



# WEIRD AND WILD!

## PLANTS AROUND THE WORLD

Look for these interesting plants as you explore our indoor plant conservatories!



### 1. OLD MAN CACTUS

*Mexico (Arid Garden)* hint: potted on the adobe alcove.

Can you guess how this shaggy cactus got its name? The Old Man Cactus might look fuzzy, but don't touch! The white "hair" that protects this cactus from the sun also hides sharp spines underneath.

*Can you spot any other cacti that look furry?*



### 2. MILK BUSH

*South Africa (Arid Garden)*

This tree is named for its poisonous, milky sap, but it also has a surprising use. Milk Bush sap has been used to make fuel similar to gasoline!

*Can you think of other plants that people use?*



### 3. OCTOPUS AGAVE

*Northwest Mexico (Arid Garden)*

This plant's large, twisting leaves are hard to miss. Agave store water in their long leaves, and the sap of some varieties is commonly used to make sweetener. There are more than 10 different varieties of agave in this room.

*Can you find them all?*



## 4. ROCK TASSEL FERN

*Eastern Himalayas & Malaysia (Victorian Garden)*

This fern belongs to a division of plants called Lycopods that includes some of the oldest living plants in the world. Lycopods have grown on land for more than 400 million years.

*Imagine that you have traveled back in time. What do you see?*



## 5. VENUS FLY TRAP

*North America (Carnivorous Plant House)*

When insects touch the tiny hairs on this plant's leaves, they snap shut, trapping the bug inside. Venus Fly Traps can't hurt humans, but causing them to close without any food will shorten their lifespan.

*Examine this one closely with your eyes.*



## 6. TROPICAL PITCHER PLANT

*Philippines and Indonesia (Carnivorous Plant House)*

Pitcher plants' cup-like leaves trap and digest insects and even animals. Some larger species have been known to trap frogs and birds! Look around.

*Can you find a pitcher that is longer than your hand?*



## 7. STAGHORN FERN

*Asia, Polynesia and Australia (Tropical Conservatory)*

You can find this fern by looking for its papery, brown base. Staghorn ferns cling to trees, where their papery fronds act like a cup to collect falling debris, water and nutrients.

*Can you find any other plants that live in trees?*



## 8. SCREW PINE

*Madagascar (Tropical Conservatory)*

This tree's long roots help to prop it up in sandy soil and protect it against high winds. Try standing with your feet far apart, then very close together.

*Which position would make it harder to fall over?*



## 9. OLD MAN PALM

*Cuba (Tropical Conservatory)*

This tree's furry-looking thatch has been used by islanders to stuff pillows and make brooms. The Old Man Palm isn't the only tree in the Conservatory with a wild trunk.

*How many different barks and textures can you find?*



## 10. SAUSAGE TREE

*Tropical Africa (Tropical Conservatory)*

Can you find the large, sausage-shaped fruits hanging from this tree? These fruits can reach up to 24 inches long. As you walk around the Conservatory, look up!

*Can you find other plants with unusual fruits?*