Native plants and animals can enhance your aquatic garden, creating a beautiful and serene place for you to enjoy.
PROTECT NEW YORK’S NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS BY MAKING INFORMED CHOICES WHEN CREATING YOUR AQUATIC GARDEN:

• Place your garden upland and away from waterbodies to prevent storms or flooding from washing away any plants or animals;
• Before planting, always rinse off any dirt or debris—including potential eggs, animals, or unwanted plant parts and seeds—preferably in a sunny location away from water; and
• Choose native and non-invasive plants to create your aquatic garden.
**RECOMMENDED SPECIES: floating plants**

**white water lily (Nymphaea odorata)**

Bright green, round floating leaves are reddish to purple underneath and measure up to 10 inches across. Flowers are fragrant and have many rows of white petals. Sepals and stamens are vibrant yellow color in center of flower. Plants are rooted with a long stem with large rhizomes buried in the sediment. Perennial.

**American lotus (Nelumbo lutea)**

**Carolina mosquito fern (Azolla cristata)**

**common watermeal (Wolffia columbiana)**

**needle leaf Ludwigia (Ludwigia alternifolia)**
RECOMMENDED SPECIES: submerged plants

**spatterdock (Nuphar advena)**

**watershield (Brasenia schreberi)**

**water purslane (Ludwigia palustris)**

**lesser duckweed (Lemna minor)**

**water stargrass (Heteranthera dubia)**

clasping-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*)
common waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*)
dwarf sagittaria (*Sagittaria subulata*)
giant arrowhead (*Sagittaria montevidensis*)
long-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton nodosus*)
mermaid weed (*Proserpinaca palustris*)

wild celery (*Vallisneria americana*)
RECOMMENDED SPECIES: shallow-water plants

**cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis)**
Grows 2–6 inches tall. Leaves are alternate and toothed. Flowers are fire-engine red and tubular in shape, growing 1–1.75 inches in length. Requires saturated to wet-mesic soils. Comparatively easy to grow. Hummingbirds are attracted to the nectar. Herbaceous perennial.

**northern blue flag (Iris versicolor)**
Narrow sword-shaped leaves stay attractive all season. Spring bloomer with several blue-violet flowers per stem. Prefers full sun to partial shade. With moist to wet soils, tolerant of standing water. Grows to a height of 24–36 inches. Perennial.

**American brooklime (Veronica americana)**

**American frogbit (Limnobium spongia)**

**American water willow (Justicia americana)**

**arrow arum (Peltandra virginica)**
bulrush (Schoenoplectus spp)
cattail (Typha latifolia)
common horsetail (Equisetum arvense)
common milkweed (Asclepias syriaca)
common soft rush (Juncus effusus)
groundnut (Apios americana)
marsh marigold (Caltha palustris)
northern arrowhead (Sagittaria cuneata)
pickerel weed (*Pontederia cordata*)

pussy willow (*Salix discolor*)

sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*)

swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

sweetflag (*Acorus americanus*)

three square rush (*Schoenoplectus americanus*)

water arum (*Calla palustris*)

water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*)
RECOMMENDED SPECIES: bog plants

purple pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*)

Carnivorous plant found in peat bogs that are low in essential nutrients such as nitrogen, calcium, magnesium, and potassium. They photosynthesize but also capture small insects in their water-filled pitcher-shaped leaves and digest them with enzymes. Plants grow 8–12 inches high. Leaves vary in color from reddish-green to purple and red and grow up to 8 inches long. Leaves congregate around a single nodding flower with bright red, rounded petals. Herbaceous perennial.

sundews (*Drosera* spp)

willow moss (*Fontinalis* spp)
RECOMMENDED SPECIES: fish

golden shiner (Notemigonus crysoleucas)

Habitat-generalist fish, one of the most widespread in NYS. Juveniles are silver in color, but adults are gold or brassy with red fins. Adults are typically 5–7 inches long, but can grow as long as 10 inches. Reach maturity at age two. Spawn in late spring/early summer, eggs adhere to submerged vegetation. Habitat ranges from quiet ponds with submerged aquatic vegetation to large rivers. Popular bait fish.

fathead minnow (Pimephales promelas)
Some plants and animals promoted or sold for water-gardening purposes are invasive, meaning they are non-native and can cause harm to the environment, economy, or even human health. Invasive plants and animals can escape from water gardens and can grow unchecked without native predators. Escaped invasive species can negatively impact your community by:

- Dominating your aquatic garden, limiting the growth of surrounding plants and animals;
- Forming dense patches of vegetation that cause flowing water to become stagnant and prevent boating, fishing, and swimming;
- Causing die-off of invasive vegetation, which can decrease dissolved oxygen and harm fish;
- Shading out native plants that provide food, shelter, and oxygen for a wide array of wildlife;
- Increasing erosion along the banks of waterways, reducing water clarity, and making bankside habitat unstable.

**WATCH OUT!**

Intentionally releasing aquatic plants and animals harms our waterways. Help prevent unwanted releases by choosing native options when available.

These non-native or invasive species are NOT recommended for use in your water garden. Many of the following species are subject to regulations that help control invasive species by reducing the spread of existing populations and avoiding new infestations.

- **Prohibited species** are plants or animals that are illegal to sell, import, purchase, transport, or introduce (release into the environment)
- **Regulated species** are plants or animals that can be sold (must be labeled as invasive) or owned, but cannot be released or planted in the outdoor environment

### INVASIVE SPECIES: floating plants

- **Water hyacinth** *(Eichhornia crassipes)*
- **European frogbit** *(Hydrocharis morsus-ranae)*
- **Water lettuce** *(Pistia stratiotes)*
- **Yellow floating heart** *(Nymphoides peltata)*
INVASIVE SPECIES: shallow-water plants

PROHIBITED

common reed (*Phragmites australis*)

great manna grass (*Glyceria maxima*)

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)

marsh dayflower (*Murdannia keisak*)

purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*)

yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)
INVASIVE SPECIES: submerged plants

Brazilian elodea or anacharis (*Egeria densa*)

curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*)

Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*)

parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)

water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*)

water thyme (*Hydrilla verticillata*)

waterwheel plant (*Aldrovanda vesiculosa*)
INVASIVE SPECIES: fish

REGULATED

goldfish (Carassius auratus)

koi (Cyprinus carpio)

INVASIVE SPECIES: snails

apple snails (Ampullariidae)

ramshorn snails (Planorbidae)
Get started with native species today!

watershield (Brasenia schreberi)

RESOURCES

- Take photos and report infestations of invasive plants or animals to isinfo@dec.ny.gov or to the iMapInvasives database: http://www.nyimapinvasives.org/.

- Find more plants that are native to your area at the New York Flora Atlas: www.newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu.

- Check out the New York Botanical Garden’s tips for starting your own water garden at https://libguides.nybg.org/watergarden.

- To see a list of invasive plants by state, visit the International Waterlily and Water Gardener’s Society: www.iwgs.org/invasive-species/.