

The Venus Flytrap

A Meat-Eating Plant!



Leaves

The Venus flytrap is an unusual plant that was discovered over 200 years ago. It is found all over the world, but it is native to North and South Carolina. It grows in swamps, where the soil lacks nitrogen, an important part of a plant's diet.

1

The Venus flytrap grows about 30 cm high. The plant's leaves grow close to the bottom of the stem. Each leaf has two parts attached to a rib. The surface of each side has three sensitive hairs or trigger hairs, and the edges are fringed with sharp spikes.

2

Catching a Fly



Open Leaf



Closed Leaf

The Venus flytrap feeds itself by trapping insects inside its leaves. When an insect lands on a leaf's trigger hairs, the two sides close like a trap and hold the insect inside. The soft parts of the insect are then digested. It takes more than a week for each leaf to digest an insect and "spit" out the tough parts. After the plant has taken in the food,

3

the trap opens, and the leaf is in position to capture another victim. After a leaf has caught several insects, it withers and dies. The Venus flytrap has been known to last as long as 25 years under good care.

7 “The Venus Flytrap” is mainly about

- where the Venus flytrap grows.
- how the Venus flytrap gets its food.
- when the Venus flytrap’s leaves close.
- why the Venus flytrap grows in swamps.

8 In paragraph 2, “surface” refers to the

- top of the leaf.
- edge of the hair.
- middle of the rib.
- point of the spike.

9 In the phrase “‘spit’ out the tough parts,” (paragraph 3) the word “tough” means

- dry.
- soft.
- hard.
- hairy.

10 The pictures beside paragraph 3 help the reader see how the plant

- withers and dies.
- eats other plants.
- grows in the soil.
- traps and eats insects.

11 Explain why the Venus flytrap is an unusual plant. Use details from the text and your own ideas to support your answer.

12 Explain how “trigger hairs” help the Venus flytrap. Use examples from the text to support your answer.
