

Water is an important element in the garden atmosphere. This element is easily added with a simple water bowl planter. Your water bowl can be a single plant in a 10" pot, to a combination of plants in a larger container. Water bowls are not only easy to create, but also to maintain. There is virtually no watering necessary!

this pamphlet discusses how to create and maintain a water bowl, and a discussion on different types of water plants.

### Floaters



Floaters are plants that do not require soil and just float on the water surface. Water Hyacinth and Water Lettuce are generally annual floaters. They can be placed in a small bowl in a sunny, East-facing window for over wintering. These floating plants are simply elegant in a glazed bowl.

Float these plants root-side down in water in full sun or part shade. Water Hyacinth and Water Lettuce are composted after the first hard frost, or over winter them as mentioned above.

### Marginals



Water plants termed as marginals generally grow on the edges of ponds and streams in their natural setting. Marginals are perfect for setting in a container, which is then filled with gravel. Our largest selection of water plants fall in this category. Here are some of our favorites.

***Acorus sp.* - Sweet Flag and Japanese rush.** There are several choices in this genus of low growing grass-like plants. They offer color and structure.

***Canna-*** A group of deciduous perennials with large leaves and bright showy flowers. Some grow 3'tall, and others 4-6' tall. A larger container is recommended to accommodate these robust plants.

***Colocasia sp.* -** Tropical water plants with large arrow shaped leaves. These 4-6' plants make a bold statement. Full sun to part shade. Submerge up to 6" in water.

***Cyperus* – Umbrella Palm, and *Papyrus.*** Sprays of thin leaves form parasols on long stems. *C. giganteus* is tropical and reaches 6-10' tall. Submerge this species up to 12" in water. Full to part sun. Submerge other species up to 6" in water.

***Lindernia grandiglora-* Blue **Moneywort.** Dark green foliage pairs well with the blue and white flowers spring to summer. Spreading plant reaching 1-3" tall. Full to part sun. Submerge zero- 2" in water.**

***Lobelia-*** Summer to fall blooming perennials reaching 2-3' tall. *L. cardinalis* and *L. fulgens* 'Queen Victoria' have striking red flowers. Full to part sun. Submerge up to 3" in water.

***Lysimachia n.* 'Aurea'- Golden **Creeping Jenny.** A creeping plant with bright golden leaves and yellow summer flowers. Reaches 6" tall. Full to part sun. Submerge 0-1" in water.**

***Myosotis scorpioides-* Water Forget-**Me-Not.** Creeping plants with blue or white flowers spring through summer. Grows 1'**

tall. Full to part sun. Submerge up to 3" in water.

***Orontium aquaticum-* Golden Club.** Fuzzy sea green leaves on 1-2' plants. White flower spikes in early spring. Full to part sun. Submerge up to 10" in water.

***Pontederia cordata-* Purple **Pickerelweed.** Prolific deep blue flower spikes spring through fall. Grows 2' tall in full to part sun. Submerge up to 6" in water.**

***Scirpus zebrinus-* Zebra Rush.** Striking straw-like foliage is banded cream and green. Remove plain green stems. Grows to 4-6' tall. Full to part sun. Submerge up to 18" in water.

### Submerged



Submerged plants are sunk to the bottom of a deep pot or shallow pond. As these plants grow, they help suppress algae and add oxygen to the water. Water lilies fall into this category.

Submerge water lilies 6-24" under water. Fertilize regularly during the growing season with an aquatic fertilizer. Hardy water lilies are perennial as long as they do not freeze in ice. A one-gallon water lily will need to be repotted the following year to allow room for growth.

Small, hardy water lilies are most suitable for containers. Small varieties include Fire Opal (rich pink), Somptuosa (pink/white), Burgundy Princess, Aurora (yellow, orange and red), Hermine (white), and Chromatella (yellow).

## After care

### Watering

Watering is very easy. Simply refill the container when the water is no longer visible above the gravel. With submerged or floating plants, simply top off the water as needed.

### Fertilizing

Most water plants do not need fertilizer. Water lilies however, are heavy feeders. Use aquatic fertilizer tablets, such as Laguna water sticks, monthly through the growing season.

### Repotting

In successive seasons, your water plants will need more room for continued growth. You can put the plants in larger containers, or divide the plants and create another container. It is essential to repot or divide water lilies every year.

### Winter care

Some plants such as water hyacinth, water lettuce and tropical water lilies are annuals in our climate. Specific instructions for over wintering the water hyacinth and water lettuce are outlined in the Floater section. Hardy water lilies need to be kept in a sheltered area so the water in the container does not freeze. In addition, water bowls with marginal plants should also be sheltered from freezing conditions.



## Creating a water bowl

Creating a water bowl is very simple. Materials and steps are outlined here. Most water plants require at least a half day of sun. Consider this as you decide where to position your container.

### Materials

- > Container without drainage holes
- > Gravel, decorative rock, or marbles
- > Small plastic pots for repotting plants
- > Plant material

1. **Repot your plants-** The marginal and submerged plants will need larger plastic pots to allow for growth.

2. **Place plants-** Arrange the plant or plants in the water bowl/container. If you are using plants, which require different depths, use gravel, extra plastic pots etc. to adjust the 'planting' level.

3. **Fill-** Once plants are in the proper place and level; fill in the empty space with gravel. The gravel will hold the plants in place. A decorative top layer of polished rock or sea glass adds a nice touch to the water bowl. After the container is full with gravel, fill with water and enjoy.



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## Water bowls

### Ideas and instruction for Outdoor water plant containers

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