

Drosera rotundifolia L.

Common or round-leaved sundew

Family: Droseraceae

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The name *Drosera* derives from the Greek and means "dewy, watery, dew-covered", alluding to the tentacle-like hairs on the leaves which glisten like dew in the sun, while the term *rotundifolia* derives from the Latin for "round leaf", referring to the shape of the leaves.

The sundew is a perennial **carnivorous plant** with small, white, five-petal flowers growing on apical racemes (inflorescence on a long main stalk, with pedunculated flowers) which appear in summer; it colonises wetlands, marshes, bogs and flooded grassland.



(Photo MRSN)

Its appearance is unmistakable with its round-leaved basal leaves, covered with **red hairs which secrete a viscous transparent liquid** covering the ends in small, transparent droplets. Insects are attracted to this liquid, and get stuck when landing on the leaves, which then slowly wrap them in the glandular hairs. The plant produces **enzymes capable of digesting the insect**, allowing the hairs to absorb the nutriment and integrating the

plant's need for nitrogen which is not supplied from the marshy ground where it lives. The sundew has an extraordinary ability to regenerate itself from dormant buds or other organs, such as pieces of rhizome, stalks or leaves.

Due to its rarity, it is a protected species. In the Aosta Valley, it is found and has been reported in the Mont Avic Natural Park and the Lake Lozon, Lake Villa and Mont Mars Nature Reserves.