

Plant of the Month — May 2017

Nymphaea macrosperma Merr. & L.M.Perry



Nymphaea macrosperma is an attractive emergent water plant with deep blue, sometimes pink or white flowers that extend to 30 cm above the water. The leaves, floating when mature, can grow to 55 cm wide and feature regularly spaced marginal teeth.

This species occurs across the far north of Australia and in New Guinea, where it grows in more or less permanent water on the floodplains of coastal areas. The striking flowers, which open during the day and close at night, appear between March and August.

The genus name is taken from the Greek *Nymphaia* and the Latin *Nymphaea* which means “waterlily” and was inspired by the nymphs of Greek and Roman mythology. *Nymphaea* is a cosmopolitan genus, mostly tropical and frequently cultivated, especially in temperate areas.

Photo: R. Davis

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