

POND PLANTS

Farmington Gardens 21815 SW Farmington Rd, Beaverton 503.649.4568 www.farmingtongardens.com

To maintain a healthy and attractive pond it is necessary to achieve an ecological balance between all the pond's inhabitants. Clear water, healthy fish and lush plants will result, adding greatly to the beauty of your garden. There are many excellent books available on pond care and culture, including how to select and care for pond hardware and fish. This fact sheet describes the types of plants to consider placing in an existing pond, and provides a brief overview of their placement and long-term care.

Submerged Oxygenators – A Vital Element

These underwater plants are critical to a healthy pond. They provide oxygen for fish and beneficial bacteria, compete with unwanted algae for light and nutrients, and provide food, shelter and a breeding environment for fish. Most submerged plants are sold as bunches of stem cuttings. These can be potted and placed at the pond's floor, or simply released to grow submerged. As a general rule, use one bunch of submerged plants per square foot of pond surface.

Floating Aquatics – A Tropical Touch

Most floating water plants sold in this area are tropical in origin. Treat these as annuals and replace yearly. Floaters add visual interest, help control algae by shading the pool, and the submerged roots provide shelter for fish. No more than one third of the total surface area should be covered by floating plants, or submerged plants will receive inadequate light.

Shallow Water Plants – Adding Color and Contrast

These hardy, semi-hardy, or tropical perennials will thrive in containers placed within the pond on shallow shelves or in moist pond side margins. Most shallow water plants grow well with somewhere between one to six inches of water over the top of their pots. Shallow water plants add flowers, foliage contrast and structure to the pond's appearance, provide screening for pond hardware and attract birds, frogs and other wildlife. If hardy, these plants can be removed from the pond and over-wintered in a sheltered area. Semi-hardy and tropical plants can be brought into a heated greenhouse or maintained as houseplants.

Bog Plants – Soggy but Happy!

Bog plants do well in soil that is constantly wet. They're great at the edges of natural ponds, stream sides or muddy pool edges. They add height, color and foliage contrast to spots with poorly drained soil. They can also be grown in containers kept constantly moist or placed in shallow saucers of water.

Water Lilies

Water lilies are probably the most recognizable and desirable water plants available. Tropical varieties must have protection from winter cold. Hardy species and hybrids can easily survive our winters as long as ponds are deep enough to remain unfrozen at the bottom. Hardy lilies come in a wide variety of colors and a range of sizes suitable for large ponds to table-top container gardens. Medium to large varieties should be placed 12-24 inches underwater and dwarf varieties 6-12 inches underwater. Leaves must reach the water surface to enable the plant to access oxygen. Newly purchased lilies should be placed as close to the surface as needed for the leaves to reach the top, then gradually dropped deeper as the plant grows. To over-winter lilies, simply drop the pots to the pond bottom in late fall. Ponds 24 inches or deeper are generally safe for over-wintering.

Most of our pond plants are recommended to be positioned at 1-3 inches below the water surface.

Acorus gramineus 'Variegatus' – Variegated Sweet Flag

Height: 1 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Low growing iris-like leaves with green and cream striping. Inconspicuous flowers.

Aponogeton distachyos – Water Hawthorne

Height: 6 inches Exposure: Full sun Overwinter inside: no
Evergreen aquatic perennial with fragrant white flowers in winter and spring. Will spread to 4 ft.

Caltha palustris – Marsh Marigold

Height: 5-12 inches Exposure: Partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Multiple buttercup-like yellow blossoms in early spring.

Canna – Canna Lily

Height: 4-6 ft Exposure: Full sun Overwinter inside: no
Tropical water plant with large, broad-bladed leaves. Summer blooms – assorted colors.

Carex nigra – Black Flowering Sedge

Height: 6-9 inches Exposure: Full sun Overwinter inside: no
Steel blue tufts of grass foliage will form a nice edge in any pond. The black flowers form in spring.

Cyperus alternifolius 'Gracilis' – Dwarf Umbrella Palm

Height: 2-3 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: yes
Parasols of ribbon-like leaves splayed around the tips of tall bare stems contrast small wheat colored flowers.

Cyperus haspan 'Variegata' – Dwarf Variegated Papyrus

Height: 1-2 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: yes
Tropical plant with fine, thread-like foliage held above round, bare stems.

Glyceria maxima 'Variegata' – Variegated Manna Grass

Height: 2 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Vigorous grower. Dark pink grassy foliage in early spring matures to yellow and white.

Houttuynia cordata 'Chameleon' – Chameleon Plant

Height: 6-12 inches Exposure: Full to light sun Overwinter inside: no
Will rapidly spread indefinitely. In summer, bears white flowers. Leaves have an unusual scent.

Juncus effusus 'Spiralis' – Corkscrew Rush

Height: 12-18 inches Exposure: Sun or shade Overwinter inside: no
Evergreen in milder winters. Unique spiral foliage with small brown flowers in summer.

Juncus effusus 'Zebrinus' – Zebra Rush

Height: 2-3 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Evergreen in milder winters. In summer has gold brown seed heads.

Juncus patens – California Gray Rush

Height: 1-3 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
A clumping, evergreen rush. Inconspicuous flowers. Tolerates a wide range of conditions.

Lysimachia nummularia 'Aurea' – Golden Creeping Jenny

Height: 2 inches Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Rapid growth, evergreen, will spread indefinitely. In summer, produces bright yellow flowers.

Phalaris arundinacea 'Feecey' – Strawberry and Cream Ribbon Grass

Height: 2 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
White and green leaves are variegated with pink. Flower spikes in summer turn from blush pink to light brown.

Pontederia cordata – Pickerel Rush

Height: 2 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Numerous flower spikes densely packed with deep blue petals from spring to fall. Don't allow crown to freeze.

Sagittaria australis 'Silk Stockings' – Silk Stockings Arrowhead

Height: 18-30 inches Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Leaves unfurl with beautiful purple coloration in spring and as they mature they fade to a light purple and green with attractive variegated netlike pattern. Sprays of white flowers with red bracts.

Saururus cernuus – Lizard's Tail

Height: 3-4 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Deep green heart-shaped leaves. Gracefully arching spikes of tiny white flowers nod above foliage. Fragrant!

Typha latifolia – Graceful Cattail

Height: 6 ft Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Good for balance or screening in large ponds. Develops large catkin pokers.

Typha minima 'Europa' – Micro-mini Cattail

Height: 18-24 inches Exposure: Full to partial sun Overwinter inside: no
Smallest cattail we know of. Produces many catkins in summer once established.