

# Pitcher Plant

*Sarracenia purpurea*

-The Pitcher Plant is an unmistakable plant of Northern Wisconsin's Sphagnum Bogs. It is one of just a small handful of carnivorous plants in Northern Wisconsin. The pitcher-like, heavily veined, red or green leaves are usually half filled with water; the flaring lips are lined with downward pointing bristles that help trap insects. The coloration, the veins, and the water are all used to entice insects into the plant. The downward pointing bristles and slippery inside surface are designed to make sure that the insects cannot escape.

-The area of Pitcher Plant that is wide is the area in which the insects or small crustaceans are trapped. After that animal is dead, acids created by the plant are secreted, and the animal is digested in the narrower area.

-The flower of the Pitcher Plant is extremely interesting. Its extremely flattened pistils give it an umbrella shape. Furthermore, the flower is on a separate stalk from the rest of the plant.

-Bogs are highly acidic places. Acidity retards the growth of fungi and bacteria. Fungi and bacteria are the agents of decomposition, which releases nitrogen. Nitrogen is essential for plant growth. Pitcher Plants grow in bogs and Pitcher Plants need nitrogen. Pitcher Plants carnivorous nature deals with this problem. They simply trap insects in their pitcher-like leaves and dissolve them with enzymes. They are so cool I wish that I would have invented them.

