

The Sacred Lotus

Nelumbo



You can grow Lotus in your home garden. Here Lotus is added to a mixed planter in a separate pot so that it can maintained be in standing water.





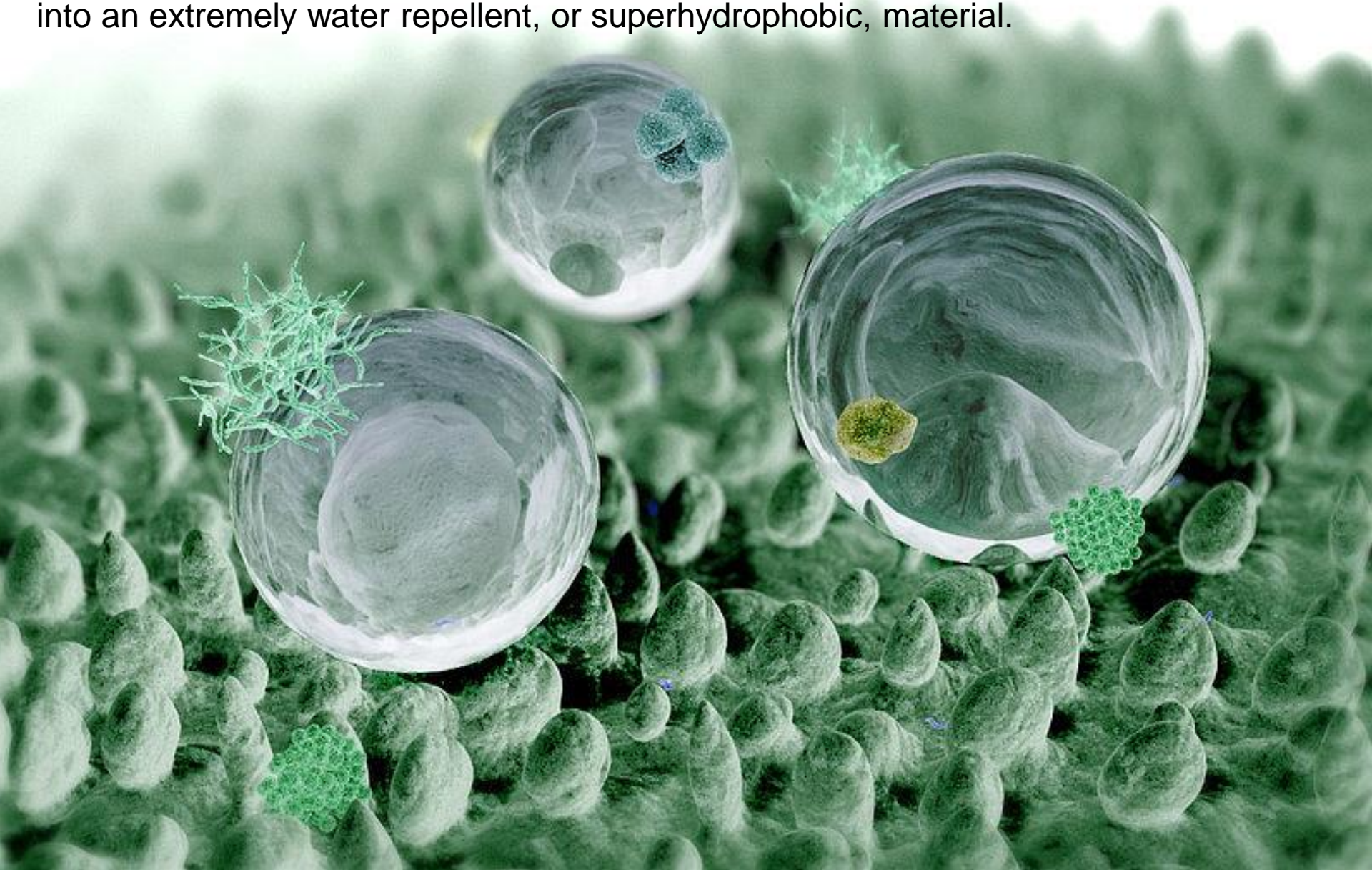
Seed pods form and seeds will ripen. Pods turn brown and seeds fall from the pods.



Lotus is a symbol of purity and plays a large role in the religions and cultures of India, Myanmar, China and Japan. It grows in muddy water but its leaves never get dirty. Water and dirt roll right off a lotus leaf.

The Lotus Effect

The leaf surface is covered in microscopic bumps which transform its waxy surface into an extremely water repellent, or superhydrophobic, material.



The self-cleaning properties of lotus have been the inspiration for a variety of nanotechnology applications from self-cleaning glass to non-stick ketchup bottles. LiquiGlide, a recently developed technology at MIT, makes use of liquid-impregnated plastic to allow thick liquids to easily squeeze from bottles.





In Myanmar (Burma), lotus silk is gathered from the stems of lotus leaves and turned into fabric through hand weaving. This expensive cloth feels like a combination silk and linen and is used to make robes for Buddhist monks.