



# Marginal Plants

## *Hardy & Tropical*

*For more information about the  
Colorado Water Garden Society  
or other aspects of pond keeping along the front-range go to:*

<http://www.colowatergardensociety.org>

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This brochure will investigate marginal plants by species. Marginal plants are used in the shallow part of your pond. Water plants are listed with a hardiness zone where they are best grown, but with some care most water plants can be kept year-round. Most water plants are listed as hardy or tropical. For those of us living in Metro Denver, depending on our Winter, "hardy" translates to mean zone 5 or 6. A tropical to us is normally zone 7. What that means is any plant with a zone 7 or higher must be protected, while zone 6 is borderline. Protection can mean protection from freezing to treating the plant as a houseplant for the Winter.

### **HARDY MARGINALS**

ARROW ARUM Araceae

*Peltandra*, Zone 5 - 9

Arrowhead shaped leaf on a 1' - 2' tall stem

*Peltandra sagittifolia* can produce white flowers.

*Peltandra virginica* can produce green flowers. Sun to shade.

ARROWHEAD Alismataceae

*Sagittaria latifolia*, Zone 5 - 10

Arrow-shaped green leaves with small white flowers. Sun.

BOGBEAN Menyanthaceae

*Menyanthes trifoliata*, Zone 3 - 10

An herbaceous perennial 9" - 12" tall with three-lobed, dark green leaves with short-lived white flowers in the Spring. Sun.

CATTAIL Typhaceae

*Typha*, Zone 3 - 11

*Typha angustifolia* has a narrow-leaf cattail and grows to 4'.

*Typha minima*, Dwarf grows 12" to 18".

*Typha laxmannii* 'Graceful' has slender leaves at 4' tall.

*Typha latifolia* 'Variegata' can reach 5' to 7' tall with variegated leaves. Sun to part shade.

GIANT REED Poaceae

*Arundo donax*, Zone 7 - 11

This is a tall plant at 3' to 8' and looks a lot like bamboo. Sun to part shade.

HORSETAIL Equisetaceae

*Equisetum*, Zone 4 - 11

*Equisetum hyemale* grows to 4' with a hollow stem and green with black bands around.

*Equisetum scorpioides* is a dwarf horsetail 4" tall. Sun to part shade.

IRIS Iridaceae

*Iris*, Zone 4 - 9

There are many types of iris in many colors. They can be Louisiana hybrids, Siberian, and native *pseudacorus* (yellow). Sun to light shade.

LIZARD'S TAIL Saururaceae

*Saururus cernuus*, Zone 4 - 9

Heart-shaped leaves on 2' stems with white flower spikes. Sun to part shade.

MARSH MARIGOLD Ranunculaceae

*Caltha palustris*, Zone 2 - 6

Produces bright shiny yellow flowers in the Spring with dark leaves.

'Alba' will produce white flowers.

'Flore Pleno' will produce double yellow flowers. Sun.

PICKEREL RUSH Pontederiaceae

*Pontederia cordata*, Zone 3 - 9

Sword-like leaves with purple or white (*Alba*) flowers. Grows to 18" to 24". Sun to part shade.

RIBBON GRASS Poaceae

*Phalaris arundinacea*, Zone 4 - 9

Ribbon grass can be white variegated (*Picta*) or yellow (*Luteo picta*) variegated and stand up to 2' tall, Can be invasive. Part shade.

SEDGE Cyperaceae

*Carex pseudocyperus*, Zone 3-7

There are more than 2,000 species in the genus *Carex*, but those used in our ponds should be planted shallow. They have narrow leaves. Sun to Part shade.

SOFT RUSH/COMMON/CORKSCREW Juncaceae

*Juncus effusus* 'Spiralis', Zone 3 - 8

Common Rush is green with upright stems 2' to 5' tall.

Corkscrew Rush have a twisting habit. Sun.

SPIKE RUSH Cyperaceae

*Eleocharis montevidensis*, Zone 3-11

Grass like plant 6"-12" that if left unchecked can become a weed. Sun to part shade

SWEET FLAG Araceae

*Acorus*, Zone 4 - 10

*Acorus calamus* is 2' to 4' either solid green or variegated and when the leaves are crushed, the fragrance is citrusy.

