

Smelly monster 'corpse' flower in bloom in Brussels

July 8 2013



Visitors look at the Arum Titan as it blossoms for a second time on November 19, 2012 at the Botanical Garden in Basel, Switzerland. Another one of these rare, smelly flowers is in bloom Monday in a Brussels hothouse for the third time in five years in a rare botanical feat for a plant that generally goes years without blooming.

A Titan Arum, one of the world's largest, rarest and smelliest flowers, is in bloom in a Brussels hothouse for the third time in five years in a rare botanical feat for a plant that generally goes years without blooming.

Variously known as a "corpse flower" in Indonesia where first found, or "huge deformed penis" under its scientific name, "Amorphophallus titanum", the strange but spectacular specimen began to bloom Sunday in the national botanical gardens, the Jardin de Meise, on the outskirts of the Belgian capital.

"Flowering is very brief, three days at the very most. Afterwards it will die and it'll be several years before it [blooms](#) again," the spokesman for the gardens Franck Hidvegi told AFP.

The plant, which looks a little like a giant ear of corn until the red-rimmed flower opens leaving a stench of rotting flesh or fish, stood 244 centimetres (eight feet) high Monday, attracting crowds.

Endangered in its [natural habitat](#) of the Sumatra tropical forest, Titan Arum is generally in flower every four or five years.

Yet the Meise specimen flowered in 2008 shortly after its arrival from the German city of Bonn, and then again in 2011. "This is exceptional and has never occurred in other botanical gardens," added Hidvegi.



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Exported to Europe at the end of the 19th century for the first time, a specimen of the giant plant was first seen to bloom in 1889 in London but then flowered again only in 1926.

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Citation: Smelly monster 'corpse' flower in bloom in Brussels (2013, July 8) retrieved 14 May

2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-07-smelly-monster-corpse-bloom-brussels.html>

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