

## Stop 144 Kid's Tour – Epiphytes, Palm House

Rainforest plants occupy different layers of the forest. The very tallest trees get the most sun and form a big umbrella of leaves that keeps much of the sunlight from filtering down to the forest floor. Some plants called epiphytes have found a way to get themselves higher up so they can catch more rays of sunlight. Hanging on other plants like coats on a coatrack, they grow *without soil* on the branches of the forest trees. They get their nutrients, from water and other materials floating around in the air! Vines also use the trees as support but they are still rooted in the ground. Neither vines nor the epiphytes you see here are parasites, which means, they don't live off of the tree like a flea lives on a dog!

You'll find lots of orchids and other epiphytes in the Stove House next door, but while you're here in the Palm House, see if you can find any vines climbing their way up to where there is more light.