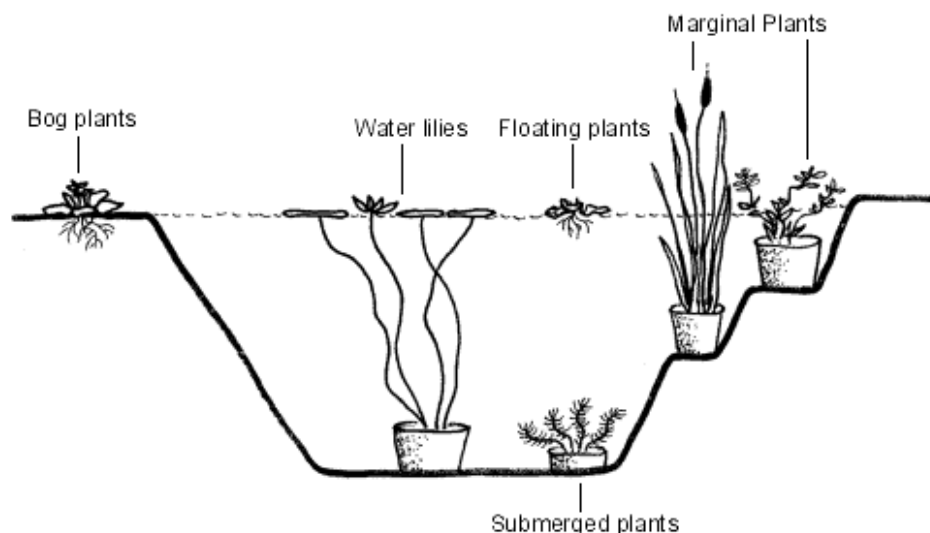


Water Plants

Whether you are planning to install plants at the edge of a naturally occurring body of water or in a newly created artificial pond, proper plant selection and care are the keys to success. After installing the hardscape of your pond, it is time to establish the softscape (plant materials). The softscape creates a pleasant appearance, but also helps create a balanced ecosystem to keep the pond environment healthy as well as beautiful.

Site Considerations: Most water plants do well in direct sunlight. Consider also the exposure to winter wind and the depth of ice that accumulates over winter. When selecting plants, keep in mind the hardiness zone factor. Ponds have varying water movement, from no moving water to swift moving water. Plants need to be chosen that will thrive in the existing water conditions.



Adapted from *Water in the Garden* by James Allison

Plant Selection Process: There are five categories of water plants that can be included in a pond to achieve perfect balance: water lilies and lily-like aquatics, marginal plants, bog or moisture-loving plants, submerged or oxygenating plants and floating plants.

Planting: Plants may be potted or planted directly, *but pay attention to the stated water depth requirements for each plant, since growing in water too deep may cause the plant to drown; too shallowly, and the plant may overheat or get too dry too often.* You can move most water plants during the growing season, late spring until the end of summer. Potted plants can be moved while dormant. Move submerged plants in spring or fall. Do not purchase any water plants until you are ready to plant, because you do not want them to dry out.

Water Lilies: The hardy lilies grow from rhizomes. They are best grown in soil-filled containers set in the pond. Lilies can be introduced to the pond from spring to early fall.

Care After Planting: Your pond may look bare at first, but after a couple of months the plants will mature and flourish. If your pond water becomes murky and fills with algae, do not change the water. Give the pond time to reach its balance. Fertilize with pond tabs pressed into the soil near the roots and groom as needed.

Water Plant Categories

Bog or Moisture-loving Plants

These grow in damp soil at the edge of ponds and prefer to have only the tips of their roots submerged. They also do best in still to slow moving water. Start with a mixture of marginal plants and bog plants inhabiting about 1/3 of the circumference of the pond. Try Cannas, Bog Irises, Bog Lobelia, and others for these plantings.

Floating Plants

These plants do not need soil or a base of any kind. As the name implies, they are simply suspended in the water. They provide decoration and shade and help reduce algal growth. One bunch is sufficient for every 10-15 square feet. These plants are vigorous growers and will need to be thinned periodically. Try Mosaic Plant, Azolla and Floating Clover (*Marsilea*).

