Carnivorous Plants

Carnivorous plants capture, kill, and digest animal/insect organisms. The majority of carnivorous plants use digestive enzymes to dissolve their prey. Venus flytraps, pitcher plants, and honeydews begin secreting digestive juices inside their leaves as soon as an insect is trapped. These enzymes don't harm the leaves, but break down the protein in the insect's body until it can be absorbed by the plant. Some carnivorous plants do not produce the enzymes themselves, but have bacteria living in their leaves that digest their prey. Much like the bacteria in the human intestines, these bacteria help the plant absorb nourishment while the plant in turn gives them a habitat to live in. Certain plants even use both digestive enzymes and bacteria to digest their food, just like the human digestive system. Carnivorous plants typically live in nutrient poor environments such as bogs, where sun light is limited. Since their soil quality is so poor they must supplement their diets with nutrients from the digested insects.

What if I don't have bugs?

Most carnivorous plants grow without consuming any insects, but they do grow and reproduce much faster when they get supplemental nutrients from their prey. If you choose to feed it, 1-2 bugs each month is sufficient but don't feed them anything other than insects.

The basic needs of a carnivorous plant:

Sunlight – they like a bright room or direct sunlight at least 4 hours a day, North or East windows are better than South and West windows where they may get too much light.
Water - distilled or reverse osmosis water only
Soil – Use nutrient poor soil such as peat moss, too rich of soil may cause death. Soil should hold moisture well.
Dormancy - Venus Fly Traps require a 3-4 month dormancy period

Do not touch – you should avoid touching a carnivorous plant as the oils in your skin has a bad effect on the plants.

If your plant has a lid, you may keep the lid off during the day, making sure the bedding/moss stays moist, and replace the lid at night. You may take it out of its terrarium for only a few hours at a time, making sure to spray it with distilled water and keep it moist to maintain humidity.

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