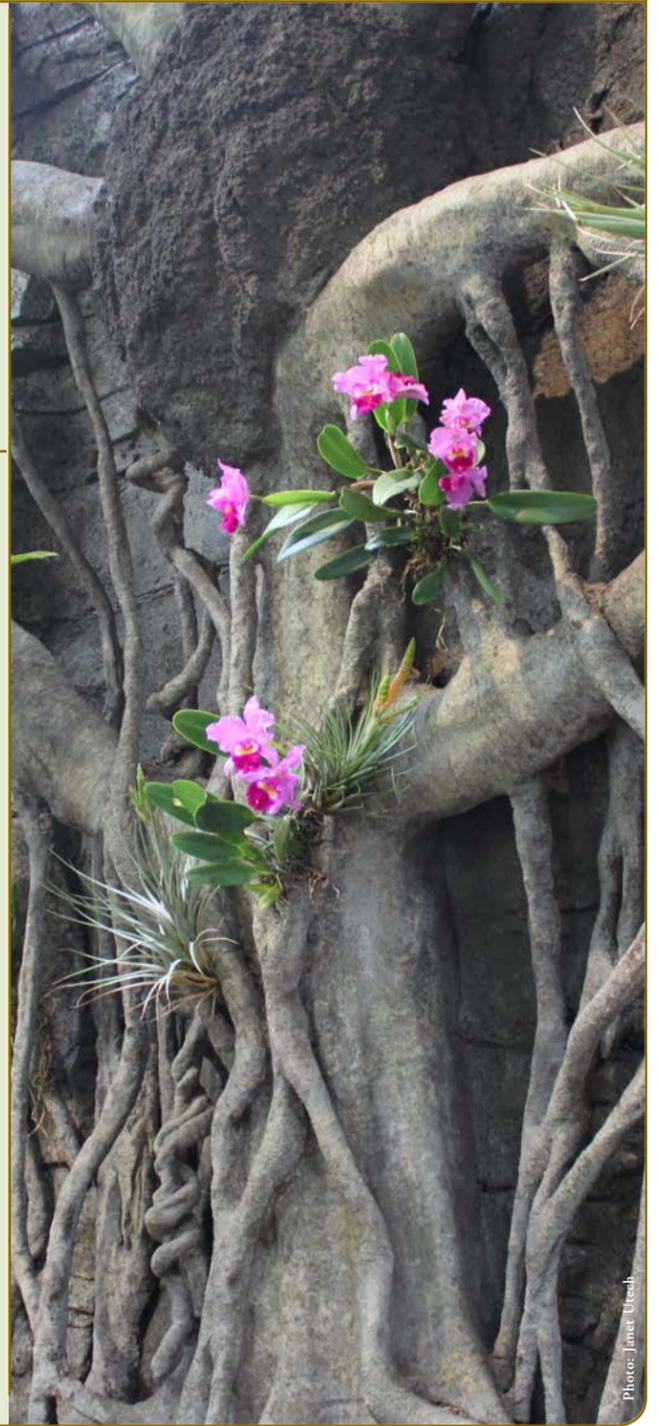
Aerial root of ficus alii
Dendrobium species



Strangler fig (repilca)



Tillandsia



PLANTS



Swiss cheese plant
Monstera adansonii



Split-leaf philodendron
Monstera selloum



Brazilian snow
Ctenanthe lubbersiana



Variegated corn plant
Dracaena fragrans



Ficus tree
Ficus benjamina



Ficus
Ficus alii



Triangle ficus
Ficus triangularis



Rubber tree
ficus elastica tricolor