

CONSERVATORY READER: **AMAZING ADAPTATIONS**



An early view of the Conservatory.

The Garfield Park Conservatory opened in 1908 and is one of the largest conservatories in the United States. It has 2 acres of indoor greenhouses and 10 acres of outdoor gardens. The indoor greenhouses are 8 rooms that grow mostly tropical and desert plants.

Home to venus fly traps, tall palms, and chocolate trees, the Conservatory is a place to learn and explore!



WHAT DO PLANTS NEED?

Plants need many things to live and grow. Just like you, plants need **water** and **food** to live. They also need things found in **soil**. And every plant needs **sunlight** to live!



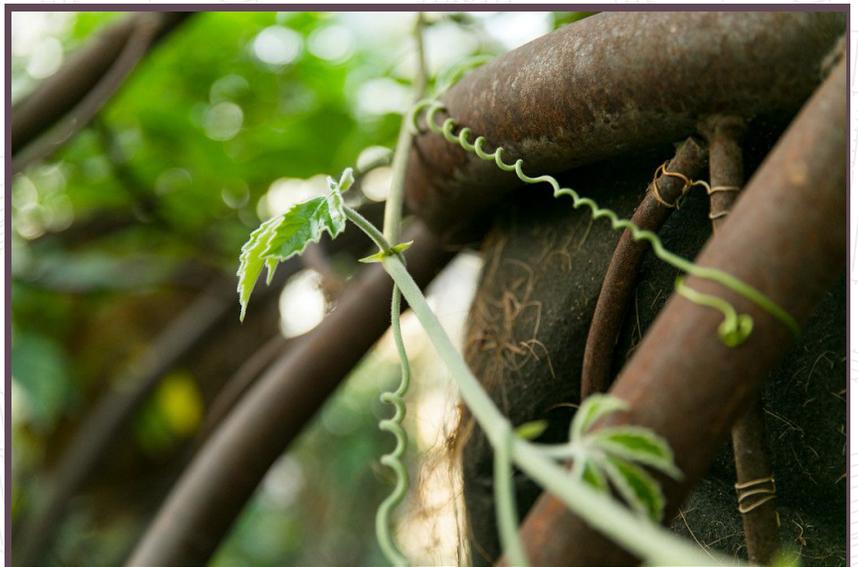
The palm house gets sun through the glass ceiling.



The ficus tree has aerial roots that grow from the branches! This gives the plant more stability while also giving it more opportunities to collect nutrients from the soil and the air.

While all plants need these 3 things, they get them in different ways. Some plants have **roots** underground to get water and food. Others, like this ficus, have roots above the ground to get those things.

Plants have many ways to get sunlight. Some of those ways are hard to find, so you have to look closely! Plants want sunlight to reach their leaves.



The chestnut vine has spring-like tendrils that grow outward, looking for something to hold.

The chestnut vine is a small plant that can not grow tall to get sunlight. It wraps its tendrils around taller plants and climbs up them.

As you can see, not all plants get water, food, and sunlight in the same ways. Come explore the Conservatory to find the hidden ways plants get what they need to live. We hope to see you soon!

AMAZING ADAPTATIONS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Can you think of another way that the ficus' roots can help it?



What other adaptations can plants have to get sunlight other than growing on taller plants?



If a plant grows in a very windy area, what adaptations could it have to protect itself from falling down?



What questions do you have about plant adaptations? Remember them or write them down, and ask the staff at the Conservatory!

School groups are welcome at the Conservatory Tuesday through Friday from 9 am-1 pm. For more information visit garfieldconservatory.org/group-visits or email groups@garfieldpark.org.

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