Marginal Plants

These grow in the shallow margins around the edge of the pond. It is helpful if a shelf is incorporated in the pond design to support them. Marginal plants can be decorative, provide shelter from the wind, and offer a bit of shade. These plants do best in still to slow moving water. Try Thalia, Pickerel Weed, Rushes, and others for marginal plantings.

Submerged or Oxygenating Plants

The roots of these plants are anchored in soil, but the leaves stay underwater. Their foliage is usually fern-like, lacy, or hairy. They play a vital role in maintaining the pond's natural balance. These plants use waste nutrients and help purify the water. This, in turn, creates an environment that is unsuitable for algal growth. They also provide cover for microscopic forms of life. It is best to include one bunch (these plants are sold by the 'bunch' or handful) for every two square feet of pond surface. Fewer bunches may be adequate once the natural balance is obtained. Grow a variety of species since each species grows at a different time of year and has different water depth requirements.

Water Lilies and Lily-like Aquatics

These grow on the base of the pond and send up leaves and blooms to the surface. Depending on the variety, they may grow a couple of inches to a few feet below the surface of the water. They provide valuable leaf cover to help shade the water, which reduces algae growth. Fish love to hide under the leaves too. Lilies do not do well with strong water movement or splashing water. Most species need full sun 10 hours a day for best blooms. NHG carries both **tropical** and **hardy water lilies** (*Nymphaea*) as well as a few varieties of **tropical lotus** (*Nelumbo*).

The list that follows details the growing conditions for plants in each of the above categories.

Water Plant List

CATEGORY

HEIGHT / SPREAD DESCRIPTION- *water depth is the maximum above crown.*

Bog

Moisture loving plants which grow by the side of the pond where the soil is damp but not waterlogged. These plants can take extra moisture but cannot be submerged.

| | | | |
|--|---------|------------|--|
| Sweet Flag, Dwarf <i>Acorus gramineus pusillus</i> | 4"-6" | 6"-9" | Miniature grass-like leaves are bright green. Growth is very tight in dense tufts. Slow growing, it is good as a pond edger, or between rocks near a waterfall. Grown for its attractive foliage. Flowers are inconspicuous. |
| Crinum Lily, American <i>Crinum americanum</i> | 2'-4' | 2' - 3' | NATIVE. The white flowers are intensely fragrant and large. Pointed, strap-like, nearly evergreen leaves build into large clumps. Zone 8-11. |
| Hosta <i>Hosta spp.</i> | 12"-18" | 2' - 3' | Broad-leaved shade plants with white or lavender flowers in summer. Zone 3-9. |
| Royal Fern <i>Osmunda regalis</i> | 2'-6' | 2'-3' | NATIVE. Coarse-textured, true fern. Deciduous. Zone 3-9. |
| Frog Fruit <i>Phyla nodiflora</i> | 4"-6" | Indefinite | NATIVE. Low growing. Blooms tiny white flowers all summer. 4" water level. Zone 5-11. |

Floating

The entire plant, including the root system floats at the surface of the water. They can help shade the surface, but should be removed if coverage is more than 30%.

| | | | |
|---|----------|------------|---|
| Fairy Moss <i>Azolla caroliniana</i> | under 2" | Indefinite | Surface floating clumps of moss-like water fern with roots just below the surface. Some plants turn red in bright sun. |
| Duckweed <i>Lemna minor</i> | under 2" | Indefinite | Surface floating, bright green plants do not clump. Can become a nuisance. |
| American Frogbit, Sponge Plant <i>Limnobium spongia</i> | 2"-4" | Indefinite | Small plant for full sun with lily-like leaves and tiny white flowers, spreading by stolons at a moderately slow rate. Easier to remove and slower growing than duckweed to provide temporary shade and act as a filter. Prefers sun. |

Marginals

Shallow water plants which grow close to the edge of the pond. These plants can be grown submerged.

