



SCHOLASTIC

Vol. 69 No. 6 ISSN 0736-055X

March 2013 • Edition 2

News

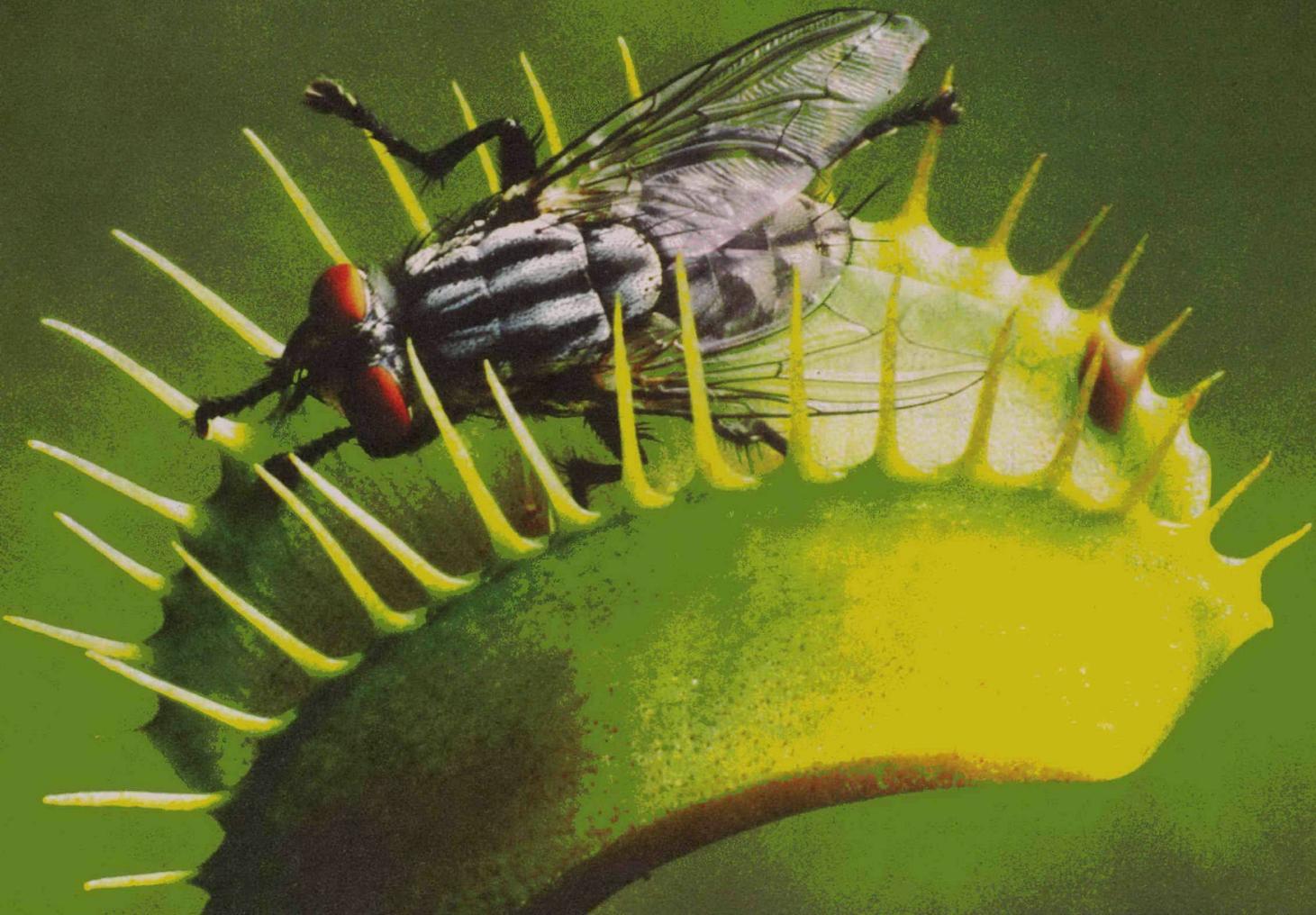
My Weekly Reader™

Go to www.scholastic.com/sn2
for plant videos and
Common Core activities.



Extreme Plants

Plants don't need much. They need water, sunlight, and nutrients from the soil. If a plant can't get all these things, it has to find extreme ways to survive. This fly doesn't know it, but it's about to be lunch—for a plant!





