

# Native Plants and WATER GARDENS



## *Protecting the places you cherish*

A water garden will enhance the aesthetics of your property and increase the diversity of wildlife that visit your garden. Water provides wildlife with a place to drink, bath, and in some cases, breed. When landscaping your pond, using native plants will enhance its value for wildlife and help to preserve our natural heritage.

There are two basic methods of building a pond; you can dig a hole to your desired dimensions and add a liner to retain water; or use a moulded pond pool. If you decide you want to add fish or attract frogs, turtles or other wildlife, the design of your pool is important. The water depth should be sufficient so the animals can survive winter freezing. There should also be a gradual slope at one end to allow entry and exit. Tadpoles and snails can be added to reduce algae.

The amount of sunlight reaching the pond and the pond depth will help you decide what plants to grow. Check to make sure run-off from fertilizers will not reach your garden. This may result in an algae bloom. Leaves and debris which are not cleaned out will also cause algae problems. If possible, shallow ponds should be drained in the winter to prevent damage to the liner.

Oxygenators are submerged deep water plants that oxygenate the water and help keep algae levels down by competing with them for dissolved nutrients. They help improve water quality for fish and provide protection for their young. They are especially important in ponds that are not equipped with a pump or aerator. Place these plants at the bottom of your pond. A native species to consider is Canadian Pondweed (*elodea canadensis*).

## Moisture Loving Plants

These species should be planted around the outside of the pond where soil is moist but not covered with water. The amount of sun and shade is important to some species.

### JOE-PYE WEED

*eupatorium maculatum*

This plant requires full sun. It has clusters of purple pink flowers that bloom from June to August. It will grow 0.6 - 1.8 metres in height.



### CARDINAL FLOWER

*lobelia cardinalis*

A large perennial, reaching up to 1.5 metres tall. The flower is a slender scarlet spike that blooms from July to August. It prefers partial sun to shade. It will attract hummingbirds, bees and butterflies to your garden.

### TURTLEHEAD

*chelone glabra*

A perennial with a white or pinkish tubular flower, blooming from August to September. It can grow from 0.3 - 0.9 metres tall. The leaves are a larval food for the Baltimore butterfly.

### ADDITIONAL SPECIES

Swamp Milkweed (*asclepias incarnata*)

Sensitive Fern (*onoclea sensibilis*)

Swamp Aster (*aster puniceus*)

Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*arisaema triphyllum*)

## Shallow Water Plants

These plants do well in water not exceeding 15 cm in depth. They are usually planted around the pond margin.

### SWEETFLAG

*acorus calamus*

This plant has a dense spike of tiny flowers approximately 5 cm to 9 cm long. The fruits are small gelatinous berries. The plant reaches a height of 30 cm to 120 cm and flowers from May to August.

### PICKERELWEED

*pontederia cordata*

Pickerelweed is an aquatic herb. It has a violet-blue flower spike that extends out of the water and long rhizomes that grow beneath the water. It blooms from June to November and produces seed like fruit. It reaches a height of 30 to 60 cm.

### BLUE FLAG

*iris versicolor*

Blue Flag has beautiful violet-blue flowers surrounded by sword-like leaves. The flower is 6.3 - 10 cm wide and the plant reaches a height of 60 - 90 cm. Blooming occurs from May to August.

### BOG ARUM

*calla palustris*

An interesting flower consisting of a dense spike of tiny yellow flowers 2.5 cm long, partially wrapped inside a rolled spathe 5 cm long. The leaves are green and heart shaped. The plant reaches a height of 15 to 30 cm. Blooming occurs from May to August. Fruit appears as red berries in late summer to early autumn.

### ADDITIONAL SPECIES

Arrow Arum (*peltandro virginica*)

Arrowhead (*sagittaria latifolia*)

Marsh Marigold (*caltha palustris*)

Smartweed (*polygonum spp.*)

## Deep Water Plants

These plants do well in water 25 to 90 cm in depth. They are usually placed in the middle of the pond.

### WHITE WATER LILY

*nympaea odorata*

This plant is also known as Fragrant Water Lily. It has floating leaves and white, aromatic flowers 6 to 11 cm across. Flowering occurs from June to September.

### WATER-STARGRASS

*heteranthera dubia*

Water-stargrass is part of the Pickerelweed family. It has a pale yellow flower that reaches the water's surface. The grass-like leaves remain submerged. Blooming occurs from June to September.

