

them and they can sit in the tray in the background keeping the tray water cool. I find that evaporation off the large surface area and a fan will keep the water at a cooler temperature that *Darlingtonia* seems to like. The cool nights here will cool the tray water even more. *Darlingtonia* can also be grown in large tubs such as deep dishpans made by Rubbermaid which could withstand the weather and sunshine over long periods of time. Again, I use perlite mostly for the soil and I hold it down from floating with a 3-4 inch(8-10 cm) layer of live sphagnum moss. I flood the tub with water and try to maintain some free water sitting on the surface. The tub sits in my yard and gets about 2 hours of east morning sun only with the rest of the day in shade. The plants are healthy and I will be getting some flowers soon for the 3rd year in a row.

I also have stolons which can be cut off and planted separately in a pot. These root and grow rapidly into mature plants-a lot faster than from seed.

*Darlingtonia* begins growing after *Sarracenias* start growing here in early spring ( about March). They seem to start a month later or so and all their pitchers for the season are produced in the spring. Flowers are also produced at this time as well. So, it is at this time that you should pay close attention to the needs of this plant because what you do to it now is important to what you will get later. The plant also goes dormant earlier than *Sarracenia* but its hard to tell because unlike its cousins, the pitchers remain green during the dormancy. Many of the pitchers are long-lived and frequently they survive not only the season but also into the following year when they begin to turn brown from the hood down and are easily replaced with new growth. The pitchers can also withstand some harsh weather conditions including freezing of the pitcher water.

If flowers are pollinated properly, seed is produced in October when the capsule changes color from green to light brown. Seed should be captured before the capsule splits open releasing most of the seed that falls to the ground. The seed can be stored in paper envelopes in the refrigerator until spring and are sown according to instructions by another member given here.

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## Darlingtonia Seeds

by

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Seeds of *Darlingtonia* are harvested at the end of September to mid-October and are stored in the refrigerator in plastic bags until spring. In the Spring, I use two methods of germination. First, I sow the seed on a peat-sand mix composed of 4 parts peat to one part sand#2 size. I sow the seed sometimes with and sometimes without Superthrive. I sprinkle seed on the surface of the peat-sand and water them very well. The other batch of seed are put in a solution of water and Superthrive ( about 4 drops per cup of water) . I leave it this way until all the seed sinks to the bottom of the jar which usually takes about a week. I collect the seed through a strainer and then scrape the seed on the surface of the mixture of peat and sand. After putting the seeds on the peat & sand mixture. I set them in water about 3/4 full in full sunlight with 80% humidity. The seeds with Superthrive take about two weeks to germinate. The ones without Superthrive take a little longer about 3 - 4 weeks depending on your conditions in your growing area. You can also use live sphagum moss to germinate the *Darlingtonia*



seed it also takes 3 -4 weeks with that type medium or you can put a clear plastic cup for high humidity which might speed up the germination process a week eariler. I don't fertilize the seedlings but I treat with Superthrive solution once every two weeks. After they reach one-year old I don't use this hormone anymore since by now the seedlings have good roots. When they are three years old, they are transfered to pure live spagnum moss or 50-50 peat/sand mix.

I feel the key to growing these plants is filtered sunlight, good low conductivity water and allowing them a dormancy period. I leave the pot of seedlings in water all year. I spray-mist the seedlings twice a day: in the morning and in the evening. If they get any insect pests on them, I spray with Orthene pesticide which is very good for CP and doesn't harm the most sensitive plants.

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## Followup on Tuberous Drosera Propagation

by

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In CPN Vol 20, No 3, P. 68, I reported on my attempts at the propagation of tuberous droseras by detaching the newly emerging plant from the tuber at the start of the season.

It is now the end of the season, and my tuberous droseras have all been unpotted and stored in small plastic bags for the summer. Normally, I would leave the tubers in their pots over the dormant period, but as we will be moving before the next growing season, I have packed them ready to be moved.

On inspecting the pots, I found that I had varying results with my experiments. Some detached plants produced tubers, whereas others of the same species did not. I would suspect that it is necessary to detach the plants a little closer to the tuber, in order to remove more of the stolon connecting the plant to the tuber, but still leaving sufficient stolon with dormant buds on the tuber to allow a new plant to be produced by the tuber after disconnection of the previous one.

Another method that can also be sucessful is to detach the newly formed tuber from the plant just before the plant starts to die down. This method is probably most sucessful with noncolonising species, i.e. ones that form a single replacement tuber at the end of the season. Many colonising species die down before the new tuber is formed, relying on the succulent I underground rhizome to produce the tuber. The new tuber is removed from the plant as soon as it is of sufficient size, and treated as a dormant tuber. The plant is again repotted and kept growing with weekly foliar fertilizing, and a new but probably substantially smaller tuber should be produced.

As a result of my weekly fertilizing program, I found that I had a higher survival rate of tubers, a higher average multiplication rate, and a larger average size of tubers.



Lagoteta, Larry. 1996. "Darlingtonia seeds." *Carnivorous plant newsletter* 25(4), 120–121. <https://doi.org/10.55360/cpn254.11965>.

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