

Discover the Enchanting Triggerplants of Western Australia



Western Australia is home to a diverse array of breathtaking flora and fauna that never ceases to captivate nature enthusiasts from around the world. Among the most exquisite and intriguing species found in this biodiverse region are the

fascinating Triggerplants. Known for their unique trigger mechanisms and show-stopping blooms, these plants are a sight to behold.

The Unique Mechanism

Triggerplants, also known as Stylidium, get their name from their fascinating trigger-like mechanism. This mechanism enables the plants to capture insects for pollination by creating a trap that holds onto their unsuspecting victims. When an insect, such as a bee or a fly, lands on the delicate trigger hairs of the plants, the trigger is activated, sending a small part of the plant's structure down to capture the insect. This entrapment allows for efficient pollination as the trigger mechanism brushes pollen onto the insect, ensuring its transfer to other flowers.



TRIGGERPLANTS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

by DRMW(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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The Allure of Western Australia's Triggerplants

Western Australia boasts an impressive variety of triggerplants with over 150 known species. These unique plants are renowned for their vibrant and eye-catching blooms, which come in various hues, including shades of pink, purple, yellow, and white. Their intricate flower structures often include long filaments that further enhance their charm and add to the allure of these remarkable plants.

One of the most celebrated triggerplants found in Western Australia is the *Stylidium schoenoides*, commonly known as the Tall Triggerplant. Known for its tall and erect stems, this species produces stunning light-pink flowers that create a beautiful contrast against its green foliage. Observing a Tall Triggerplant in full bloom is a truly magical experience.



Another captivating member of the triggerplant family is the *Stylidium graminifolium*, also known as the Grass Triggerplant. As the name suggests, this species stands out for its grass-like appearance and its tiny, delicate pink flowers.

Its unique beauty can be found across Western Australia, as it thrives in various habitats, including sandy plains, rocky slopes, and even coastal regions.

One of the more peculiar triggerplants found in Western Australia is the *Stylidium laricifolium*, or the Prickly-leaf Triggerplant. What sets this species apart is its needle-like leaves that are unlike most other triggerplants. Its bright pink flowers and distinctive foliage make it a true curiosity for botanists and nature lovers alike.

Conservation and Preservation Efforts

As with many unique and delicate species, triggerplants face various threats to their survival. Human activity, such as urbanization and land clearing, poses a significant risk to these plants. Climate change, invasive species, and habitat destruction further exacerbate the challenges faced by these mesmerizing Western Australian natives.

Thankfully, several organizations and passionate individuals are dedicated to the conservation and preservation of triggerplants. Through habitat restoration initiatives, research projects, and public awareness campaigns, these groups strive to protect the fragile ecosystems that these plants rely on.



Awareness and education are cornerstones in the effort to conserve Western Australia's triggerplants. By highlighting the unique features and importance of these plants, we can inspire individuals and communities to take action and work towards their preservation. Whether it's through planting native species, supporting conservation organizations, or advocating for protected areas, every effort is crucial in safeguarding these remarkable triggerplants.

Western Australia's triggerplants are undoubtedly treasures of nature. Their fascinating trigger mechanisms, vibrant blooms, and intricate structures make them a unique and captivating part of Australia's floral diversity. By appreciating and understanding these plants, we can contribute to their conservation and ensure that future generations can continue to marvel at their beauty.



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The Triggerplants belong to the family Stylidiaceae, one of the largest genera in Australia. The genus *Stylidium* is made up of about 300 species all occurring in Australia (a few other species occur in India, China and The Philippines) with about 150 species occurring in Western Australia and about 50 species around Perth. It is the 5th largest genus of plants in Australia. The name derives from the Greek *stylos* meaning a column. The male and female organs of the plant are fused to make up a column, the trigger, that when touched snaps forwards like a trigger to aid spread of pollen onto an insect. It can make this swing within 15 milliseconds. The trigger then rests itself. The trigger lies below the plane of the flower. Glandular hairs on the flower stem and flower can trap small insects and then produce proteolytic enzymes that break down the insect tissues, the breakdown products then being absorbed by the plant. Many Triggerplants are thus carnivorous plants. The column is reminiscent of a similar but static structure in the Orchidaceae.

The plants have usually 2 pairs of petals that may be unequal in size. The white, cream, yellow or pink petals can be between ½ centimetre to 3 centimetres in size. The plants grow from a few centimetres to 1.8 metres in height depending on the species concerned. In some species flowers with 2, 3 or 5 and even 6

petals occur.

When the column is touched by an insect the column flies towards the insect and covers it in pollen. The anthers are first to develop followed by the stigma. The trigger may contact the insect from above or below depending on the individual plant species. The contact can occur within 15 milliseconds of the column being touched. It then takes from a few minutes to half an hour to reset, again depending on species and air temperature. Movement of the column is slower in lower temperatures. The pollinating insect is a small bee.

The hairs on the plant produce a sticky material that attracts insects. This contains proteolytic enzymes in certain species.

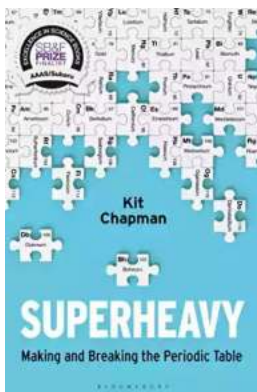
The genus *Stylidium* was first discovered in 1770 by Joseph Banks and the Swedish Naturalist Daniel Solander in Botany Bay, Sydney in Australia. Robert Brown and the Belgian botanist Charles Francois Antoine Morren were also to describe species of Stylidaceae.

Hybrid formation rarely occurs.



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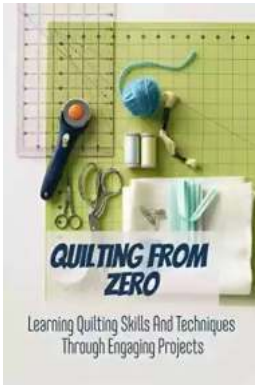
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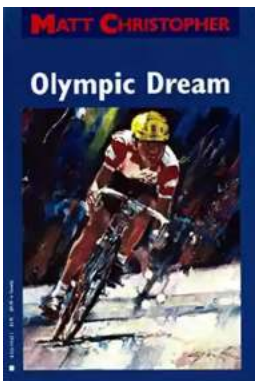
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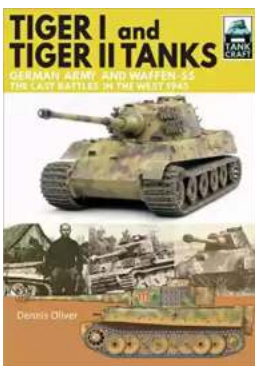
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