

## Bog Plant Favorites

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Once the pond builder and owner decide on the best location and sun exposure for the bog, they can start to think about which plants to use. Exactly which plants to use depends on the desired aesthetics or effect, such as a tropical setting or attracting diverse wildlife.

Zone hardiness also must be considered because not all plants grow in all zones. "Because different plants absorb different nutrients while growing, you want multiple types of plants that grow at different times, bloom at different times," said Colleen McCalip, owner of Still Water Gardens in Cheney, Wash. You also want the plants to "have different root depths and plant structures," she said.

Other considerations are environmental concerns. North American Pitcher Plants (Sarracenia) are indigenous to the Southeastern part of the United States, and some species are native to Canada, but some species are endangered. Plant experts recommend using natural hybrids or those propagated by nurseries to ensure they were not harvested from nature. When using invasive plants, experts recommend keeping the plants potted to prevent spreading.

Iris (Courtesy of Florida Aquatic Nurseries)

Click [here](#) for slideshow. With so many choices, MacCalip, Jay Bearfeld, owner of Liquid Landscape Designs, in Carlisle, Mass., and other experts shared some of their favorite bog plants: Bluebell (Zones 9-11) - It blooms mid-summer, grows low and features blue flowers. Canna or Canna Lily (Zones 8-10) - Considered a bog's best friend, canna feed heavily on nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus. The flowers feature red or orange petals with burgundy edges. Cardinal Flower (Zones 5-7) - Late Summer through Autumn blooms attract hummingbirds. It feeds on potassium and features red flowers. Iris (Zones 5-11) - Favorites include Louisiana Iris and Japanese Iris. They bloom in late Spring through Autumn and feed on nitrogen and phosphorus. Choose from many varieties and colors. Lizard's Tail, Swamp Lily or Water-dragon (Zones 4-11) - This summer bloomer is native to the Eastern United States and features white flowers. Marsh Marigold or Kingcup (Zones 2-4) - Sporting yellow flowers, it blooms early, which jump-starts the system feeding. It re-blooms in Autumn and feeds when other plants are dormant. Pickerel Rush (Zones 4-11) - It feeds on the total nutrient system and blooms in late Spring through early Autumn. Umbrella Palm, Umbrella Plant or Umbrella Papyrus (Zones 9-11) - They feature 24- to 72-inch high stems with thin blades arranged like an umbrella on the end. Taro (Zones 8-11) - It grows best in partial shade and feeds heavily. Thalia or Alligator-flag (Zones 7-11) - This summer bloomer is, native to the southeastern United States, grows up to 10 feet tall and features purple flowers.

Designers recommend planting the bog with various plants to create an aesthetic smorgasbord of colors, heights and textures throughout the year.