

Cape Blue Water Lily

GENERAL

Origin	: tropical
Vigour	: fairly fast growing
Humidity	: semi-humid, very humid, extremely humid
Propagation	: direct sowing, division
Maintenance	: high

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: vulnerable
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: resistant
Salinity/ppm	: low (700 ppm)
Hardiness	: 0°C

SHAPE

Type	: aquatic
Height	: 0.4 m
Spread	: 1 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: pastel white, pastel pink, pastel purple
Size	: 20 cm
Period	: January - December
Smell	: sweet

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 10 cm
Toxicity	: inedible

This other species of tropical Water Lily, native to Africa, is the Cape Blue Water Lily: it is closely related to *Nymphaea caerulea* and the Blue Lotus, as well as *Nymphaea alba*, the White Lotus. Similar in shape and appearance, the Cape Blue Water Lily is sky-blue in colour and the Blue Lotus is a brighter blue. It is found growing abundantly in freshwater habitats in southern Africa. *N. capensis* was introduced from its native South Africa to the USA, where many beautiful varieties were bred, for example, the Star Water Lilies, including 'Lilac Star'. The flowers have a spicy perfume. Essentially, *N. capensis* has all the same attributes as *N. caerulea*: it is easily grown, but prefers high acidity in the water. The success of this species in Arriyadh is therefore somewhat dependent on this, but it has generally been as good as *N. caerulea*. It is considered hardy to a winter minimum of -1 to 4°C . The Cape Blue Water Lily grows best in full sun to partial shade and in relatively shallow water. All Water Lilies are heavy feeders: good, sieved garden loam is recommended, an accumulation of humus at the bottom of the pond is sufficient and nutrients should be added in the growing season. Maintenance of these plants is intensive: in very cold climates, these Water Lilies may be killed if left outdoors during winter.

