

some Frog-friendly native plants for ponds and bog gardens

Sydney region

From creeping floaters to tall swayers

Swamp Lily - *Ottelia ovalifolia*

- Submerged plant with floating leaves found in slow moving streams and dams.
- Broad leaved plant with beautiful white flowers held just above water surface, grows in full sun or partial shade, in shallow to moderately deep water.
- Suitable for pond.
- May provide good cover for tadpoles.

Water Snowflake - *Nymphoides indica*

- Submerged plant with large floating leaves, found in stationary and slow moving water.
- Round-leaved plant with white fringed star flowers, suitable for full sun in shallow to moderately deep water.
- Suitable for pond.
- Attracts small insects.

Water Primrose - *Ludwigia peploides* *subspecies montevidensis*

- Yellow flowering herb with creeping or floating stems in ponds and slow flowing streams.
- Flowers best in full sun and shallow water, grows as a low, bushy shrub to 50cm in moist soils.
- Suitable for pond and bog.
- Attracts seed-eating birds.
- Very similar to declared Noxious Weed, *Ludwigia peruviana*, a serious problem around Sydney.

Water Ribbons - *Triglochin microtuberosum*

- Clumping aquatic herb, with fleshy, strap-like leaves along creeks and in permanently wet areas.
- Attractive, glossy water plant for full or partial shade in permanent water; leaves floating or erect, 50cm or more.
- Suitable for ponds.
- Leaves, seeds and tubers are eaten by waterbirds, attracts butterflies and other insects and provides fish habitat. Tubers are edible by humans.

Native Violet - *Viola hederacea*

- Creeping, round-leaved herb forming carpets in moist shady places.
- Hardy groundcover with attractive purple and white flowers, useful for underplanting in moist shady areas.
- Suitable for bog areas.
- Provides shelter for small skinks and possibly small frogs.
- Butterfly food plant.

Native Pennywort - *Hydrocotyle peduncularis*

- Creeping herb with lobed leaves common in sheltered marshy areas.
- Hardy, vigorous groundcover suitable for shady areas. Won't tolerate pedestrian traffic.
- Suitable for bog.
- Not easily confused with the exotic weed Kurnell Curse, *Hydrocotyle bonariensis*.

Native Arthritis Plant - *Centella asiatica*

- Creeping herb with rounded leaves common in marshy sheltered places.
- Hardy groundcover useful for underplanting amongst taller plants in damp areas. May withstand some drying out as well as inundation for short periods.
- Suitable for bog

Swamp Goodenia - *Goodenia paniculata*

- Spreading tufted groundcover to 30cm with yellow flowers, common in marshy meadows and wet heaths.
- Prefers moist sunny areas, but will tolerate some shade and is drought tolerant. Good in pots.
- Suitable for bog.
- Attracts butterflies, native bees and small insects which provide food for frogs.

Knobby Club-Rush - *Isolepis nodosa*

- Erect grass-like sedge to 70cm, with distinctive spherical flower heads, common in moist soil near the sea.
- Prefers full sun and moist soils yet tolerates drought and shade. Grows well in pots. Very hardy.
- Suitable for bog.
- Good for small ground frogs when planted in clumps.
- Attracts native bees.
- Spreads easily by seed in moist places.

Mat Rush - *Lomandra longifolia*

- Clumping, grass-like herb to 70cm, with sharpened leaf tips. Common in many habitats, in sun or shade.
- Hardy sedge for exposed and coastal gardens on any soil.
- Suitable for bog.
- Excellent habitat for small frogs
- Attracts seed and insect-eating birds and butterflies, provides shelter and nesting sites for birds and is a wombat food plant.

Tall Sedge - *Carex appressa*

- Grass-like sedge to 1m with spiralling flower-heads, common along creeks and in wet areas.
- Hardy attractive sedge in full sun to full shade, prefers moist soil but is fairly drought tolerant.
- Suitable for pond and bog.
- Provides good shelter for small frogs.
- Attracts butterflies and is a wombat food plant.

Tassel Sedge - *Carex fascicularis*

- Strap-leaved clumping plant with pendant clusters of bright green tassels, found in wetland margins and swampy areas
- Hardy, attractive sedge 1m x 1m, for sunny position or shade, may be drought tolerant but prefers regular water.
- Suitable for pond and bog
- Butterfly food plant

Knotweed - *Persicaria decipiens*

- Very common, dense groundcover herb to 1m, with striking pink, pendulous flowerheads. Found in marshes and beside creeks.
- Suits moist position in sun or semi-shade. May be drought tolerant.
- Suitable for bog.
- Provides good cover for ground frogs.
- Attracts seed-eating birds such as finches.

