



Care Sheet – Waterlily Plants

About Waterlily Plants – *Nymphaea*

Waterlilies grow in most countries of the world from the tropics to the edge of the subarctic. They require plenty of sun during the growing season to produce lots of flowers. There are three main types being temperate (hardy), sub-tropical and tropical. Waterlilies grow in most of Australia's climates and come in a huge range of colours, shapes and sizes. In Southern Australia, waterlilies flower from late spring – late autumn, then go dormant over winter.

TIPS for Growing Waterlilies

1. Hardy waterlilies need a minimum of 4 hours direct sun a day during the growing season to flower.
2. Sub-tropical & tropical waterlilies need full sun all day during the growing season to flower. You must protect them from frost and never let the water freeze, move pots under cover in winter. Always use bigger bowls and pots (80cm+) for these varieties and protect them from birds. *Sub-tropical & tropical varieties have a 25% mortality rate in temperate and cooler regions.*
3. Never use potting mix to re-pot your waterlilies. Use good quality topsoil (garden soil).
4. Keep waterlilies away from flowing water or fountains.
5. Don't allow your pot or bowl to freeze solid in winter.
6. Re-pot your waterlilies in a larger container every 1-2 years.
7. Protect your waterlilies from water birds & crustaceans.
8. Fertilize only when the plant is actively growing. Don't fertilize in winter.
9. Use Confidor Spray to control aphids and insects.

TIPS for growing waterlilies in pots, bowls and planters

Hardy waterlilies need a minimum of 4 hours direct sunlight to flower. Sub-tropical varieties need sun all day. Waterlilies also like a minimum of 10cm of water over the plants crown to be happy. When deciding on a position for your plant, make sure it has plenty of sunshine and plenty of water, normal tap water is fine to use. It's also important to re-pot your waterlilies every 1-2 years into a larger pot or bowl for them to flower well. We suggest bowls wider than 40cm with a depth of 15-20cm for small varieties and wider than 80cm with a depth of 30cm for larger varieties.

TIPS for re-potting waterlilies

The best time to re-pot waterlilies is during spring after they have sent up new leaves. Take the plant out of the nursery pot and trim the roots back by half, **making sure to leave one or two new growth tips/points coming out of the main root.** Place 1 teaspoon of granulated slow release fertilizer in the bottom of your new container with a small amount of topsoil (**Never Use Potting Mix**). Then place the trimmed plant in the container and fill with soil to a level of 10-15cm below the rim. We recommend using a 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 to the rim. Fertilize your plant once a year with slow release granulated fertilizer during the growing season, not during winter. Place 1 teaspoon of fertilizer in tissue paper and poke into the soil on the edge of the container until it reaches the bottom.

TIPS for growing waterlilies in small ponds

Place your new plant in the sunniest spot in your pond away from water features. Waterlilies like 15cm-45cm of water over the growing crown depending on the size and variety. If your pond is too deep, elevate the pot. Remember to re-pot your plant every 1-2 years and fertilize once a year following the directions above.

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

This is the best way to grow waterlilies. Find a sunny spot away from flowing water, take the plant out of the pot and place it in about 30 – 60cm of water. Push mud from under the water around the plant. Fertilize once a year during the growing season, not winter. Place 1 teaspoon of slow release granulated fertilizer in tissue and poke into the soil next to 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 & Water Birds:** 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.