

"Just Add Water"

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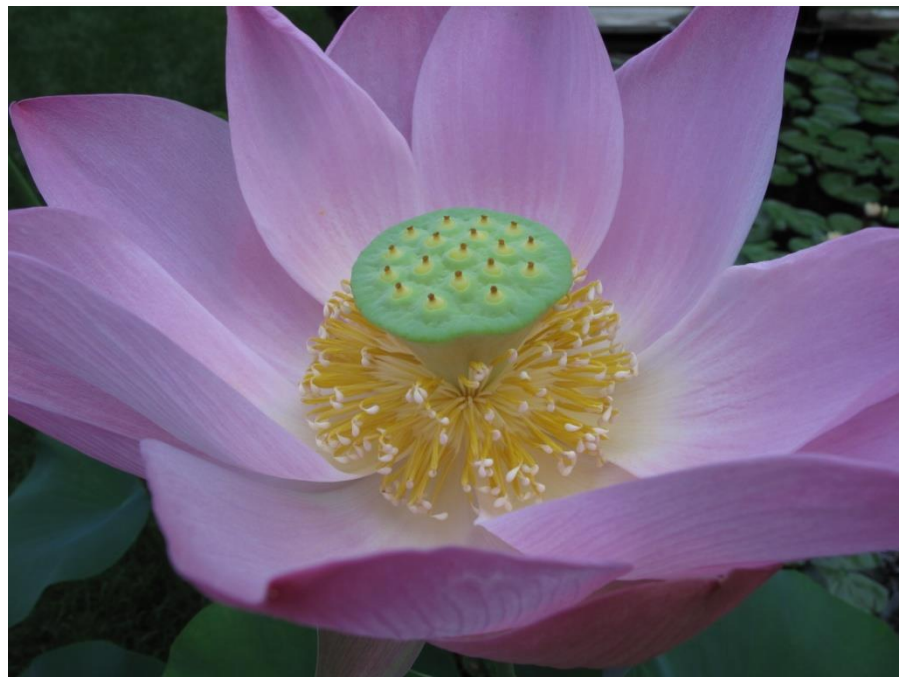
Lotus, Water Lilies and Japanese Beetles



Aquatic plants, especially water lilies and lotus, are not exempt from the destructive Japanese beetles. Of the two, they prefer the lotus. The beetles like tall plants rather than those closest to the ground or floating on water. The little buggers eat holes in the petals of Nelumbo 'Maggie Belle Slocum' and feast on the stamens, causing the flower to collapse. This year, the beetles arrived in swarms June 11th. For several weeks they would even land on me and fly into my hair as I worked outside in the sunny areas.



Impatient for the first lotus bloom to open, a beetle passes the time nibbling on a thick lotus pad.



Nelumbo 'Maggie Belle Slocum' from another summer. No lotus flower has escaped the ravages of this pest in 2018.



The good (honeybee) and the bad (Japanese beetle) share the same flower, Chinese hybrid Nelumbo 'Pretty Flower.'



Nelumbo 'Pretty Flower' a couple summers ago



Nymphaea 'Marliac Carnea' with beetle damage. Each summer, fewer than dozen waterlily flowers will be visited by the beetles. Because each waterlily produces lots of blooms each season, a summer's worth of blooms are not destroyed. Different story with the lotus. Each lotus has only two to six flowers a season and the bloom time is the two-plus months that the beetles are out. Some summers are worse than others. In my yard, this is the worse summer to date.



***Nymphaea 'Marliac Carnea'* without the Japanese beetles**