

Planting and caring instructions for Water Lilies & Deep Water Aquatics

Water lilies should be planted in a position where it will receive at least **4-5 hours** of sunlight per day during the warmer months whilst the deep water aquatics require much less and some can also tolerate shady areas. They are best planted out during late Winter or early Spring. This will enable them to establish well into their new environments by summer. If planted during other times of the year, the plants may not start growing until the weather warms up.

Use the following steps as a guide on how to plant your water lilies/deep water aquatics:

- 1) Upon receiving a bare-rooted water lily/deep water aquatic **rhizome/corm/tuber**, place them immediately in a bucket of water if you're not ready to plant them within the next few hours.
- 2) Use a planting basket or standard plastic pot (preferably **squat pots**) with at least a diameter of **150mm/6 inch** (for miniature/small lilies) and **200mm/8 inch** (for standard size water lilies or deep water aquatics). Line the bottom of the pots with old newspapers (for planting baskets lined **both** the bottom and the walls of the basket). This is to cover the holes and prevent any soil from leaking into the pond. (refer to diagram below)
- 3) Preparing the soil: mix **1** part of well-rotted (or well broken down) cow manure with **3** parts clay loam (or sandy loam). **NOTE: DO NOT** use potting mix or compost. Good healthy garden soil can also be used as an alternative.
- 4) Firm down the soil mixture surrounding the neck of the rhizome/corm/tuber. Allow the growing shoot/tip to be exposed just above the soil surface. Add a top layer of dressing 1cm thick using fine river sand/pebbles.
- 5) Gently water down the soil mix in the planting basket/pot until all air bubbles has been released before placing it into the pond. Place the basket/pot in a sunny position with the growing tip of the plant at either just **15cm – 20cm/6 inch – 8 inch** (for small/miniature growing lilies) or **20cm – 30cm/8 inch – 12 inch** (for standard size growing lilies and deep water aquatics) fully submerged below the water surface of your pond.
- 6) To fertilise once the weather warms up, add in aquatic fertiliser tablets. Recommended dosage is around **1/2 a green fertiliser** tablet to each **150mm/6 inch** planting basket/pot and **1** tablet to each **200mm/8 inch** planting basket/pot for every 2nd month, starting spring until the end of summer. **NOTE:** Only use slow release fertilisers (**light brown tablets**) when you have ponds larger than 1m x 1m in surface space and feed only once every 3-4 months.

After plants become established and flowering (when in season), please be aware that the first few blooms (i.e., shape & colour of petals) may be different to what an established plant flower will look like. This is due to the transplanting of the rootstock (i.e. after repotting). In Australia, hardy water lilies usually flowers between **October** to **April**. Tropical water lilies usually flowers between **December** to **May** (in tropical regions – flowers all year round). Most deep water aquatics will flower during the warmer months.

