

Water gardens are growing in popularity

The popularity of water gardening continues to grow — each year the sparkle and splash of water are added to more gardens and the topics of liners, pumps, algae and koi are part of gardening conversations.

But there are those among us who do not have the space nor the inclination to begin excavating for a lily pond (in some municipalities this also requires making a fenced enclosure).

Yet, it's still possible to

experience the joy of water gardening by using containers. This is not a new idea — the Chinese have been water gardening in containers for nearly 5,000 years.

It is much less demanding than the traditional form of container gardening — there's no need to water everyday.

All that's needed to get started is a container that holds water or can be sealed so that it will do so.

The traditional whiskey

barrels should be lined with plastic to prevent chemical residue from leaching into the water. "Perfect fit" liners are sold for this specific purpose.

Although it isn't a necessity, mini pumps and fountains or "water spouting" ornaments can be installed for effect but the plants will keep the water clean.

Put a potted dwarf water lily on the bottom of the containers.

Place some potted plants



Let's Get Growing

Marjorie Mason Hogue

on bricks so that they are just below the surface of the water. Add a layer of gravel or small stones to cover the soil of all the potted plants. There is a wide choice of pond plants from the grass-like sedges and miniature cattails to myosotis palustris — the water forget-me-not.

Fill with water and add some floating plants to shade the water — keeping it cool and to compete with algae for available nutrients, thus keeping the water clear.

Choose from water hyacinths, water lettuce or the tiny duckweed (lemma) or fairy moss (azolla).

After several days, add snails, oxygenating plants (anchored to a stone) and fish to eat mosquito larvae.

Because the water can become quite warm in small containers it is better to choose tropical fish rather than goldfish which prefer cool water. Because they can be viewed only from above, do not choose slender bodied ones such as angel fish.

Good choices would be fancy guppies, mollies or swordtails. Feed them lightly with a floating food that can be netted out if they do not finish it within a few minutes.

A low wide bowl without drainage holes makes an excellent "bog garden" for moisture loving plants such as lobelia cardinalis, primula japonica, iris versicolour and many others. A bog garden of hardy plants could be dug into the garden for overwintering while a bog of the tropics — papyrus, calla lilies, etc., could be wintered in a solarium or greenhouse.

There are even water plants with trailing habits that are suitable for growing in hanging baskets.

On my upcoming garden visit to England, I will be visiting the Museum of Water Gardening at Stapley Water Gardens. I promise a full report on my return.

I will be presenting a free entitled The Dry Garden on Saturday, June 21 at 10 a.m. For directions, call 905-649-3532.

Send your questions or comments to:

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SHAW

Educational scholarship offered to farm family students

Monsanto Canada has launched its seventh annual agri-business scholarship program, now totalling \$50,000, in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

In each province, 10 \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to high school students, from a family farm, who are pursuing post-secondary education in the areas of agriculture, business or biotechnology. Students must have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership capabilities and a keen interest in their local communities to qualify for scholarship.

The deadline for applications is Aug. 15, 1997.

"We are committed to helping our customers' children pursue their educational goals and we understand that financial constraints often make this difficult. The scholarship program can assist students who may not otherwise be able to attend college or university. At Monsanto Canada we believe present and future developments in agriculture and biotechnology are dependent upon nurturing bright minds and future leaders through post-secondary education," said Francine Davis, program coordinator.

Scholarship application forms can be obtained from area high schools, local 4-H offices, and Monsanto retailers and distributors, or by calling (204) 985-1000.



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Is pleased to announce that our office has been completely renovated and we have returned to our permanent location at 254 Main Street North Markham.

We would like to thank everyone for their support and assistance during this transition.

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