PLANT FACT SHEET

Ottelia ovalifolia (R. Br.) L. C. Rich.

GENUS *Ottelia* **FAMILY** Hydrocharitaceae

COMMON NAMES Swamp lily, Water poppy

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Roots, Tuber, Flowers, Fruit, Stems

The tubers are roasted and eaten.
The leaves, flowers and fruit can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

DESCRIPTION

A tufted plant with floating leaves and flowers. It is rooted in the mud. It can re-grow each year or continue to grow from year to year. The leaves arise from the base of the plant. They are on long stalks which have wings near the base. These can be up to 1 m long allowing the leaves to float. The leaves are oval. Young leaves are thin and strap-like. The flowers have 3 yellow petals. These usually have a purple blotch near the base. The flowers are on a stout stem which supports them above the water. After being fertilised, the stems turn downwards and the seeds develop.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical and warm temperate places. It grows in still or slow-flowing water up to 60 cm deep. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from fresh seed.

NOTES

There are about 40 Ottelia species. They grow in the tropics.

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