

## *Nymphaea 'Sunfire'* *a hardy waterlily*

Story and photos by Soni Forsman

*Nymphaea 'Sunfire'* is a medium-size pink waterlily that begins blooming early in the season and continues non-stop into late summer. Mike Giles, West Virginia, is the hybridizer.



*Nymphaea 'Sunfire'*

Giles described the color(s) of this waterlily when it was introduced as varying from shocking deep-red outer petals with orange center ones to hot red-pink outer petals with yellow ones in the center. He said it can also bloom almost yellow or white. The flower color of my Sunfire has been consistent over the years, blooming medium to a soft soothing pink with soft yellow inner petals. I find it similar in appearance to *Nymphaea 'Pink Grapefruit.'* Its round green pads are marked with brown splashes.

It prefers full sun for max flowering but will bloom in part sun. If growing in the later, place where it receives sun over the noon hours. Sunfire has proved itself to be very winter hardy. I add 'very' when writing about a hardy waterlily if its pads are already growing with ice out. Sunfire will grow in deeper water up to 24-inches over top of pot. *N. 'Sunfire'* is also at home in a container water garden.





## *Nymphaea* 'Sunfire' in a container water garden

I plant my waterlilies in two-gallon containers with good top soil. I fertilize with tablets, according to product directions, when planting or placing in its summer location. I start twice monthly feedings with aquatic fertilizer tabs the first of June and go no later than Labor Day.

Many years ago, I heard Giles say Sunfire was one of his favorites. Give it a try, it might become one of yours.