



## Tropical Pitcher Plants (Nepenthes)

Tropical Pitcher plants, also known as Monkey Cups come from the jungle areas of South East Asia. These plants can be divided into three groups: highland, intermediate and lowland. The height above sea level at which they grow determines the conditions they require. We only sell highland plants as, unlike the other groups, these don't require specialist equipment to achieve high levels of heat and humidity.

**HIGHLAND PLANTS** e.g *N.x ventrata*, *N. sanguinea*

**Position** - Place in a bright position but not in full sun. A south facing conservatory is too hot, but a north facing one is fine. A bathroom will have a nice humid atmosphere. Growing amongst other house plants also creates a moist microclimate.

**Watering** - Use rainwater if possible, but Nepenthes are one of the few carnivorous plants that will tolerate lime so tap water is alright. On arrival, check the traps have a little rainwater inside - about 1/3 full. Water the pot like ordinary house plants. Do not stand in water though you can place the pot on a tray of gravel or stones - the water evaporating around the tray will help with humidity. Misting with a sprayer will be required. If the new, developing traps dry up before they develop, then higher humidity is needed - possibly misting several times a day. New traps will produce their own liquid.



**Nepenthes x ventrata**



**Trap dying back - the trap can be removed now. Also cut off the leaf when it has gone brown.**

**Feeding** - Nepenthes are one of the few carnivorous plants that can be easily fed. Dead insects or even pieces of meat can be put in the traps for digestion. They can also be sprayed with a 1/4 strength foliar feed once a month from April to September. However they will catch their own food as well.

**Pruning** - Nepenthes, once they like your conditions, are quite vigorous, growing upwards if given a support frame. If you do not want a huge plant, then hard pruning in the spring will encourage large lower traps. The traps will go brown as they become old, starting with the lid, followed by the trap and then the leaf. Just cut the old traps off and the leaf when it has gone brown.

**Growing on** - Pot into Nepenthes compost every three years. The compost is a mix of peat, Supersphag, perlite and orchid bark. Nepenthes are not too fussy as long as there is no fertiliser or lime. They can be potted into hanging pots to allow the traps to hang down, or allow them to climb up a trellis or support frame.