*Acorus gramineus* is smaller at 6" to 9" with dark green and white leaves and is also called Japanese sweet flag. Sun to part shade.

WATER PARSLEY/CELERY Apiaceae

*Oenanthe sarmentosa*, Zone 6 - 9

Green leaf or variegated. This plant grows to 12" and is a good water filter. Can be invasive. Sun

## **TROPICAL MARGINALS**

BOG OR SWAMP LILY Liliaceae

*Crinum americanum*, Zone 8 - 11

Tropical plant with long, narrow green leaves with white flowers. Sun.

CANNA Cannaceae

*Canna*, Zone 7 - 10

Cannas come in all colors (flowers and leaves) and sizes. Flowers are red, pink, yellow and orange.

Foliage can be tall, short, solid, or striped. Sun.

PAPYRUS, DWARF Cyperaceae

*Cyperus haspan*, Zone 9 - 11

Yellow-green flower heads on stems of 12" to 18". Sun to part shade.

PAPYRUS, GIANT Cyperaceae

*Cyperus papyrus*, Zone 10

Tall 12' to 15' with large mop heads. Sun to part shade.

PAPYRUS, MEXICAN Cyperaceae

*Cyperus giganteus*, Zone 8 - 11

Very tall and can grow to 12' to 15'. Erect stems with fluffy foliage. Sun to part shade.

SPIDER LILY Liliaceae

*Hymenocallis littoralis*, Zone 7 - 10

Planted from a bulb, the flower is white with dark green foliage. Sun to part shade.

STAR GRASS Cyperaceae

*Dichromena colorata*, Zone 9 - 10

An evergreen sedge that grows 12"-18" tall and produces white star-shaped flowers. Sun to part shade.

TARO Araceae

*Colocasia esculenta*, Zone 9 - 11

Taro come in green, purple, and variegated leaves and stems. Best grown in part shade.

THREE-WAY SEDGE Cyperaceae

*Dulichium arundinaceum*, Zone 6 - 10

Not a true bamboo, but looks like bamboo at 18" to 24". Sun to part shade.

UMBRELLA PALM Cyperaceae

*Cyperus alternifolius*, Zone 7 - 11

Dark green leaves radiate out like an umbrella with a height of 2' to 5'. Sun to part shade

**BORDERLINE MARGINALS**

CARDINAL FLOWER Campanulaceae

*Lobelia cardinalis*, Zone 6 - 9

It is a perennial, herbaceous plant 18" tall with rosy red flowers. Sun.

CHAMELEON PLANT Saururaceae

*Houttuynia cordata*, Zone 6 - 10

Place container in shallow water 1" - 2". It has heart-shaped, bluish green leaves and 1" flower spikes with white bracts. Sun to shade.

FLOWERING RUSH Butomaceae

*Butomus umbellatus*, Zone 6 - 10

Green leaves with pink flower stalks in July and August. Place in shallow water. Sun to part shade.

GOLDEN CLUB Araceae

*Orontium aquaticum*, Zone 6 - 10

Small, golden flowers on 4" spikes with 12" long/4" wide oval leaves. Sun.

POWDERY THALIA Marantaceae

*Thalia dealbata*, Zone 6 - 9

*Canna* like leaves with purple flower stalks that stand 2' to 6' tall.

*Thalia geniculata*, Zone 6 - 9

Red stemmed, stands 5' to 6'. Sun to part shade.

ROSE MALLOW/SWAMP HIBISCUS Malvaceae

*Hibiscus moscheutos*, Zone 5 - 11

This woody plant grows to 4' with 4" - 6" flowers in red, pink, or white. This plant dies back in the Winter and starts fresh in late Spring. Sun

SEDGE Cyperaceae

*Cyperus longus*, Zone 6 - 10

Triangular stems that grow to 2'-4' tall. Leaves radiate from the top with brown spike-lets.

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