

## When did that happen?

Tertiary  
60 million  
years ago



Cretaceous  
135 million



Jurassic  
185 million



Triassic  
230 million



Permian  
280 million



Carboniferous  
310 million



Devonian  
405 million



Silurian  
425 million



Ordovician  
500 million



Cambrian  
600 million

## Fun Facts



Many insects eat plants but have you heard of plants that eat insects? The carnivorous plants, such as the Venus Fly Trap, are native to areas with poor soils. In an effort to get extra nutrients, the plant will entrap an insect in its modified leaf where digestive juices break down the insect into usable nutrients. Our collection has pitcher plants, sundews, bladderworts and the well-known Venus Fly Trap.



Because they cannot walk, wiggle, or fly, flowers which rely on insects for pollination must find a way to attract them. Insects may be attracted by flower color or fragrance. Some plants offer food and shelter in exchange for pollination services. Clever plants, like some orchids, use insect mimicry. This is when the flower is shaped and colored similar to an insect. A confused insect may accidentally pollinate in an effort to mate with the imposter. There are several orchids in the Conservatory collection.



Madagascar, a island nation off the southeastern coast of Africa, has a wealth of biological diversity which is quickly being destroyed. The unique flora and fauna of Madagascar make it especially important to preserve as many species are found only there. The Insectary rears the unusual Madagascar Hissing Cockroach. It is one of the world's largest roaches. The hissing sound is made when air passes through its spiracles and is startling to predators. Growing in the Conservatory is the odd Madagascar Palm. Not really a palm at all, the spiny-trunked succulent is actually in the Dogbane family, a family of medicinal importance. A cousin of the Madagascar Palm, the rosy periwinkle is the source for leukemia medication.

Some insects will masquerade as branches, foliage, or bark attempting to hide themselves from predators. The colorations on the wings and bodies of these insects helps them blend in with their environment, making it difficult for hungry predators to make a meal of them. The Insectary has 3 types of walking sticks. They look like twigs and leaves hanging from the branches.

**One fern plant can produce 50 million spores!**



A curious relationship between an ant and a tropical tree provides a clue that insects and flowering plants evolved together. One OSU researcher is studying this ant, whose venom may be a potential treatment for arthritis. The tree provides food and shelter for the ant and in exchange, the ant will industriously prune off the foliage of any encroaching neighboring plants. This reduces the competition for water, light, and nutrients, letting the tree grow faster and providing more food and shelter for the ants. The habitat of the ant and its friend the tree are endangered. If the decline continues, we may lose an important treatment for a debilitating disease.

The coconut palm may be one of the most useful plants in the world. Most of us are familiar with the coconut as it is used in confections, but did you know that the oil extracted from the meat is used in making margarine, non-dairy creamer and whipped topping, cosmetics and suntan lotions among other products? The leaves can be used as roof thatch or woven to make baskets or hats. And the trunk can provide wood for shelter or fuel.



**Less than 1/2 of the estimated 4 million species of organisms on earth have been discovered, described**