| | | | |
|---|---------|------------|--|
| Sweet Flag <i>Acorus calamus</i> | 24"-36" | 12"-24" | Iris-like leaves that produce a strong fragrance when crushed. Shade tolerant. Zone 4-11. <u>6"</u> |
| Variiegated Sweet Flag <i>Acorus calamus variegatus</i> | 2'-3' | 2'-3' | Same growth habit with striking variegated foliage when planted in masses. Shade tolerant. Zone 4-11. <u>9"</u> |
| Dwarf Variiegated Sweet Flag <i>Acorus gramineus variegatus</i> | 10"-12" | 12"-24" | Smaller version of above; identical requirements. |
| Sweet Flag, Variiegated <i>Acorus gramineus variegata</i> | 6"-12" | 6"-12" | Grass-like leaves are striped with yellow. Widely used in landscaping garden ponds and hardy in flower beds where an upright accent is needed. Grown for its densely clumping, attractive foliage. Flowers are inconspicuous. Protect from freezing by sinking the plant in deeper water, or mulching. Shade tolerant. |
| Elephant Ears <i>Calocasia spp.</i> | 3-4' | 2' - 3' | Arrow shaped leaves in various textures and colors. |
| Canna Lily <i>Canna hybrids</i> | 4'-6' | Indefinite | True water cannas, including Longwood hybrids. Flowers range from red, orange and yellow. Prefers full sun. Zone 8-11. <u>6"</u> |

| | | | |
|--|---------|------------|--|
| Umbrella Palm <i>Cyperus alternifolius</i> | 4-6' | 3'-4' | Grass-like foliage with whorled flowers. Will tolerate 3-4 hours of sun. Shade tolerant. Zones 9-11. <u>3"</u> |
| Umbrella Palm, Dwarf <i>Cyperus alternifolius gracilis</i> | 18"-24" | 12"-24" | Dwarf grass that has dark green foliage and tufted flowers. Shade tolerant. Zones 9-11. <u>< 2"</u> |
| Papyrus, Dwarf <i>Cyperus isocladius</i> | 12"-18" | 12"-24" | Bright green, decorative, low growing sedge. Used in wet areas or ponds. Great accent plant and good plant for pots with no drainage. |
| Egyptian Paper Reed <i>Cyperus papyrus</i> | 8'-10' | 4'-6' | Elegant and exotic foliage. Shade tolerant. Zones 9-11. <u>6"</u> |
| Dwarf Bamboo <i>Dulichium arundinaceum</i> | 12"-18" | Indefinite | Excellent low screen. Zones 6-11. <u>4"</u> |
| Spike Rush <i>Eleocharis montevidensis</i> | 12"-18" | 12"-24" | Slower growing species than <i>E. palustris</i> , the common rush. Zones 6-11. <u>3"</u> |
| Dwarf Horsetail Reed <i>Equisetum scirpoides</i> | 8"-10" | 12"-24" | Nice accent for patio ponds. Same growth culture as the non-dwarf cultivar. Zones 4-11. |
| Variegated Manna Grass <i>Glyceria maxima variegata</i> | 18"-24" | 2' - 3' | Attractive foliage plant with striking cream stripes. |
| Rainbow Plant <i>Houttuynia cordata</i> | 6"-8" | Indefinite | Multi-colored, heart-shaped leaves. Best in containers. Can be invasive. Shade tolerant. Zones 6-11. <u>4"</u> |
| Water Poppy <i>Hydrocleys nymphoides</i> | 10"-12" | 3'-4' | Glossy leaves that are the perfect accent for its yellow flowers. Zone 9-11. <u>4-12"</u> |
| Yellow Water Iris, Yellow Flag <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> | 4'-6' | 3'-4' | Flower stems from 6'-7' with yellow flowers in early spring. Shade tolerant. Zone 4-11. <u>10"</u> |
| Siberian Iris <i>Iris sibirica</i> | 24"-36" | 12"-24" | Delicate blue, purple and white flowers in mid to late spring. Shade tolerant. Zones 4-11. <u>2"</u> |
| Louisiana Iris <i>Iris x fulva</i> | 24"-36" | 12"-24" | Grass-like foliage producing large flowers of different colors. Blooms spring and summer. Shade tolerant. Zone 4-11. <u>6"</u> |
| Spiral Corkscrew Rush <i>Juncus effusus f. spiralis</i> | 18"-24" | 12"-24" | Unique accent plant! Thick stems curl as they grow like a corkscrew. Small flowers are sparse and emerge from the sides. Zone 4-9. <u>4"</u> |
| Blue Rush <i>Juncus glaucus</i> | 18"-24" | 2' - 3' | Resembles blue fescue. Zone 4-11. <u>2"</u> |
| Mosaic Plant <i>Ludwigia sedeooides</i> | 2"-4" | 3'-4' | Floating foliage creates a mosaic pattern and produces yellow flowers mid-summer. Zone 8-11. <u>12"</u> |
| Water Clover <i>Marsilea macropoda</i> | 10"-12" | Indefinite | Actually a type of fern, water clover makes a neat ground cover in moist places or between rocks around the edge of a pond. Spreads vigorously in moist soil, but will not invade dry soil. |
| Water Clover <i>Marsilea mutica</i> | 6"-8" | 2' - 3' | Floating 4-leaf clover. Shade tolerant. Zone 5-11. <u>4"</u> |
| Lotus, Red Scarf <i>Nelumbo x</i> | 3'-4' | Indefinite | A medium sized single variety, one of the best reds. Narrow petals gracefully fold out from the center. |
| Lotus, Momo Botan <i>Nelumbo x</i> | 24"-36" | Indefinite | A beautiful dwarf hardy lotus that is less invasive than larger varieties. Double pink flowers only 2 feet from the water. Leaves also stay under two feet high. Water beads up on the leaves like quick silver. |
| Lotus, Green Maiden <i>Nelumbo x</i> | 3'-4' | Indefinite | Changeable flowers on medium sized plants. Pink changing to a yellowish green over several days. Very prolific. |
| Snowflake <i>Nymphoides indica</i> | 6"-8" | 3'-4' | Leaves are shaped like miniature lily pads with small 5 petaled white flowers with yellow centers. Zone 7-11. <u>3-4"</u> |

