



Prickly Plants

Stuck!



by Ellen Lawrence

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BEARPORT
PUBLISHING

New York, New York

Credits

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Publisher: Kenn Goin

Editorial Director: Adam Siegel

Creative Director: Spencer Brinker

Design: Elaine Wilkinson

Photo Researcher: Ruby Tuesday Books Ltd

Lawrence, Ellen, 1967–

Prickly plants : stuck! / by Ellen Lawrence.

p. cm. — (Plant-ology)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-61772-588-3 (library binding) — ISBN 1-61772-588-9 (library binding)

1. Prickles—Juvenile literature. 2. Plant defenses—Juvenile literature. I. Title.

QK650.L39 2013

581.4'7—dc23

2012014336

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For more information, write to Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., 45 West 21st Street, Suite 3B, New York, New York 10010. Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



Contents

A Deer's Dinner	4
Prickly Protection	6
A Thirsty Cactus	8
Don't Eat! Don't Drink!	10
Spines for Shade	12
Prickly Thorns	14
A Giraffe's Dinner	16
Thorns as Homes	18
Don't Touch!	20
Science Lab.....	22
Science Words	23
Index.....	24
Read More.....	24
Learn More Online.....	24
About the Author.....	24

A Deer's Dinner

A hungry deer in a desert is looking for some food.

It spots a large juicy cactus—but it doesn't dare take a bite.

Why?

The cactus has a way to make sure it doesn't end up as the deer's dinner.

Why do you think the deer won't eat the cactus?

A cactus is a type of plant that can survive in hot, dry places. Most cactuses, or cacti, grow in rocky or sandy **deserts.**

A close-up photograph of a deer's head and shoulders. The deer has large, upright ears and is looking slightly to the left. It is positioned behind a large, green, flat-topped cactus (prickly pear) which is covered in sharp spines and small, reddish-brown flower buds. The background shows a desert landscape with rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

cactus

Prickly Protection

Plants can't move away from animals that want to eat them.

So some plants, such as cacti, have sharp prickles that are painful to touch or eat.

The prickles on a cactus are called **spines**.

Animals don't try to eat a cactus because the sharp spines would poke them.

spines

cactus



prickly pear cactus

pad

A cactus called the prickly pear has flat round pads that look like leaves, but they are actually the plant's **stems**, or branches.

spines

Index

acacia trees 16–17, 18–19
barrel cacti 11
deserts 4, 8
grasslands 16
honey locust tree 15
leaves 7, 16, 18
prickles 6, 15, 20

prickly pear cacti 7, 12, 21
roots 8
rose plants 14–15
saguaro cacti 8–9
seeds 14
shade 12
spines 6–7, 8, 10, 12–13, 20–21

stems 7, 8–9, 10–11, 13, 14–15, 20
stinging hairs 20
stinging nettles 20
teddy bear cholla 12–13
thorns 14–15, 16–17, 18–19, 20
water 8, 10–11

Read More

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Learn More Online

To learn more about prickly plants, visit
www.bearportpublishing.com/Plant-ology

About the Author

Ellen Lawrence lives in the United Kingdom. Her favorite books to write are those about nature and animals. In fact, the first book Ellen bought for herself, when she was six years old, was the story of a gorilla named Patty Cake that was born in New York's Central Park Zoo.

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Prickly Plants

Stuck!

Why are some plants so prickly? Look inside to learn the answer to this question. Along the way, you'll also find out how plants use their needle-like spines, thorns, and other prickly parts to survive in harsh environments and other dangerous places.

Amazing Plant Bodies
Tiny to Gigantic

Cooking with Sunshine
How Plants Make Food

Freaky Plant Facts
Extreme Greens

From Bird Poop to Wind
How Seeds Get Around

Meat-Eating Plants
Toothless Wonders

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Prickly Plants
Stuck!

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