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Technique for rapid establishment of American lotus in remediation efforts

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ABSTRACT

A technique for increasing the establishment rate of American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea* Willd. [Nelumbonaceae]) and simplifying planting was developed as part of a pond remediation project. Lotus propagation techniques typically require scarification of the seeds, germination in heated water, and planting in nursery containers. Then mature (approximately 1 y) nursery-grown stock is transferred to the outplanting site, or scarified seeds are simply broadcast applied to the outplanting site. Mature plants should grow more quickly but can be sensitive to handling, require more time to plant, and cost more. Scarified seeds are easier to plant and are inexpensive but have a lag time in growth, can fail to germinate, and can be difficult to site precisely. We developed an intermediate technique using small burlap bags that makes planting easier, provides greater germination success, and avoids lag time in growth. Data on survival and growth from experiments using mature stock, scarified seeds, and bag lotus demonstrate that bag lotus grow rapidly in a variety of conditions, have a high survival rate, can be processed and planted easily and quickly, and are suitable for a variety of remediation projects.

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KEY WORDS

wetland, pond, restoration, propagation, planting, Nelumbonaceae

NOMENCLATURE

USDA NRCS (2012)