Knotweed - *Persicaria strigosa*

- Common dense groundcover herb to 1m, with striking white flowerheads. Found in marshes and beside creeks.
- Suits moist or submerged position, in sun or semi-shade.
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- Provides good cover for frogs such as Striped Marsh Frog and Peron's Tree Frog.
- Likely to attract seed-eating birds.

Common Rush - *Juncus usitatus*

- Clumping rush with cylindrical leaves, found in moist to wet soils.
- A graceful arching plant to 1m tall, grows in full sun to partial shade.
- Suitable for bog.
- Provides shelter for small frogs when planted closely in groups.
- Provides seed and shelter for small birds and is a butterfly food plant.

Yellow Marsh Flower - *Villarsia exaltata*

- Broad, fleshy leaved herb found in fresh water marshes in coastal districts.
- Clumping perennial plant with prominent yellow flowers, held on stems up to 1m tall, for full sun or partial shade in wet or waterlogged areas.
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- Leaves eaten by herbivores such as Swamp Wallabies.

Water Plantain - *Alisma plantago-aquatica*

- Broad-leaved herb, with tall flower stems to 1m during summer, found in creeks and ponds.
- Full sun or partial shade, may become dormant in very hot weather and die back in winter.
- Suitable for pond or bog.
- Fruits and leaves eaten by wildlife.
- Spreads very easily from seed.
- Resembles some weedy species such as Arum Lily, *Zantedeschia aethiopica*.

Tassel Rush - *Baloskion tetraphyllum* subspecies *meiostachyum*

- Distinctive, bright green, feathery-looking rush found along creeks and peaty wetlands.
- Hardy, tall, decorative plant to 1.2m, for full sun to shade in moist soils or shallow water.
- Suitable for bog and shallow pond.
- Used by Jervis Bay Tree Frog.
- Provides seed for birds and attracts butterflies.
- Formerly *Restio tetraphyllum* ssp. *meiostachyum*

Swamp Hibiscus - *Hibiscus diversifolius*

- Shrub 1.5m x 1m with large yellow flowers and prickly stems growing in low swampy coastal areas.
- Keeps well in a pot in full sun or semi-shade, prefers wet to waterlogged position, but may be drought tolerant
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- Provides perches for medium-sized tree frogs.

Woolly Frogmouth - *Philydrum lanuginosum*

- Tufted succulent herb to 1.5m, with showy yellow flowers, fairly common in swamps and pond edges.
- Full sun or shade in moist or wet soil in a warm position, may be drought tender, flowers opening over a period of several weeks.
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- Provides food and cover for birds and other animals.

Jointed Twig Rush - *Baumea articulata*

- Clumping sedge with dark green, cylindrical leaves found in fresh water swamps and waterways.
- Attractive water plant with graceful, weeping flower heads growing to 2m in full sun in deeper water.
- Suitable for pond.
- Provides shelter for frogs when planted closely in groups.
- Provides seed and shelter for waterbirds and may attract butterflies.

Common Reed - *Phragmites australis*

- Tall, erect grass to 2m, with handsome, feathery flowerheads forming dense stands in marshy ground in fresh or brackish water. Common throughout Australia.
- Suits sunny or semi-shaded position. Fast spreading so may require containment in pots.
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- Provides habitat for birds and insects such as butterflies. New shoots are edible.
- May be confused with the exotic weed Giant Reed, *Arundo donax*.

Red-Fruited Saw Sedge - *Gahnia sieberiana*

- Tall, arching, sharp-leaved sedge to 2m, with dark brown, feathery flowerheads, found in dense thickets on marshy, sandy soils.
- Grows well in moist soils and tolerates waterlogging, full sun or shade, grows well in pots.
- Suitable for bog.
- Provides excellent shelter sites for small tree frogs.
- Attracts seed-eating birds and butterflies.

Tall Spike-Rush - *Elaeocharis sphacelata*

- Large rush to 2m with round, hollow leaves, found in standing water.
- Spreading, tall perennial with pale green stems and attractive flower spikes for full sun and partial shade, preferably in deeper water.
- Suitable for bog and pond.
- A good basking plant for all green tree frogs.
- A major habitat plant, providing shelter, nest sites and food for waterfowl and other wildlife.

These native plants can be used to create attractive frog habitat in ponds and bog gardens. Contact your local indigenous and specialist native plant nurseries to find out about their availability.

For information about froggy matters contact:

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Compiled by Danie Ondinea 2000, updated 2007 using information provided by Dr Arthur White, and the following 2 books:

Robinson, L. (2003) Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney (Revised 3rd edition) Kangaroo Press Pty Ltd. NSW.

Sainty, G.R. and Jacobs, S.W.L. (2003) Waterplants in Australia - A Field Guide (expanded 4th edition) Sainty & Associates, NSW.