

Pictured on the first page of My City Garden is a water lily I've had since my daughter was one. I bought the water garden as a hobby and it's been with me ever since, withstanding skunk and raccoon invasions in Westchester County, NY and various bird, skunk and critter invasions in my present location of Jersey City.

Last year the Helvola miniature lily was dragged out and the root tuber left on the sidewalk by what appears to have been a bird. I popped it back in its pot and waited. And waited and waited. Finally, I had leaves and flowers again after about two months.

This year I moved the little Helvola lily into the larger tub with the other larger lilies mistakenly believing it would be safer. Back in June I awoke to another water garden debacle. This time even the poor trapdoor snails were taken leading me to believe it was a raccoon because the snail shells were cracked. The raccoons are a little more advanced in their dining techniques and able to eat clams and other water dwellers.

Once again the poor little lily was nothing but a scrap of tuber and one little leaf. Why target this one when so many larger ones were available? Demon varmint. Visions of high-power water pistols and mace danced in my head but I wasn't up to staying up all night to confront the wildlife here.

So I took the tuber, planted it in a small pot put the pot in a kitchen pot of water and placed that on the Aerogarden to use the light. And waited. And waited. Finally leaves started to appear but they didn't look like Helvola leaves at first. Oh no, I thought, maybe it was one of the other lilies in a sprout state and not my beloved little yellow lily. Well, I waited some more and wanted to put the lily back in its little tub but didn't want it to be a snack for a raccoon again.

The little tub garden is only about a foot or so across. Something flashed in my mind - a barbecue grill in the basement lying by the outdoor stuff. Hmm. Time to put the coated green wire fencing on the large tub to thwart the furry varmints and maybe the grill would fit over the little tub garden. Turns out the grill fit almost exactly. Best part is the tub handles hold the grill down further interfering with hungry furry critters.

One Tough Little Water Lily

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The little white water lily that I bought has died in March after only 20 years of straight growing so the little

