

# A Fly, some Glass, and a Trap



*A glass flytrap. Private collection.*

This object is rather obscure. It's an attractive piece of glass until one describes its function. Few books on glass care to deal with them, so this description will be brief:

Mostly described as French, English or American, a fair number of these devices survive and one imagines that prior to the availability of screening they were quite ubiquitous in the 18th and 19th centuries. The large percentage of the population living on farms must have been plagued by flies at least half the year. While this example is quite plain, others are highly paint decorated, perhaps to obscure the deceased. A dish of attractant was placed under the device and, when satiated, the insect tended to fly upward, naturally winding up in the internal gallery from which few escaped. Some modern traps are actually of a very similar design, though sadly few are any longer of blown glass.

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