This Venus flytrap caught a yellow jacket.

Plant Survivors

Not every habitat is perfect for plants. Some habitats are dry or dark, while others have poor soil. But there are plants that can survive in these places. Here's how they get what they need.

Killer Plants

In bogs and swamps, the soil is poor. It does not have many **nutrients**, which are important vitamins and minerals. Here, some plants need to get their nutrients from something else, so they eat insects and other small animals! These plants are **carnivorous**.

A sundew plant has many drops of sticky liquid. A small animal, like an insect, gets stuck on the drops. The sundew wraps itself around the



This sundew plant caught a frog!

animal. The plant lets out juice. The juice **dissolves** the animal, which means it turns the animal to liquid. The plant drinks it up!

A Venus flytrap has flat leaves that are covered in tiny hairs. The leaves look like an open mouth. When an insect lands on a hair, the leaves snap shut and trap the insect. Then the plant dissolves the insect, just like the sundew does.



Ocotillo before the rain



Ocotillo after the rain

Thirsty Plants

In the desert, rain does not fall often, so there is very little water. Plants need to find ways to get it. Many desert plants have long roots that suck up water deep in the ground. Other plants can store water for a long time. When it rains, a cactus swells up with water. Then it has plenty of water stored inside it, even if the ground is dry.

Some plants wait until it rains to spread seeds. Most of the time, the ocotillo looks like a bunch of dry sticks. When rain falls, bright red flowers pop out and drop seeds in the soil. The seeds grow into new plants!

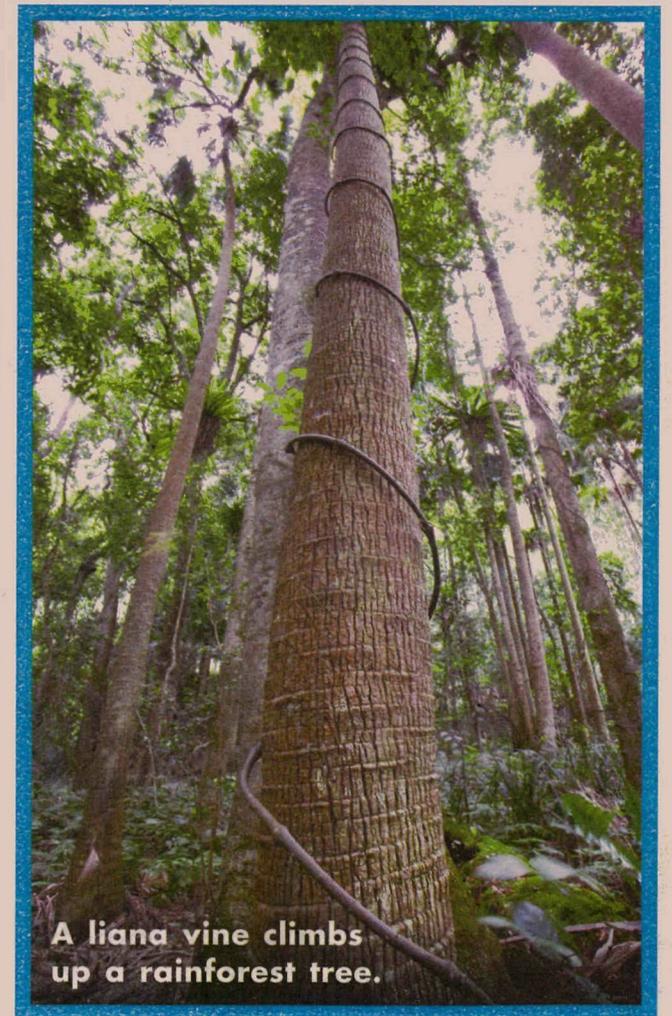
Climbing High

In the rainforest, trees stretch high into the sky. They make lots of shade on the plants below. But these plants still need sunshine to grow. How do they get the light they need?

Some plants climb toward the sun! The

liana (lee-AH-nuh) vine wraps around trees. It climbs up to where the sunlight is bright.

Epiphytes (EP-uh-fites) don't grow in the shade on the ground at all. They grow way up high on tree branches. They don't need soil. They get water from the air and nutrients from dead leaves and bark on the branches. And up there, epiphytes get lots of sun!



