



Our Story – History of the Gardens

Blue Lotus Water Garden has been owned by the Cochrane family for over 60 years. It was originally developed as a market garden where the family grew vegetables, predominantly Chinese cabbage. In the early 1990s, Geoff & Yvonne Cochrane decided to diversify and further develop the property for fly-fishing which resulted in the construction of Cochrane Lake and a few years later, Lotus Lake.

A range of waterlilies and lotus plants were added to beautify the waterways and provide shelter for the fish. However, the conditions were so ideal for these water plants, they flourished. As a result, Geoff decided to farm the waterlilies and lotus as a commercial crop and turn the rest of the property into a display garden. In the early 2000's work began to establish a retail nursery specializing in lotus and waterlilies. At the same time, the rest of the property was landscaped with thousands of plants. Walking tracks, bridges, more ponds and facilities were also built. In 2005 the plant nursery and gardens were officially opened covering approximately 14 acres featuring dozens of built waterways, 3km of trails plus hundreds of thousands of exotic, rare and beautiful flowering plants.

The Gardens

- Garden size - 14 acres or 5.6 hectares or 50,000 square metres
- Blue Lotus Water Garden has the largest display of water flowers – Lotus and Waterlilies – in Australia, and possibly the Southern Hemisphere.
- The property has been owned by the Cochrane family for over 60 years.
- 4 main types of lake Lotus – Cream Lutea, Mrs Perry Slocum, Hindu and Carolina Queen plus over 20 varieties of medium, small and miniature lotus.
- Thousands of waterlilies on display including over 100 varieties of temperate (hardy) waterlilies and 30+ tropical waterlilies.
- 40 man-made waterways including lakes, ponds, lagoons, bogs and a waterfall containing hundreds of varieties of flowering water plants.
- 3km of walking paths that weave through the gardens connecting by 20 ornamental bridges.
- Terrestrial gardens extensively landscaped with hundreds of trees, palms, shrubs, grasses and perennial flowers creating a tropical feel.
- Extensive facilities including childrens play areas, picnic shelters, café, kiosk, retail nursery and gift shops.



More about the Lotus Plants

- There are two types of Lotus in the world – temperate and tropical.
- Blue Lotus Water Garden grows mainly temperate Lotus which are summer active (December – April) and completely dormant in winter. In the northern hemisphere, temperate Lotus grow to about 48 degrees north e.g. north of Beijing and can withstand temperatures below -30, laying dormant under frozen lakes for up to 6 months. In late spring when the water warms, Lotus send up new leaves above the water followed by flower buds at the start of summer.
- Lotus flowers and leaves have a coating on them that makes them impervious to water.
- The Lotus root and seed is widely eaten throughout Asia.
- The Lotus plant is considered sacred to the Buddhist and Hindu community with the flowers used as offerings in temples and at festivals around the world.
- The Lotus flower is the national flower of India and Vietnam.

More about the Waterlily Plants

- Temperate (hardy) waterlilies range from old varieties found in Claude Monet's garden at Giverny, France to modern bred Waterlilies sourced from around the world.
- Tropical Waterlilies on display include a unique collection of Charles Winch (Sydney) bred lilies, the rare Egyptian Blue Lotus Waterlily and many others from around the world.
- Blue Lotus Water Garden houses some of the largest Waterlilies in the world in their Giants of the Amazon exhibit, with one of largest species being the Victoria Cruziana Waterlily. This species can be distinguished by its massive leaves (lily pads) which can reach up to 2 metres in diameter and flowers the size of a dinner plate

Native Australian Lotus and Waterlilies

- The Garden has a new display of native Lotus and Waterlilies housed in their Kakadu Lagoon Exhibit that originate from northern Australia.
- These flowers are unique to Australia and Papua New Guinea.
- Blue Lotus Water Garden has experimental ponds in Far North Queensland which hold many native Lotus and Waterlilies collected from northern Australia.