



Care Sheet – Lotus Plants

About Lotus Plants - *Nelumbo Nucifer*

Nelumbo have existed on the earth for thousands of years and their distribution is widespread. They grow in a wide variety of climates including Australia, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. In Australia you can grow *lotus* from the tropics of North Queensland to the Snowy Mountains and Tasmania. There are two types of *lotus*, tropical and perennial temperate. The main difference is the tropical type grows all year round and the perennial temperate goes dormant during winter. We only sell the perennial temperate type.

TIPS for Growing Lotus

1. *Lotus* need a minimum of 6 hours direct sun a day during the growing season.
2. Never use potting mix to re-pot your lotus. Use good quality garden soil.
3. Keep Lotus away from flowing water or fountains.
4. Don't allow your pot or bowl to freeze solid in winter.
5. Don't submerge the growing leaves.
6. Re-pot your lotus in a larger container.
7. Protect your young lotus from birds & crustaceans.
8. Fertilize in when plant is actively growing.
9. Use Confidor Spray to control aphids and insects.

TIPS for growing lotus in pots, bowls and planters

Lotus need 6 hours of direct sunlight to flower. When deciding on a position for your plant, make sure it has plenty of sunshine. Secondly *Lotus* are water plants, don't let your pot or bowl dry out. Keep the water level 5cm over the soil, normal tap water is fine to use. It's important to re-pot your lotus into a larger pot or bowl for it to flower well. We suggest bowls wider than 60cm with a depth of 20cm for small varieties and wider than 80cm with a depth of 30cm for larger varieties.

TIPS for re-potting lotus

To re-pot your *lotus* carefully take the plant out of the nursery pot without damaging the roots. Place 1 teaspoon of slow release granulated fertilizer in the bottom of the container with a small amount of topsoil. Then place your plant in the middle of the container and put soil (**Never Use Potting Mix**) around the *lotus* up to a level of 10cm below the rim. We recommend using good quality topsoil with a pH between 6.5 - 8.0pH. Then add 2-3cm of pea gravel over the soil and fill the container with water, **DON'T submerge the growing leaves.**

Fertilize once a year between December and January with slow release granulated fertilizer. Place the fertilizer in tissue paper and poke into the soil on the edge of the container until it reaches the bottom. A guide of how much to use for pots & bowls: 60cm wide - 1 teaspoon, 80cm+ wide – 2 teaspoons

TIPS for growing lotus in small ponds

Re-pot your lotus into a larger container first, following the instructions above. Then place your *lotus* in the pond, choose a sunny spot away from water features. Make sure the water level of the pond covers the top of the pot without submerging the leaves. To fertilize follow the instructions above.

TIPS for planting lotus in lakes, dams and earth bottom ponds

This is the best way to grow lotus. If the plant has the room to expand and spread, they will flower better. There are two ways you can plant your *lotus* in earth bottom lakes, dams & ponds. Cut 150mm piece out of the side of the nursery pot taking care not to damage the roots. Place the plant in about 30cm+ of water keeping the leaves above the waterline. Choose a sunny spot away from flowing water. Push mud from under the water against the side of the pot where the section has been removed. OR take the *lotus* completely out of the pot, taking care not to damage the roots. Place the plant in about 30cm+ of water keeping the leaves above the waterline. Choose a sunny spot away from flowing water. Push mud from under the water around the plant. **Important – place chicken wire around the plant to protect it from yabbies and water birds until it has become established (4-6 weeks).**

TIPS for treating pests

- *Aphids*: Often cause spots on leaves. Treat with Confidor on the leaves ONLY! Not on water surface.
- *Water Snails*: Float lettuce leaves on the water overnight and remove leaves and snails in the morning.
- *Yabbies*: Place chicken wire around the plant until it has become established (4-6 weeks).
- *Duck Weed*: Remove by hand, use a net for ponds and small dams.
- *Algae*: Is caused by too much nutrient in the water often caused by rain run-off, rotting organic matter or over fertilizing. There are numerous products available to treat algae. We suggest removing the nutrient source first. Change the water if it's a small pond or pot and remove algae by hand.