



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Nymphaea* x 'Attraction'<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Introduction**

'Attraction' Waterlily is a hardy hybrid that floats its round foliage and produces a slightly fragrant, multipetaled, red flower just above the water (Fig. 1). It needs about 4 feet to spread its leaves on the water's surface. It has become one of the most popular Waterlilies, but recent tests show that it is poorly suited for Florida. Each leaf lasts about 6 weeks before turning yellow. This is normal and should not be cause for concern. Flower showiness is legendary and each flower lasts several days, but flowers close in late afternoon and at night. Although 'Attraction' requires full sun for best flowering, this one will produce some flowers with only 4 hours of direct sun.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Nymphaea* x 'Attraction'

**Pronunciation:** nim-FEE-uh

**Common name(s):** 'Attraction' Hardy Waterlily

**Family:** *Nymphaeaceae*

**Plant type:** aquatic plant

**USDA hardiness zones:** 3 through 8 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** cut flowers; attracts butterflies

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



**Figure 1.** 'Attraction' Hardy Waterlily.

**Spread:** 2 to 4 feet

**Plant habit:** not applicable

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

### **Description**

**Height:** .5 to 1 feet

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** orbiculate

**Leaf venation:** palmate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 12 to 18 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** red

**Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; summer flowering; fall flowering; spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; grows submerged in water

**Drought tolerance:**

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Fragrant Waterlily grows in standing water about 18 inches deep and spreads by means of rhizomes. It can be prevented from spreading by planting it in a container without drainage holes and submerging the container into the water garden. This helps prevent the plant from invading the entire water garden.

Hardy Waterlilies should be planted in a container filled with garden soil or potting mix. A shallow and wide container shape is better than a tall, narrow container. The garden soil can be mixed with one-fifth well decomposed cow manure. Incorporate fertilizer at an equivalent rate of about one-quarter cup 10-10-10 per gallon of soil or media to help stimulate growth. Before filling the container, place a small plastic bag filled with sand at the bottom of the container to keep the container from floating in the pond. Plant the rhizome at the edge of the container so it can grow horizontally across the top. Place a 1- or 2-inch layer of sand or gravel over the top of the media after the rhizome is planted in the pot to keep media and soil in the container. Lower the container into 6 inches of water until growth begins. Then it can be set so the bottom is no more than 18 inches below the surface. If the water is too deep, place a brick or concrete block under the container. Do not construct containers from treated lumber since growth could be severely inhibited.

The only maintenance required is monthly application of a slow release fertilizer. Tablets manufactured by various companies can be placed several inches below the sand or gravel layer at the top of the container. Follow the manufacturers directions to determine appropriate number of tablets.