

Tall Hardy Marginals

CATTAIL - *Typha*: All are aggressive and grow from a horizontal rhizome in a spreading fashion. If you are looking for the natural look, with some control, pot your plants. All cattails will take sun to part shade. They will take water depth from 2" to 12".

Typha domingensis 'Giant Cattail' - if you have a large pond or lake, this plant can grow 8 to 11 feet tall, but the saving grace is that it is not hardy here (zone 7 to 11 (Very tall)

Typha latifolia 'Cattail' - because of the size, it is best used as a screen. If you want to reduce the size, plant in a smaller pot. These plants will grow up to 7' (Tall)

Typha angustifolia 'Narrow leafed' - this is a narrow leaf cattail with narrow catkins. This plant will reach 4' to 5' (Medium)

Typha laxmannii 'Graceful' - this plant is also used for screening, but is more for smaller ponds. This plant can reach 3'. It also has smaller catkins. (Medium)

Typha minima 'Miniature' - you may want to call this a dwarf cattail because it only gets to 12". It also has very tiny catkins. (Small)

BULRUSH - *Scirpus*: Bulrush, like cattail, come in many sizes from 12" to 20'. Bulrush will take some shade, but like sun. Animals may find these plants tasty. Rushes can be very attractive as a background.

Scirpus albescens 'White Rush' a pretty, light-colored plant that gets 4' to 6' tall. This is not a fast grower in the pond, but does survive the winter. Zone 5-9 (Tall)

Scirpus eyperinus 'Wooly Rush' - will get a brown tassel in the summer and grows to 4'. Zones 3-9. (Medium)

Scirpus validus 'Soft Rush' - another tall rush that grows 2' to 6'. These tall plants need large containers, because they will blow over in the wind. Zones 3-11 (Tall to Medium)

Scirpus viatilis 'Bulrush' - this is an aggressive plant that can grow to 3' to 6' tall. (Tall)

Scirpus zebrinus 'Zebra Rush' - white bands along a tall 4' to 6' green stem. These bands can fade over time. Zone 5-9. (Tall)

Hardy - and not so hardy - Marginals

These marginals are sort of a mixed bag - you will recognize some of them because they fit in most pond surroundings.

PICKEREL RUSH - (*Pontederia*) Will exhibit colors from blue, lavender, white or pink. Pickerel rush will range in the hardiness zones from 3 to 8. This will mean that some used here will be considered tropical. They can grow from a foot to 5' but, here in Denver, not much more than 3'.

Pontederia cordata 'Pickerel Rush', This is the hardy (zone 3) lavender flowering plant that is best grown in full sun, but can take some shade. Cordata can also come in pink flowers. (Medium)

Pontederia cordata 'var. alba', This is a similar-looking plant, but has a white flower. This plant is not as hardy (zone 6) and doesn't grow as tall as the lavender. (Small to Medium)

Pontederia lanceolata & *Pontederia dilatata* 'Tropical', These plants come in the same colors as *cordata*, but the plant is tropical (zone 8). These plants tend to get larger than *cordata*, but with our short growing season they may not attain the 3' to 5' as advertised (Tall)

HORSETAIL - (*Equisetum*) Known for its segmented or jointed stems, this is a very nice plant for the pond. This plant would rather have its feet damp, not wet, and it can take some shade.

Equisetum hyemale 'Horsetail', the plant can get to 3', but normally is 2' here in Denver. The plant is hardy to (zone 5). (Medium)

Equisetum scirpoide 'Dwarf Horsetail', a smaller version of *hyemale* (6" to 8") and the segments are not as well defined. (Small)

SPIKED RUSH - (*Eleocharis*): Within the family of spiked rush is Chinese Water Chestnut and, as you may suspect, the tubers are edible.

Eleocharis montevidensis 'Spiked Rush' A small, attractive plant with small brown tufts in the summer. This is a hardy (zone 4) plant that can take some shade, but likes full sun. (Small)

Eleocharis tuberosas 'Chinese Water Chestnut' A small, well-formed plant. I found two references to hardiness and one was tropical (zone 8), the other hardy (zone 2), so take your pick. (Small)

Eleocharis quadrangulata 'A miniature rush' This is a small rush of only 2'-4' with a square stem and a zone of 7.

Baumea rubiginosa 'Variegated Striped Rush' This is a tropical in zone 8, so it must become an indoor plant for the winter. Can get to 2' tall and will take full sun to part shade.

Butomus umbellatus 'Flowering Rush' A foot or two plant that has pink flowers, lives in zone 4 and need sun to part shade .

