

CASCADE CARNIVORES

CARNIVOROUS PLANT NURSERY



Tropical Pitcher Plant (Nepenthes)

The 5 Most Important Points for Growing Highland Nepenthes:

1) Most highland Nepenthes grow where it is constantly warm during the day, and cool at night. Daytime temps in the upper 60s to mid 70s should be the minimum year-round. Summer temps are fine into the 80s. Occasionally, they can take upper 80s to low 90s, but they won't like it. During weather like this, keep them out of direct sun, and mist them frequently. Nighttime temps should ideally be below 60, to as low as 50. If you can, place near a window. In the Pacific Northwest, our outside temps often drop below 60 even in the summer, with a few weeks of low 60 nights during mid to late August.

2) Place them near or over water, but not in water. It will rot their roots if they don't get some air circulation through the soil. That's why the mix we use is so 'fluffy'. Water whenever the top surface of the mix just starts to get dry, but don't ever let the mix dry out completely, as this is usually fatal. Water with pure water, distilled, RO-filtered or rain water all being good. Water until it pours out

the bottom of the pot, but let it flow through and drain away so air can get to the roots.

3) Good strong indirect light is perfect. If it does get direct sunlight, it should be cool (morning only) and you must provide extra humidity somehow: mist the foliage and traps, place water in the traps if needed, but always less than ½ full. Too much water can lead to early pitcher death. Also you can put long fiber sphagnum moss around the plant inside your terrarium and water that to provide extra humidity. I sometimes place a couple inches of large crushed rocks or aquarium gravel under the plant and keep the water level in that just below the bottom of the plant's pot.

4) You can feed the pitchers if you want to, your plant will grow faster for you if you do, but it is not necessary. It will grow if you provide good light, proper temperatures, humidity and pure water. If you do feed it, insects are good. I supplement the insects that my Neps catch naturally with crickets, mealworms, ants, or wasps. I will sometimes catch a 'yellow jacket' or other wasp in a jar; place the jar in the freezer for 10 minutes until the wasp is asleep (this doesn't hurt the insect) and then feed to the plant while it is still not moving. Be careful, they can't move right away, but they wake up pretty fast. They can sting while asleep. One such meal every 3 or 4 weeks is all the 'plant food' these plants need.

5) Never, ever feed any plant food or fertilizer to this or other carnivorous plants until you are an experienced grower, and know what you are doing and why, or you are following the instructions of an experienced grower. Fertilizers have the potential to do great harm to these plants. It may even kill them.

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