



# Water Lilies for Texas Ponds

**“What kind of water lilies can I put in my pond?”** It’s a frequent question. For the answer, first consider your own unique setting, since no 2 water gardens are ever the same. The best situation for any lily is to have at least 5 hours of full sun everyday.

## Small Space Suggestions

For **whiskey barrel ponds** in partial sun, tropical lilies such as **Colorata** or **Dauben** will do well. If you prefer hardy lilies, look for **Perry’s Baby Red**, **Indiana**, **Charlene Strawn**, **Joey Tomocik**, **Hermine** or **Aurora**. If your pond is less than 8 feet in diameter and in partial sun, good tropical choices are **Panama Pacific**, **Colorata**, **Tina** and **Mrs. Martin E. Randig**. Best hardy selections would be **Joey Tomocik**, **Laydekeri Fulgens**, **Aurora** or **Hermine**.

## Day and Night Bloomers

Larger leaf plants are ideal for ponds larger than 8 feet and located in full sun. Try the tropical day bloomers **Pamela Blue Beauty**, **Pink Capensia**, **Pink Pearl**, **Jack Wood**, **Evelyn Randig**, **Albert Greenberg** and **Wood’s Blue Goddess**. Tropical night bloomers that would be appropriate are **Red Flare**, **Emily Grant Hutchins**, **Trudy Slocum**, **Antares**, **Texas Shell Pink** and **Juno**.

If you have fish in your pond, it is best to use the hardy lilies with **Marliac** rootstock. The root system of this type of plant tends to grow mostly in a pineapple shape, keeping the plant clumped in one area better than a plant of the **Odorata** rootstock, which grows in a somewhat straight line across the pond.

It is also important that your pond have a consistent depth. If the pond’s depth tends to fluctuate, the plant will never have the opportunity to be at its fullest growth and beauty potential. After about 2 years, it is a good idea to pull the entire lily up and split the new growths away from the original plant and then replant the original lily once again.

## How Many?

Avoid overcrowding your pond! It is best to have room for submerged, floating and/or border aquatics. Also, leave room for clear water space. Cover no more than 2/3 of the pond’s surface with water lilies.

Calculate your square footage of water surface, and calculate what a mature water lily’s spread would be. *Extensive* growers cover 12 or more square feet. *Medium* growers cover 6 to 12 square feet. *Small* growers cover 6 or fewer square feet. If overcrowded, water lily leaves will rise above the water surface seeking sunlight (or curl upward). If too overcrowded, some lilies may go dormant or die due to lack of sunlight.

Finally, remember that all water lilies prefer still water, so place them away from areas of your pond with strong flowing water.

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The source for this **GVST Gardening Guide** is Ruth Ann Schultz of THF Ornamentals in Poteet. THF Ornamentals grows and supplies aquatic plants to water garden centers throughout South Texas. For more information about water gardening, contact the Water Garden Club of South Texas--Sandy Harper, president (sharper7@earthlink.net). Visit **www.PlantAnswers.com** for more information about water garden plants, including color photos. All GVST Gardening Guides can be found on our website: **www.gardeningvolunteers.org**.