

Devil's Tongue flower comes to life in continuing five-year cycle

August 29 2014, by Andrew Baulcomb



Biology Greenhouse technician Arthur Yeas measures the imposing Devil's Tongue on Thursday morning. The plant currently measures 58 inches.

A rare plant at the McMaster Biology Greenhouse is finally showing its true colours (and odours), and may not bloom for another five years.

The towering Devil's Tongue, also known as a Voodoo Lily or *Amorphophallus konjac*, is native to tropical Indonesia and has the dubious distinction of being one of the smelliest [plants](#) on earth.

The flowering at McMaster was a remarkable surprise.

"I was told by someone a plant flowered at the Royal Botanical Gardens many years ago, but I can find no record of it blooming at the RBG. Our plant may not bloom for another five years or so," said greenhouse technician Arthur Yeas.

"I do not believe exceptionally large specimens of this plant are common in our part of the world. Our flower is growing from a corm weighing 10 pounds, and the bud was growing six-eight inches every day."

Despite its pungent corpse-like aroma, the Devil's Tongue has been used in food and medicine for more than 1,500 years.

The Japanese make a popular dish from the plant known as konnyaku. Those who eat the dish are said to be devouring the devil's tongue.



'I do not believe exceptionally large specimens of this plant are common in our part of the world. Our flower is growing from a corm weighing 10 pounds, and the bud was growing six-eight inches every day,' said greenhouse technician Arthur Yeas. Far right: the Devil's Tongue flower on Thursday morning, now fully bloomed. - See more at: <http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/article/el-diablo-devils-tongue-flower-comes-to-life-in-biology-greenhouse/#sthash.6MpAN2Dp.dpuf>

In medical circles, it is an important ingredient in weight loss products such as Lipozene and PGX Daily. Studies show it can reduce bad cholesterol and raise [good cholesterol](#) in the blood. It can also stabilize [blood sugar levels](#), and may play a role in managing diabetes.

Provided by McMaster University

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