

A REWARDING HOBBY

by

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I have been studying and cultivating CP for a few years, collecting as many species as I have room for in my 55, 30 and 10 gallon terrariums, and a couple of goldfish bowls for the aquatic *Utricularia*. In addition, I have a half dozen mini-terrariums for the enchanting pygmy sundews. It is a most rewarding hobby and a topic of conversation with anyone, especially children who love to see the Venus-fly-traps do their thing!

Although I am an amateur grower of CP, I hope that some of the things I have observed may benefit other growers. For those who grow aquatic *Utricularia* or *Aldrovanda*, you may find that putting water into a fishbowl or aquarium a difficult task especially with a 2 inch layer of soft peat moss sitting on the bottom. I float a sponge in one corner and pour the water gently in a steady stream over the sponge which fills the tank without disturbing the peat moss layer.

Last winter, I used *Drosera rotundifolia* hibernaculum 'leaf buds' for propagation of this plant. The tiny buds or leaves act like pygmy gemmae. They grew very fast when placed under live sphagnum moss. The resulting plants were healthy and vigorous, forming hibernaculum the following fall. The parent plant suffered no harm by the removal of a row of leaf buds.

The tiny pygmy sundews are incredibly pretty and fascinating. I grow mine under lights about 3" from the plants for 16 hours in summer and 8 or less hours during the winter. Plants which are 18" or more from the lights will not develop their sweet traps. An easy pygmy to grow is 'Lake Badgerup'. One day last summer, I fed my plant a minute crumb of a *Tubifex* worm and if I winked, I would have missed the action for the speedy tentacle movement was astounding, perhaps even surpassing the speed of *D.*

burmanii. In order to observe this, use a magnifying lens of about 20x and give the plant about 16 hours of light.

D. spathulata seems to lose its appetite when given only 8 hours of artificial light per day. There is no noticeable leaf movement when digesting its meal.

Another tip for the *D. adela* and *D. indica* lover is that a large surface area is needed for *D. adela* since this plant propagates itself naturally from roots. Old crowns are constantly being replaced with new ones which are always growing up to the surface. The roaming *D. indica*, a difficult species, would also benefit from a wide container for whenever the plant falls to the moss it roots, enabling it to trail along as if growing outside.

I agree with Michael Homick who gave advice on cooling seeds in the refrigerator. This treatment seems to enhance germination among tropical *Drosera* such as *D. indica* and *D. glabripes*.

I licked the fungus blues! Instead of risking poisoning myself and my plants, I simply spray the surface of my moss with rainwater, soaking the surface twice weekly but being careful not to wet the *Drosera* or *Pinguicula*. It works! All the white fungal growth disappears the next day. Perhaps the fungus cannot cope with the soaking. One problem is fungus on the surface of large seed, such as *Byblis gigantea*, which needs to be rotated once a day to keep fungus off.

I have read in Adrian Slack's book, *Carnivorous Plants*, about the problem with keeping *Pinguicula caerulea* alive for more than a year. I am growing mine since the spring of 1981. They grow under two lamp grow-lights with an 8-hour cycle in winter and 16 hours during the summer and are kept warm under ambient room temperature all year long. I trim back the leaves with a clean razor blade

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when they start to die and rot during the winter. They are cut back very gently down to a tight ball. This is done when the plant stops growing. After a month or so, new leaves and flowers emerge from the sides of the ball. All of my *P. caerulea* have multiple crowns and are flourishing well.

Drosera capensis is one of the most charming and beautiful of the Droseras. They are a hardy lot and adapt easily to different conditions. Since my plants all live together, tropicals with the temperate species, they all receive the same amount of humidity during the winter.

There are many bogs in my area full of CP. I have explored some of them, finding the pearl-like bladders of *Utricularia macrorhiza* shimmering in the sunlight. Last spring I discovered a clear, cool spring nearby in the woods which

streamed out into a clearing. I dammed up the area with logs and mud, digging out a lot of earth and grass to form a pond. I placed some *U. purpurea* and *U. gibba* in the water and they grew like weeds. By summer's end, large clumps could be seen growing in every direction. Also, leopard frogs, too, found a home there. I will plant some *S. purpurea* and various *Drosera* around the pond when the moss takes over. The water is neutral in pH.

I like to end this note with a beautiful picture of *S. purpurea* which I saw in an exotic flower book which was mistakenly labelled as *S. flava*. There was a nice ground covering of *U. pubescens*. The book described briefly what gorgeous flowers the plant had. The supposed flowers were merely the deadly crimson pitchers of the pitcher plant.

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Send coin or check to:

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Carnivorous Supplies, P.O. Box 179, Albion Park, N.S.W. 2527 AUSTRALIA (TS) *Drosera*, *Utricularia*, *Sarracenia*, *Pinguicula*. Also CP seeds. Please send 2 international postal coupons for list. (W) Unusual species (seed only) Please send list of available seed.

Michael Hallett (25 Grayson Rd., Epping, 2121, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA) (S) *D. adelae*, *D. arcturi*,

D. 'Bannister', *D. regia*, *U. lateriflora*, *U. uliginosa*, plus many other native Aust. CP. (WB) Any *Heliamphora*, *Aldrovanda*, *Pinguicula*.

Joachim Nerz (Arndtstr. 2, 7030 Boblingen, WEST GERMANY). (WTB) *Drosera falconeri* (I've *Heliamphora minor* or other species to exchange for it), *N. clipeata*, *Biovularia*.

Bruce Pierson P.O. Box 179, Albion Park, N.S.W. 2527 AUSTRALIA, Has plants and seeds for sale and swap. Interested in rare or unusual plants and seeds. (W) Seeds of *Heliamphora*, *Genlesia*, *Roridula dentata*, or anything rare or unusual.

Jeff Williams (4407 Peridot, Friendswood, TX 77546) (TS) 21 varieties of *Sarracenia* (S) *D. spatulata Kansai*, *D. burmanni*, *D. capensis*, *D. intermedia*, *U. fibrosa*, and *U. longifolia*; (TB) *Nepenthes cuttings* (B) *Cephalotus*, *Byblis*.

Note: All individuals or organizations selling, trading or buying CP are advised to be cognizant of certain restrictions under the U.S. ESA and international CITES for certain species (see editorial, CPN 12 3, 1983).