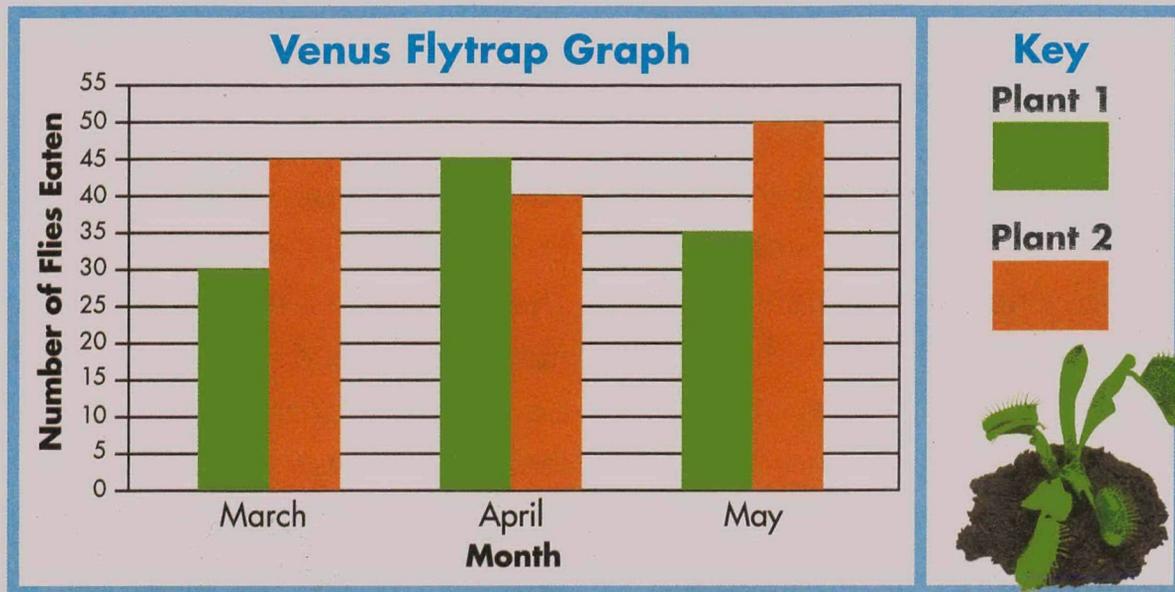
A liana vine climbs up a rainforest tree.

Teachers: Go to www.scholastic.com/sn2 for a Common Core cause and effect activity.

Hungry Plants



This graph shows how many flies two Venus flytrap plants ate in three months. Look at the graph and the key. Answer the questions.



- How many flies did Plant 1 eat in May?
 35 40 50

- How many flies did Plant 2 eat in April?
 30 40 45

- In which month did Plant 1 eat the most flies?
 March April May

- In which month did Plant 2 eat 50 flies?
 March April May

- How many flies did both plants eat altogether in March?
 65 75 85

- How many flies did Plant 1 eat in March and May altogether?
 45 65 75

Joke Time

What is a carnivorous plant's favorite dessert?

Flies cream!



Carnivorous Plant Challenge

Bugs perch on the edge of the **pitcher plant**. They slip down the sides into a pool of liquid. They can't get out. The plant can trap 1,000 bugs in a week! Which catches more bugs in a month, a pitcher plant or a Venus flytrap?



COVER: DENNIS; DAVID M./EARTH SCENES/ANIMALS; PAGES 2-3: CHRIS MATTISON/NATUREPI.COM (TOP); MICHEL RAUCH/SCIENCE SOURCE (SUNDEW PLANT); CYNTHIA E. WOOD/FICKR RF/GETTY IMAGES (COTTON TAIL); LEMKER, JOHN/EARTH SCENES/ANIMALS (COTTON TAIL); MARC ANDERSON/ALAMY (LIANA VINE); PAGE 4: SIEDE PREIS/GETTY IMAGES (VENUS FLYTRAP); CREDITIVE STUDIOS/ALAMY (ICE CREAM); MICHAEL DURHAM/MINDEN PICTURES (PITCHER PLANT)

Copyright of Scholastic News -- Edition 2 is the property of Scholastic Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.