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Marietta, GA 30062

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## Review of Recent Literature

# A NEW FAMILY OF CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

by J.A. Mazrimas

Givnish, T.J., E.L. Burkhardt,  
R.E. Happel, and J.D. Weintraub.

Carnivory in the Bromeliad *Brocchinia reducta*, with a cost/benefit model for the general restriction of carnivorous plants to sunny, moist, nutrient-poor habitats.

The American Naturalist 124, No. 4:  
479-497 1984

What really is a carnivorous plant? The authors of this paper propose a two part definition which is as follows:

The plant must be "able to absorb nutrients from dead animals juxtaposed to its surfaces, and thereby obtain some increment to fitness in terms of increased

growth, chance of survival, pollen production, or seed set.

Second, the plant must have some unequivocal adaptation or resource allocation whose primary result is the active attraction, capture, and/or digestion of prey."

For some time, observers of the tropical forest canopy noticed the cup-like structure (called a tank) of epiphytic bromeliads which provide the opportunity to store not only water but many forms of animal life which accidentally fall in and drown and eventually decay into simple nutrients. The question is whether these plants are benefiting by this passive capture which is the subject of this paper.