DROSERA GIGANTEA

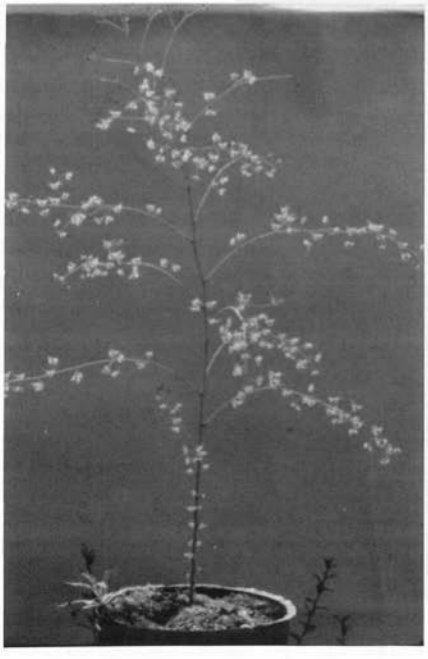
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Most of the species of tuberous *Drosera* in Western Australia actually grow during the moist winter and then go into dormancy during the hot drier summer. In our book, "Carnivorous Plants of the World" we mentioned that we planted some species of tuberous sundews in soil that was maintained wet the year around to ascertain their survival under conditions which seem to be unlike those of their natural habitat. The tubers are found in nature at a depth of a meter or more. This zone is probably moist even though the surface zone is dry most of the summer, save an occasional shower.

The benches in our greenhouse are lined with plastic and the plants planted in plastic pots are set on the benches. Watering is achieved by placing about 2 inches of water in the plastic lining the benches. The water is allowed to evaporate. When the soil in the pots starts to dry out water is added to the benches.

The tubers were planted 6 inches deep in pots with a diameter of 8 inches in a mixture of one half peat and one half sand. At our latitude, 40 degrees 15 minutes North, the above ground growth becomes visible during January. The plant subsequently dies back during late July.

Sometimes the plants produce droppers, after or during flowering, which have achieved lengths of up to 5 inches. In photograph 1, one dropper can be seen on the left hand side of the plant. Photograph 2 shows a close up view of the dropper that has formed from the leaf. We have had as many as one dozen droppers on a single plant. They have never grown to ground level and exhibit very little if any tuber and eventually die back. If the leaves with the droppers are removed and planted the droppers will produce tubers. It appears that humidity may be a factor in dropper development because they develope when there are no pots beneath the branches of *D. gigantea* on the bench therefore increasing the humidity surrounding the plant.



Photograph #1



Photograph #2