

*Sarracenia purpurea*

**PITCHERPLANT** is a carnivorous perennial. Native to north-eastern North America it has small red or purple and green (rarely yellow) flowers.

It is also known as Adam's cup, Adam's pitcher, Bog bugle, Boots, Carrion flower, Common pitcher plant, Devil's boots, Dumb, Dumb watches, Eve's cup, Fever cup, *Flugtrumpet* (Swedish), Fly-catcher, Flytrap, Forefather's cup, Forefather's pitcher, Foxglove, Frog bonnet, Huntsman's cap, Huntsman's cup, Huntsman's horn, Indian cup, Indian dipper, Indian jug, Indian pipe, Indian pitcher, Indian tea kettle, Meadow cup, Northern pitcher plant, Purple pitcher plant, Purple side-saddle flower, St. Jacob's dipper, St. John's dipper, *Saracenia purpureová* (Slovak), Sarracenie, Side-saddle flower, Side-saddle plant, Skunk cabbage, Smallpox plant, Soldier's drinking cup, *Šprlice nachová* (Czech), *Trompetblad* (Danish), Trumpet leaf, Trumpets, Watches, Watercup, Whip-poor-Will's-boots, and Whip-poor-Will's-shoes; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of deceit.

The pitcher-shaped leaves with their arching hood or lip have a hairy and sticky inside to trap insects digested by the plant. They are often found full of water and decaying insects.

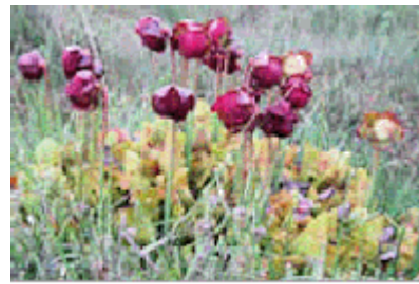
*Purpurea* is Latin (purple-coloured).

This species of pitcherplant multiplies quite quickly. Some time between 1910 and 1920 one plant is said to have been introduced to a 15-acre site in Ohio in the United States and roughly 40 years later about 157,000 other plants had appeared in that area.

Pitcherplant featured in children's games in the North American Indian tribes, some of the Cree tribe, and also the Indians.

North American Menominee Indians believed pitcherplant was an instrument of witchcraft and this may explain why they appear to have avoided using it for medicinal purposes, unlike many other local Indian tribes. The plant seems to have been most widely used in making childbirth easier and it was prescribed by the Potawatomi tribe, some of the Algonkin, the Cree and Chippewa tribes. Some of the Cree also used it for various period problems. Micmac Indians turned to it for lung disorders generally, the Iroquois prescribed it for whooping-cough and pneumonia, and they and the Micmac and Malecite tribes valued it for treating tuberculosis. Water retention and general urinary problems were treated with it by some of the Algonkin, Iroquois Indians used it for liver ailments, and Penobscot and Micmac Indians valued it as a remedy for kidney disorders and internal bleeding. It was also a fever remedy for the Iroquois, as well as a smallpox treatment for the Montagnais and Micmac tribes. Not least some of the Cree valued it for treating venereal disease.

There seems to be some discrepancy between authorities on how and when this species of pitcherplant first reached Europe. Some say that John Tradescant the Younger (1608-1662) found it during his trip to Virginia in 1637 and a live plant was brought to Europe in 1640. Others contend that it was only introduced to Europe at the beginning of the



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20<sup>th</sup> Century after an Assistant Surgeon with the Royal Artillery. Herbert Miles, when stationed in Canada, observed and reported its use by the North American Indians for treating smallpox and the British Army decided to investigate the plant's qualities further. This particular species is a State flower for the Canadian province of Newfoundland. Medicinally, after its introduction to Europe it rapidly gained a reputation there for not only being able to save life but also to prevent pock-marks on the skin. This fame did not last as the evidence for these claims was insufficiently substantiated. Herbalists have recommended it in the treatment of liver, stomach and kidney ailments.