

Pietropaolo, J., Pietropaolo, P.: **Carnivorous Plants of the World**. - Timber Press, Portland 1996. 206 pp. Paperback US \$ 22.95. ISBN 0-88192-356-7.

Within minutes of receiving a review copy of *Carnivorous Plants of the World* I discovered just how useful it could be. The authors, expert nursery owners, wrote an authoritative and easy-to-read guide to the world of one of the most fascinating plant groups. Carnivorous plants themselves bring a captivating spirit of exotics and exceptionality to your home gardens while their undescending popularity still attracts new growers and fans. And this excellent book dealing with the private life of these delicate plants may be just your taste; much valuable information at the very reasonable price.

The volume is organized in two major sections, and consists of nine chapters covering all genera currently considered as carnivorous. The first six chapters inserted into the Section I are devoted to botanical assessments of particular groups of carnivorous plants. Each chapter provides specific information available on the plant history, natural environment, morphological description, trapping mechanism, list of species that comprise the genus, specific cultural requirements and propagation methods. General introductory comments on the plant carnivory, capturing insect prey and classification of these plants are followed by thorough reports about targeted plant species that belong to particular carnivorous groups. They include the Venus fly trap (*Dionaea muscipula*), pitcher plants (*Heliamphora* spp., *Sarracenia* spp., *Darlingtonia californica*, *Nepenthes* spp. and *Cephalotus follicularis*), sundews (*Byblis* spp., *Drosera* spp. and *Drosophyllum lusitanicum*), butterworts (*Pinguicula* spp.), and bladderworts (*Utricularia* spp., *Polypompholyx* spp., *Genlisea* spp. and *Aldrovanda vesiculosa*). Both newcomers and experienced enthusiasts will benefit from such comprehensive information assembled together in one volume on over 125 carnivorous plant species that are commercially available in a plant trade.

The Section II contains three important chapters that offer practical advice pertinent to all carnivorous plants on how to successfully grow, propagate and maintain them healthy. The chapter seven highlights accumulated information on culture conditions and nutrition requirements; not only the first-hand instructions on starting to cultivate for beginners, but also very useful hints of how to avoid occurring pitfalls for experienced growers are provided. The next chapter is aimed at keeping these plants healthy and vigorous by preventing them from pest infestation and disease onset according to the tested guidelines given by the authors. In the final chapter, up-to-date information on propagation and hybridization of these exquisite plants gathered from other growers is presented. Moreover, it offers the challenging opportunity for carnivorous plant propagation through tissue culture techniques. Very useful appendices listing carnivorous plant sources along with international carnivorous plant societies, and bringing comments how to deal with trading or exchanging plants are added to obtain your favourite carnivorous plant species and share information gained with others. A glossary of technical terms is included, too.

Carnivorous Plants of the World is the ideal book both for the general reader and for enthusiasts. The problems and approaches are set out in a clear and concise way, without recourse to jargon. 57 superb colour photographs and 63 black and white line drawings enhance the value of this landmark study. Besides its scientific contribution to the field it also attracts the wider public and, according to Pietropaolos' words, "provides you with information that will enable you to grow carnivorous plants successfully, and also to experiment on your own". The authors must be congratulated on their considerable efforts. There is no doubt that every laboratory or nursery working on carnivorous plants should have a copy of this book for reference. The exciting field of plant carnivory is hotter than ever.

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