| | | | |
|---|---------|------------|---|
| Arrow Arum <i>Peltandra virginica</i> | 12"-18" | 12"-24" | NATIVE. Glossy arrowhead leaves. Zone 5-9. 6" |
| Frogs Mouth <i>Philycrum langinosum</i> | 24"-36" | 2' - 3' | Yellow flowers last for several weeks. Bloom period is from June through July. Native to Australia. Has succulent, Iris-like foliage. |
| Needleleaf Arrowhead <i>Sagittaria brevifolia</i> | 12"-18" | 12"-24" | Abundant white flower spikes in summer with arrow shaped foliage. Zone 3-11. 6" |
| Lance-leaved Arrowhead <i>Sagittaria lancifolia</i> | 24"-36" | 12"-24" | Abundant white flower spikes in summer with arrow shaped foliage. 6" |
| Common Bulrush <i>Scirpus atrovirens</i> | 4'-6' | Indefinite | Tall rounded green stems. Up to 3' deep water. |
| Narrow-leaved Cattail <i>Typha angustifolia</i> | 3'-7' | Indefinite | Narrow reed-like foliage with small narrow cattails in fall. Confine roots. 6" |
| Broadleaf Cattail <i>Typha latifolia</i> | 4'-6' | Indefinite | Tall straplike leaves with cylindrical spikes of tiny brown flowers that are often used in cut flower arrangements. |

Marginal Natives

| | | | |
|---|---------|------------|---|
| Horsetail Reed <i>Equisetum hyemale</i> | 18"-24" | Indefinite | NATIVE. Also known as Scouring Rush. Aggressive Spreader. Best grown in containers. Shade tolerant. Zones 3-11. 6" |
| Pickerel Rush <i>Pontederia cordata</i> | 24"-36" | 3'-4' | NATIVE. Shiny green heart-shaped foliage bearing spike, blue-white blooms all summer. Shade tolerant. |
| Lizard Tail <i>Saururus cernuus</i> | 24"-36" | 3'-4' | NATIVE. Attractive plant with fragrant white flowers in spring and summer. Shade tolerant. Zone 4-11. 6" |

Submerged

These plants are oxygenators, plants that are totally submerged, including leaves. They help prevent green water by absorbing excess nutrients and providing a foothold for water-filtering microorganisms.

