

Broadleaf Cattail

Typha latifolia

-So I bet you are wondering, “Why in the world would I ever want to plant a Cattail?” Well, listen to this. Broadleaf Cattails are the most productive cold weather plant that Wisconsin has to offer. A single seed can produce a network of rhizomes and one hundred shoots in one growing season.

-Broadleaf Cattails were there to help the Allied Powers win WWII. When many of the synthetics that we use today were not around, Cattail seeds were used to stuff the life vests of sailors used by the US Navy and the US Marine Corps.

-Early American Indians used the seeds of the cattail to stuff early “diapers”.

-Cattails provide nesting habitat for many marsh birds, while muskrats and geese consume shoots and rhizomes. Submersed stalks provide spawning habitat and shelter for fish. Invertebrates also live on cattails.

-Cattails have been proven to be one of the best plants in the world for improving water quality and clarity.

-Cattails have been proven to help “suck out” pollutants that are put into aquatic communities by man.

CAUTION: If you are looking to create a diverse area of plants on your shoreland property, do not plant Broadleaf Cattail. This species is very prolific and can take over an area by crowding out other plants.

