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*Nymphaea*

*Nymphaeaceae*

*Nymphaea* is derived from Greek *nymphē* or *nymphaia* (goddess of Springs, water-nymph, virgin) components with reference to an aquatic habitat.

Reputed for its anaphrodisiac qualities the water lily (particularly the white varieties) has been associated for thousands of years by European poets and artists with virginal detachment and has provided a symbol of purity and chastity.

The water lily has been no less important in Middle American countries than the lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) in Egypt and Persia, for there and in Mexico, the regional varieties are symbols of the earth.

Water lilies are associated with the month of July.