



YELLOW POND LILY

Nuphar variegata



Yellow pond lily is a native aquatic plant with alternate, simple leaves, on submerged stems. It is one of the most iconic aquatic plants and is abundant in the Lake Champlain basin's waters.

Habitat Preference

Found in slightly acidic to basic water of lakes, slow-moving streams and pools

Characteristics:

Vegetative

- Leaf type: slightly waxy with smooth edges.
- Leaf shape: oval to heart-shaped, flattened on one side, sometimes purple tinge.
- Leaf arrangement: alternate (one leaf per node).
- Leaf position: floating on the surface.

Flower

- Number of petals/sepals: 6 round bright petals (may be green on the outer surface).
- Color: yellow.

Fruit

- Oval capsule up to 1.5 inches long, strongly ribbed and purplish.

Seed

- Located inside the flower.





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Cultural History Notes

- The plant has been and continues to be used by indigenous people throughout its native range.
- The root can be eaten raw or cooked. A tea made from the roots is used for dysentery and diarrhea. A poultice made from the roots is used for swelling, boils, tumors and inflamed skin.

Ecological Contributions to Lake Champlain

Biological

- Use as a food source and anchors shallow water community.

Chemical

- Flowers smell like fermenting fruit which attracts pollinating insects.

Physical

- Provides shelter and food for fish, snails, crayfish, and underwater insects. Can be a host for species of beetles.

Similar Species

Spatterdock (*Nuphar advena*)

- Native aquatic plant with cordate leaves and perennial yellow flowers.



How to differentiate yellow pond lily and spatterdock

- Yellow pond lily is more common and abundant in the Lake Champlain Basin than spatterdock.
- Spatterdock have circular leaf stalks and green sepals and fruits. Yellow pond lily has flat leaf stalks and fruits are red-purple at the base.
- Spatterdock has more rigid stems and leaves can appear as more emergent than floating.

Scan to learn more about Lake Champlain's native aquatic plants!



The Lake Champlain Committee is a watershed-based nonprofit that uses science-based advocacy, education, and collaborative action to protect and restore water quality, safeguard natural habitats and ensure recreational access in the Lake Champlain Basin.



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