| | | | |
|--|----------|---------|---|
| Cabomba <i>Cabomba caroliniana</i> | 10"-12" | 2' - 3' | Bright green fan-shaped, coarsely segmented leaves up to 1.5" in diameter. Small white blooms float at the water surface. |
| Foxtail <i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i> | under 2" | 12"-24" | Lacy foliage that resembles a fox's tail. This is a great oxygenating plant. |
| Anacharis (Elodea) <i>Egeria densa</i> | under 2" | 12"-24" | Vigorous grower with multi-branched stems of tiny white flowers at the waters surface. |
| Parrot's Feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i> | under 2" | 12"-24" | Can be used as a floating plant or planted in a container. Zone 6-11. 3-12" |
| Dwarf Sagittaria <i>Sagittaria natan (S. subulata)</i> | 10"-12" | 12"-24" | Ribbon-like leaves up to 10' long. |
| Eel Grass <i>Vallisneria americana</i> | 10"-12" | 12"-24" | NATIVE. Narrow ribbon-like leaves up to 36" long. 8' |

Hardy Water Lilies

These are winter hardy plants that should be placed in 12" to 36" of water depth.

| | | | |
|--|-------|--------|--|
| 'Red Spider' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 4'-6' | Light pink outer petals give way to dark red center. |
| 'Charlene Strawn' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 6'-10' | Yellow slightly fragrant blooms rise tall above the water. Shade tolerant. |
| 'Colorado' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 6'-10' | Excellent addition to the water garden. |
| 'Comanche' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 4'-6' | Pinkish-apricot flowers turn coppery-orange. Lovely, green speckled leaves and flowers that rise above the water several inches. |
| 'Perry's Baby Red' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 3'-4' | Dwarf lily with dark red blooms. Long blooming season. |
| 'Arc-en-ciel' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 8'-12' | Rainbow colored leaves. Pale pink blooms turn white. Very fragrant. |
| 'Hollandia' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 8'-12' | Double pink blooms. |
| 'Attraction' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 8'-12' | Garnet flowers with petals tipped in rose & flecked with white. Shade tolerant. |
| 'Texas Dawn' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 4'-6' | Vigorous grower with an abundance of yellow blooms. |
| 'Mayla'*' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 8'-12' | Large fuchsia pink blooms with dark green leaves. |
| 'Fabiola' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 3'-4' | Large pink flowers with dark pink centers becoming lighter on petal edges. |
| 'Joey Tomocik' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 8'-12' | Lemon yellow blooms above softly mottled foliage. Excellent bloomer with long blooming period. Shade tolerant. |
| 'Indiana' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 3'-4' | Small red-orange blooms fade to salmon against red-mottled, dark green leaves. |

Tropical Water Lilies

These are winter tender plants that require a warm shelter to winter over. Place in 12-36" of water.

| | | | |
|---|---------|--------|---|
| 'Ruby' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 4"-6" | 4'-6' | Vigorous red with viviparous green leaves. |
| 'Albert Greenburg' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 6'-10' | Apricot pink flowers above mottled light green foliage. |
| 'Woods White Night' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 6'-10' | Large, white night-bloomer with green leaves. |
| 'Texas Shell Pink' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 6'-10' | Apple blossom pink night bloomer with large bronze leaves. |
| 'Robert Strawn' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 8"-10" | 4'-6' | Light purple flowers rise high above the bright green leaves. Extra hardy for a tropical. |
| 'Nora' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 4'-6' | Deep blue/purple blooms with mottled viviparous leaves. |
| 'Marian Strawn' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 12"-18" | 4'-6' | Perfect white blooms with green leaves. |
| 'Dauben' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 12"-18" | 3'-4' | This miniature tropical is one of the most shade tolerant, blooming with only 4 hours of sun. Light blue flowers. Viviparous. |
| 'St. Louis Gold' <i>Nymphaea x hybrida</i> | 6"-8" | 3'-4' | Profuse blooming miniature with bright yellow blooms. |

Speak with a Garden Advisor for questions and additional help in growing water plants.

Compliments of North Haven Gardens • 7700 Northaven Rd, Dallas, TX 75230 • (214) 363-5316 • www.NHG.com

