

Beloved species from Canada's wetlands

FRAGRANT WATER-LILY

Nymphaea odorata

ALSO KNOWN AS: WHITE WATER-LILY, SWEET-SCENTED WATER-LILY, BEAVER ROOT AND ALLIGATOR BONNET

- + Flowers close at night and on dark days.
- + On the first day of flowering, the plant produces a sweet-smelling liquid in the flower's centre to attract pollen-covered beetles and bees. The insects fall into the liquid, which collects pollen needed for fertilization before the insects (usually) escape.
- + On the second or third day of flowering, instead of liquid, the plant produces pollen to fertilize other water-lilies, which is released from the stamens for insects to collect and transport.
- + A plant only flowers for three days — then pulls its fertilized blooms underwater by coiling its stalk. Seeds ripen underwater.
- + Ducks help spread water-lily seeds (and therefore improve genetic diversity) by eating them and travelling to other ponds and lakes, where they excrete the seeds.
- + All water-lily plants are edible and considered medicinal, but may be protected—so check first and if allowed, harvest with conservation in mind.
- + Flowers can be white or pink, with petals that will not sink.

