

PROPAGATING *DROSERA DILATO-PETIOLARIS*

by Curtis Yax

233 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820

During the fall of 1984, I had the good fortune of receiving several healthy specimens of *D. dilato-petiolaris*, a plant long considered to be a form or variety of *D. petiolaris*. Dr. Kondo of Japan conducted extensive research classifying and naming this exciting new species from tropical Australia, along with two other distinct taxa, *D. falconeri* and *D. lanata* which were also considered variants of *D. petiolaris*.

The very rare *D. dilato-petiolaris* is beautifully portrayed in a painting created by Mrs. Rica Erickson from her book *Plants of Prey*.

The plants I cultivated were vigorous growers producing many flowers the first year. None of these flowers produced seed and unlike most sundews, leaf or root cuttings proved ineffective. They produced offshoots and many divisions were made for trading during the next couple of years. The plants, however, were being disturbed so often that many of them began to die. This year I was left with one plant and this one started to rot and die!

I made a last ditch effort to save the species and quickly took off all the remaining leaves by pulling them off one by one making sure that the whitish base was included. This was done by hand and not by cutting with a razor or scissors and thereby reducing the chance of rot.

Since I had excellent results producing plants from the base of *Pinguicula* leaves, I decided to try the following method with *D. dilato-petiolaris*. This method also works best with *Drosera hibernacula*, which produce plants liberally from their separated leaf buds. I used a 2 inch pygmy terrarium with tape covering the holes on top so that there was a 100% humidity level constantly maintained. A lower humidity level inhibits growth. On the bottom of the tiny terrarium I placed some live sphagnum moss and placed the leaves on the surface. The leaves were then covered with more live moss and gently firmed. The use of live moss is best since it inhibits algae and fungus growth. The plastic top was secured with tape and the pot was left undisturbed.

Some leaves were placed in a larger terrarium and these were pressed into very loose peat moss and covered with a clear plastic dome for easy viewing.

I wasn't expecting this to work since the leaves turned an ugly brown within the next few weeks. But then I notice one leaf had tiny sparkling leaves ascending into the air. So to my surprise and joy, it worked! In fact it worked so well that I now have more than 20 new *D. dilato-petiolaris* plants!

Suggested Reading

Kondo, K., Three new species of *Drosera* L. from Australia. Bol. Soc. Brot. ser 2, 57:51-60 1984.

Erickson, Rica. *Plants of Prey*. Lamb Publ. 1968.

WANT AD

Chas. Powell (2138 Harrison St., Santa Clara, CA 95050 USA) (Trade or Sell) *Nepenthes alata* - \$15, tubers of *Drosera erythrorhiza* and *D. stolonifera* - \$16, various *Sarracenia* species and hybrids - \$4 ea., *Utricularia biflora* - \$3 ea. and others in limited numbers. (Want-Buy or Trade) *Pinguicula vulgaris* f. *alpicola*, *P. vulgaris* f. *bicolor*, *P. balcanica*, *P. crystallina*, *P. hirtiflora*, *P. longifolia*, *P. vallisneriifolia* (I would like to correspond with anyone growing the European pings), *Utricularia unifolia*, *U. calycifida*, *U. nelumbifolia*, *U. endresii*, *U. praetermissa* (I would like to correspond with anyone growing large epiphytic bladderworts).