Tropical Marginals

We can use tropical marginals in our ponds, but they must be removed and brought indoors before it gets too cold. Just because they are not hardy shouldn't mean that they should be ignored. They can be used as an annual or a house plant in the winter.

Taro - (Araceae) Taro can grow large leaves and, if the plant is in a small pot, it will blow over in the wind. Many of the darker varieties will appreciate some shade because their leaves will burn in the sun. Taro can be used as a house plant in the winter and may be stored, like canna bulbs, in a cool dry spot. I would suggest an unheated crawl space. Bring them in at the first sign of frost or earlier.

Colocasia esculenta, 'Green Toro' This is the basic taro that grows best here. It can grow taller than the others, up to four feet, and does well once established in the sun. (Tall)

Colocasia esculenta var. *fontanesii* 'Violet Stemmed Taro', This plant will enjoy some shade. The plant may not get quite as tall as the green taro, but will grow to a nice three feet. The stem is violet with a green leaf (Medium)

Colocasia affinis var. *Jenningsii* 'Black Princess', This plant is dark purple and will sun burn if not kept in some shade. This is very true when it is very young. (Medium)

Alocasia amazonica 'Variegated Taro' This plant may take sometime to get started The plant will look very nice in the pond. (Small to Medium)

Umbrella Palm or Umbrella Sedge (Cyperus) This plant can come in many sizes. Some will do well in large ponds, others in small ponds, and yet others will do well in containers. The plant will also do nicely indoors as a houseplant.

Cyperus alternifolius 'umbrella plant' , this plant grows 3 to 4 feet, but may grow taller indoors. This plant can get too tall and be blown over in the wind. The plant is hardy to (zone 9). (Medium)

Cyperus alternifolius 'Gracilis', dwarf umbrella palm will only grow a foot or two and handles the wind better than the taller version. (Small)

Cyperus haspan 'Tufted top', This is another smaller version, with a nice toast-colored, tufted top. (Small)

Cyperus papyrus 'Tall specimen' This is a plant that may be better indoor because of its 7 to 8 foot size. If it is used outdoors, plant in a large container and don't plan on moving it. (Tall)

Some of our marginals are not normally thought of as water plants, but they will do very well in our ponds. As a matter of fact, when I visited Maryland Aquatic Nurseries they were trying many garden plants to see what tolerance they may have to a watery environment.

Canna - *Cannaceae* 'Canna', will grow nicely in a pond, but will get tall and tend to blow over in the wind. Large pots and some weight may help. Canna come in many colors red, yellow, and pink. The foliage can be all green or in a dark red/purple or green and white variegation. When cutting the old flower stalk, cut just above the new flower bud. Canna are tender perennials and need some winter protection. In the fall, cut the flower stalk and store the tuber in a cool, dry spot. (Medium to Tall)

Dichromena 'Star Grass', This is a nice sedge plant for the pond that can grow to a foot. On green stalks, a white flower is produced and this process is continued throughout the season. I have trouble keeping this plant through the winter. (Medium)

Marsilea 'Water Clover', This plant is floating, but will stand up a few inches in shallow water. The leaves are like four-leaf clover. Plant in a container. If you plant in a stream, it can clog a shallow waterway. (Short to Floating)

Nymphoides 'Water Snowflake or Water Fringe', This floating plant has small heart-shaped leaves with white or yellow flowers. Some of the plants have green leaves and others have bronze or purplish colored leaves. The flowers stand above the water an inch or two, and some are fringed, (Floating)

Hymenocallis 'Spider Lily', The spider lily grows from a bulb like an amaryllis. The flower is white and stands a foot or two. The bulb must be overwintered in a protected place like the canna. I might suggest starting this plant out of water until the plant starts to show leaf growth, then placing it in shallow water. (Medium to Tall)

Thalia Dealbata 'Hardy Water Canna', This may be a hardy canna, but may not be hardy enough here. This plant can be 2' to 6' tall with wide leaves so remember the wind when using this plant. It makes a nice screen at the back of the pond. This plant, with its purple stem and flower, looks tropical in your pond. (Tall)

Marginal Plants - Hardy and Tropical

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This brochure will investigate marginal plants by species. I will not keep to an order, but I will try to stay with height and hardiness. Most water plants are listed with a hardiness zone where they are best grown, but with some care most water plants can be kept year-round. Most water plants are listed as hardy or tropical. For us in Metro Denver, depending on our winter, "hardy" translates to mean zone 5 or 6. A tropical to us is normally zone 7. What that means is any plant with a zone 7 or higher must be protected, while zone 6 is borderline. Protection can mean protection from freezing to treating the plant as a houseplant for the winter.