



GROW DARLINGTONIA

No terrariums. No myths. No nonsense.

Just practical advice from guys who have been growing and propagating thousands of carnivorous plants every year since 1995.

RANGE

Darlingtonia californica is native to Northern California and Oregon. Many populations grow in open mountain wetlands in the Siskiyou Mountains, while others occur in sphagnum bogs along the Oregon Coast. Despite differences in daytime climate, these habitats share an important feature: cool summer nights.

WHERE TO GROW

As a cold-hardy perennial, *Darlingtonia* grows best outdoors as a container or potted plant. You may also grow it in a pond or fountain, but avoid submerging the plant. The water level should remain below halfway up the pot. Because of its specific soil requirements, avoid planting it directly in the ground.

SUNLIGHT

Darlingtonia requires partial to full sun (4 or more hours of direct sunlight) for vigorous growth during the growing season. Although *Darlingtonia* can grow in some shade, avoid full shade. When in doubt, give more sunlight.

SUMMER TEMPERATURES

Darlingtonia can tolerate very warm daytime temperatures. The more important climate factor is nighttime temperature during the hottest part of summer. Nights in the 50s°F (10–15°C) or colder are ideal. Plants may grow with nights in the 60s°F, but long-term performance becomes less predictable as nighttime temperatures approach 70°F. Climates where summer nights remain consistently 70°F or warmer are generally poor choices for *Darlingtonia*. **Cool nights are essential for the overall health of this plant.**

WATER

Keep the growing medium consistently wet during the growing season. Set the pot in a shallow tray of water, keeping the water level below approximately halfway up the container. Use low-mineral water under 50 ppm, especially when growing in live sphagnum moss. Every few weeks, empty the tray completely and top-water the pot thoroughly before allowing the drainage to refill the tray.

SOIL

Over the years, we've experimented with a variety of soil mixes and found that a simple mix of one part peat moss and two parts perlite was as effective as other mixes we tried. You can top dress the medium with live sphagnum moss to prevent splash erosion when top watering. With peat-based soil, change the soil every 2 years to maintain optimal root health. Use short, wide pots to encourage evaporative cooling and colony growth.

WINTER CARE

Darlingtonia is a temperate perennial and requires a normal winter dormancy. Growth slows in fall, and older pitchers may develop brown patches or spotting as temperatures fall.

Dormant plants routinely tolerate overnight frosts down to approximately 20°F (-7°C) without special protection. The greater concern is a prolonged hard freeze in which the growing medium remains frozen continuously, which can lead to dehydration and freeze damage.

If a severe freeze is expected to last several days, provide temporary protection. In climates with much colder or longer winters, additional winter protection may be necessary.

Since 1995, we've dedicated our nursery to growing, propagating, and sharing practical knowledge about carnivorous plants. We hope this guide gives you the confidence to grow your plants successfully for years to come. As we continue learning in our nursery, we update our educational resources to ensure they remain accurate, practical, and based on real-world experience. Visit our website for updated care guides, seasonal growing advice, educational videos, and answers to common growing questions.

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