

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SAN DIEGO CARNIVOROUS PLANT SOCIETY

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In the heart of San Diego's beautiful and historic Balboa Park, San Diego County's carnivorous plant enthusiasts gather to exchange thoughts, ideas, and above all, plants. Each meeting, hundreds of carnivorous plants of several varieties can be found, grown by SDCPS members in San Diego's mild climate.

Established in 2013, The San Diego Carnivorous Plant Society has quickly grown to several dozen regular members of various backgrounds and experience, along with curious newcomers always stopping in for a look. With a strong start with visits by carnivorous plant luminaries such as California Carnivores' Damon Collinsworth, the SDCPS has formed a close community of like-minded enthusiasts. The bimonthly meetings consist of casual socialization among members, where carnivores are displayed by proud growers and exchanged to grow gardens, and a more formal presentation. Topics for these presentations always vary widely, from home cultivation tips, to botanical expeditions, to carnivorous plant-themed art.

The SDCPS also has a strong dedication to community outreach outside of scheduled meetings, such as reaching out to local schools for presentations and events and participating in Balboa Park public events like their annual Fiesta Botanica and Halloween Family Day, all with the goal of educating the public on the biology, cultivation, and conservation of these wonderful plants. In thanks for being its host, the SDCPS has left a permanent mark on Balboa Park in the form of a carnivorous plant bog built within the Balboa Park Botanical Garden. Established by SDCPS members' plants and maintained by the society, the garden displays the wide diversity of carnivorous plants with a goal of educating visitors on the ecology and physiology of carnivorous plants. It is always a centerpiece of visitors of the Botanical Garden.

Every summer the SDCPS holds its centerpiece event at Balboa Park, the annual SDCPS Show and Sale. This is an all-day event of botanical displays, show competitions, public plant sale, educational outreach, and children's activities. Plants sold at the show come from the personal gardens of SDCPS members, along with guest vendors such as carnivorous plant nurseries Predatory Plants and Xtrem Plants. This allows for a very wide variety of plants sold that day, a sight that always surprises and delights visitors unfamiliar with the variety of carnivorous plants. SDCPS members host booths at the show with poster displays, live plant examples, presentations with plant dissections, and children's activities including themed arts and crafts and scavenger hunts, all to educate the day's visitors on the carnivorous plants they will see. This event grows every year, with the turnout in 2019 easily the biggest yet.

The SDCPS recently partnered with her sister California carnivorous plant societies, the Bay Area Carnivorous Plant Society and the Los Angeles Carnivorous Plant Society, to help organize the 2018 International Carnivorous Plant Society Conference that was held in Santa Rosa, California. Several local San Diego area members attended this conference. Members can also be found attending the LACPS bimonthly meetings, held off-sync with SDCPS meetings for easy attendance to both societies' meetings.

New members and visitors are always welcome at The San Diego Carnivorous Plant Society, so if you are ever in the area and want to talk carnivores, feel free to stop by for a visit. We love to connect with plant lovers all over the world. Updates on the ongoing activities of the San Diego Carnivorous Plant Society can be found online at [sandiegocarnivorousplantsociety.com](http://sandiegocarnivorousplantsociety.com), on Facebook, and on Instagram [@sdcarnivorousplantsociety](https://www.instagram.com/sdcarnivorousplantsociety).