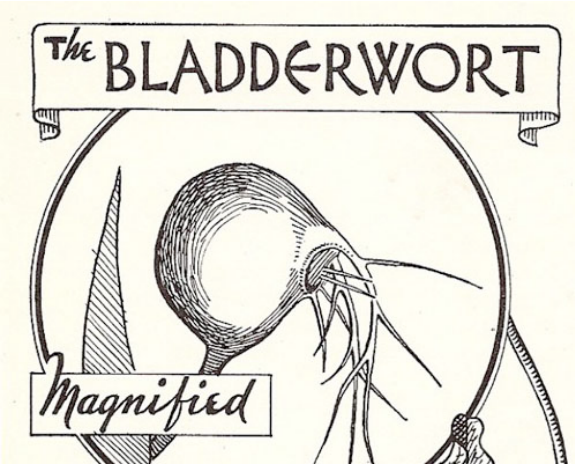
California State University, Fresno
Department of Biology presents

The fastest predator is a plant! Feeding strikes of the carnivorous bladderwort.



Dr. Ulrike Müller, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology
California State University, Fresno

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As it turns out, plants might just be top-performance predators: the aquatic bladderwort *Utricularia gibba* captures zooplankton in mechanically triggered underwater traps; each capture event takes less than 1 millisecond, making bladderwort the fastest predator in terms of capture time. Bladderwort also have excellent capture efficiency: *Utricularia vulgaris* catch their prey in 90% of their attacks, compared with 20% in larval fish, who have a similar sized mouth as bladderwort. I will talk about how bladderwort are an ideal system to study the mechanics of suction feeding in minute organisms. The question is "why does suction feeding work so well in a small predator when theory predicts that it should only work in big fish?" Bladderwort are not only fascinating because they are effective predators, they also have one of the smallest genomes among angiosperms (80 Mbp). And we hypothesize that being carnivorous might go some way towards explaining this small genome.

For further information: www.csufresno.edu/biology or phone 278-2001

If you need a disability-related accommodation or wheelchair access information, please contact Nancy Wright at the Department of Biology @ 278-2001 or e-mail nawright@csufresno.edu (at least one week in advance of the event).