

TPE Kids page

GULP!

Weird, hungry plants

Greens that bite back

Plants are usually on the bottom of the food chain. Cows eat grass. Insects eat nectar. Panda bears eat bamboo. But did you know there are a few plants that actually eat living creatures?

These are called carnivorous plants. Carnivorous means "meat eating." Plants usually absorb nutrients from the ground. But meat-eating plants grow in soil where there aren't enough nutrients. So God provides for them in another way — by allowing them to eat insects.

There are many kinds of meat-eating plants. Venus flytraps have hair-like growths that are triggered as an insect walks across them. When the trap is sprung, a hinged opening in the plant snaps shut, keeping the insect from escaping. The prey is then slowly digested.

Pitcher plants hold pools of sweet-smelling nectar that attract insects. But when they crawl to the slippery edge of the pitcher, they slide down into the liquid and are unable to escape.

Sundew plants are covered with a sticky substance that traps insects like flypaper.

Meat-eating plants use tricks to trap their prey. They often have nice smells, bright colors and pretty openings. But for the curious critter

that gets too close, these plants are bad news.

Temptation is that way. Satan tries to make sin look like the fun thing, the easy thing or the cool thing to do. But disobeying God always leads to big trouble.

"Sinners are trapped and caught by their own evil deeds" (Proverbs 5:22, CEV).

Thankfully, God provides a way of escape. The Bible says that when we face temptation, we can ask Him for help.

"When you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13, NIV).



JUST FOR laughs

What do Venus flytraps in Paris eat?
French flies.

What kind of plant is good at baseball?
A pitcher plant.



Try this!

With an adult's help, place a hard-boiled egg in a container of vinegar. Leave it for two or three days.

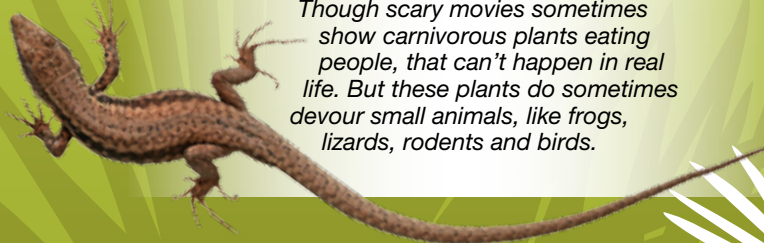
When you remove it, the egg will be soft and rubbery. It may even bounce. (Try it outside.)

What's going on? The acid in the vinegar breaks down the calcium carbonate that makes the shell hard. In a similar way, digestive acids break down food for carnivorous plants.



Did you know?

Though scary movies sometimes show carnivorous plants eating people, that can't happen in real life. But these plants do sometimes devour small animals, like frogs, lizards, rodents and birds.



Enter to win!

(Recommended for ages 4 and up with adult supervision.) Try growing your own meat-eating plants with this Carnivorous Creations home terrarium. Enter online by July 8 at tpe.ag.org or mail an entry postmarked on or before that date to Carnivorous Plant Kit Giveaway, Today's Pentecostal Evangelist, 1445 N. Boonville Avenue, Springfield, Mo. 65802. Include a daytime phone number. You must have a parent's permission to enter.



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