

WATER PROPAGATION OF THE VENUS FLYTRAP

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In the past I have taken a leaf pulling of my flytrap and planted it in a 50:50 mix of peat moss and washed sand (as I would grow any of my flytraps) in the hope that it would then produce another plant. Unfortunately though I found this method to be not the most successful as I could succeed less than half of the time. Earlier this year I stumbled across water propagation and decided to give it a go.

This is possibly the most successful propagation method that I have tried on my Venus flytraps. Using this method I was able to have a success rate of almost 100% for all the leaf pullings that I took.

The basic process is just taking the leaf pulling and then placing it into a container of water under a grow light for a month or so. I will describe the entire process I used with some photos. You can give it a go yourself.

I started this little experiment at the start of April 2015 and I potted the rooted pullings in June and July 2015.

Step 1: Getting the leaf pulling

Taking the leaf pulling is best done when re-potting your flytrap. When I have upended my pot I will shake loose the excess soil and then place the entire plant into a bucket of water and let it soak. I shake the plant gently so that there is no soil remaining on the plant. You will then be able to divide the plant into however many plants have divided from it naturally. I place all of the smaller divisions into a bowl of water and leave them until ready to be potted. This can wait a day if you aren't quite ready.

I then grab the largest healthiest looking plant, find the big healthy leaves, and then pull them gently downward towards the rhizome (The leaves that are easiest to get are the ones that are growing from the outside of the rhizome). The leaf will break off at the base of the plant and you will see there is a bit of white rhizome on the base of the leaf. Keep doing this until you have removed the accessible healthy leaves from your plant, while leaving the main part of the plant with many leaves.

Note: Don't forget to repot the original plant (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: *Dionaea* 'B52' growth after 2 months.



Figure 2: Pulled leaves before trimming.

Step 2: Preparing the leaf pullings

Put all the leaves from each different plant into their own separate jar (Fig. 2) and rinse them in lukewarm water a few times to remove all of the soil that was on them. Once you have all the leaves of one plant together, take each leaf and cut off the trap at the end of the leaf.

Step 3: Add water and light

Once you have cut off all the traps (and thrown them away) place all of the trimmed leaves into their jar/container (I used a 250 mL jam jar), fill it with demineralized water and place a lid on it (Fig. 3). Then all you need to do is simply place the jar underneath some lights. I treat the jar as if it were a pot of seeds that I want to germinate so I place it under some lights with a photoperiod of around 12-14 hours.

Step 4: The magic!

I found that after 1 month of not touching the jars, nearly all of the leaves had started to produce roots and leaves from the base of the leaf (Fig. 4). Some had also sprouted roots from the point of where the trap was cut off.

Step 5: Removal and planting

Once all the leaves had produced roots and leaves (I found that this took between 2-3 months) I removed the leaves from the jar of water (Fig. 5). You will notice that the original leaf will have started to die back from the top. To some of the leaf pullings before potting, I cut off the dead part of the leaf only really to make it look nicer.

Then all you need to do is plant your newly formed plants into your standard soil mix (some of my pots I used a 50:50 mix of sand and perlite and to others I used 100% peat moss, in this instance it hasn't seemed to have made a big difference) and place into a cheap \$10 mini greenhouse so that you can keep the plants in a humid environment to acclimatize. Over the next 2 weeks or so open the vents slowly until you remove the lid altogether (Fig. 6).

I still actually have my little plants growing inside under lights as I haven't made the time to move them outside with my other plants. They have been planted for 2-3 months now and seem to be going strong.

If you are going to take leaf pullings, I would strongly recommend using this method.

Happy Growing!



Figure 3: Trimmed leaves in jars.



Figure 4: Trimmed leaves after a month.



Figure 5: Rooted leaves after 2-3 months.



Figure 6: *Dionaea* "Dutch Delight" freshly planted and 1-2 months later.



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