

Dividing Hardy Water Lilies

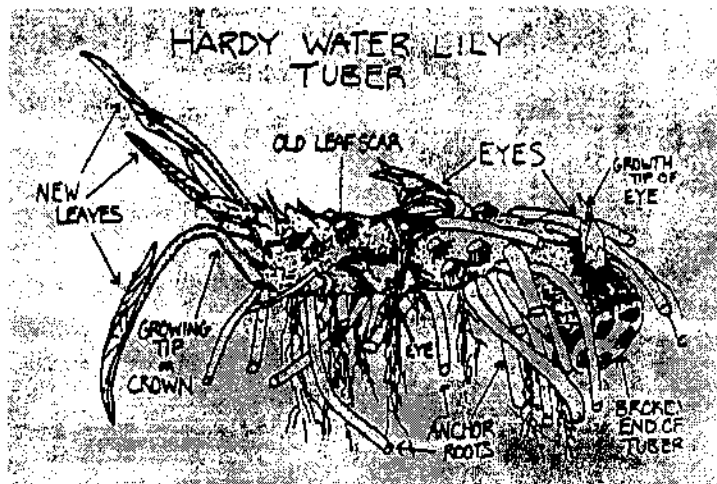
Hardy water lilies, if grown in containers, require division every year or two. Overgrown lilies in need of dividing do not bloom. They produce smaller and smaller leaves from multiple growing points in the rootstock. The plant has a congested appearance and leaf color may be yellowish. The lily's container may be so full of roots that it is difficult to insert aquatic fertilizer tablets. Division usually restores vigor and bloom. The best time to divide a hardy water lily is in the spring. They may be divided at other times of the growing season but usually will not bloom for three to four weeks afterward. Many water gardeners divide and repot their lilies every spring when they clean the pool.

Procedure:

1. Remove the plant from container and rinse off all soil. Plant will have a main growing tip and some secondary juvenile growing tips visible on large rootstock.
2. Cut off (or break off) old rootstock end, leaving 4" – 6" of healthy rootstock with the main tip growing tip. Cut off juvenile crowns. Discard old woody rootstock end. Please see illustration.
3. Repot trimmed rootstock, following planting instructions below. Use clay soil from your garden. Be sure to fertilize with tablets made especially for water lilies and other water plants. Juvenile crowns or growing tips may be discarded or potted in a small (1 gal. flower pot) container and grown in shallow water for a season. They will be blooming size plants in one year or less.

Planting Instructions:

1. Fill container 1/3 full
2. Push in EcoTabs fertilizer
3. Add enough soil to 1/2 full
4. Position lily
5. Gently add soil around roots and tamp down
6. Keep growing crown (at top of root formation) free from soil
7. Thoroughly saturate soil with water
8. Cover soil with 1/2" pea gravel, again keeping crown free.
9. Lower potted lily into pool, gradually lowering just enough to keep a few inches of water above leaves
10. Lilies require 2-3 weeks adjustment after planting before new growth resumes
11. Water lilies should be fertilized once a month during the growing season



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