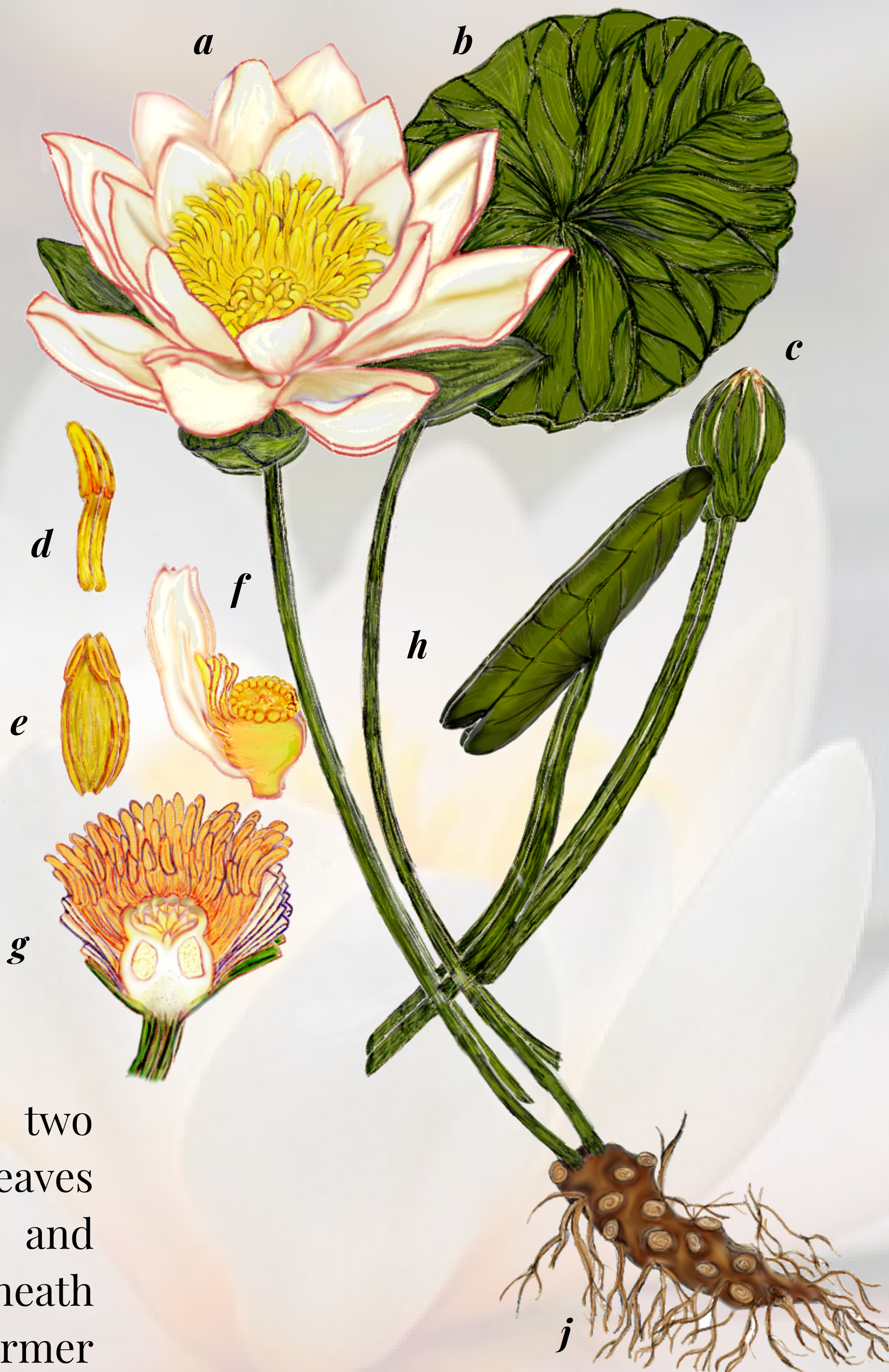
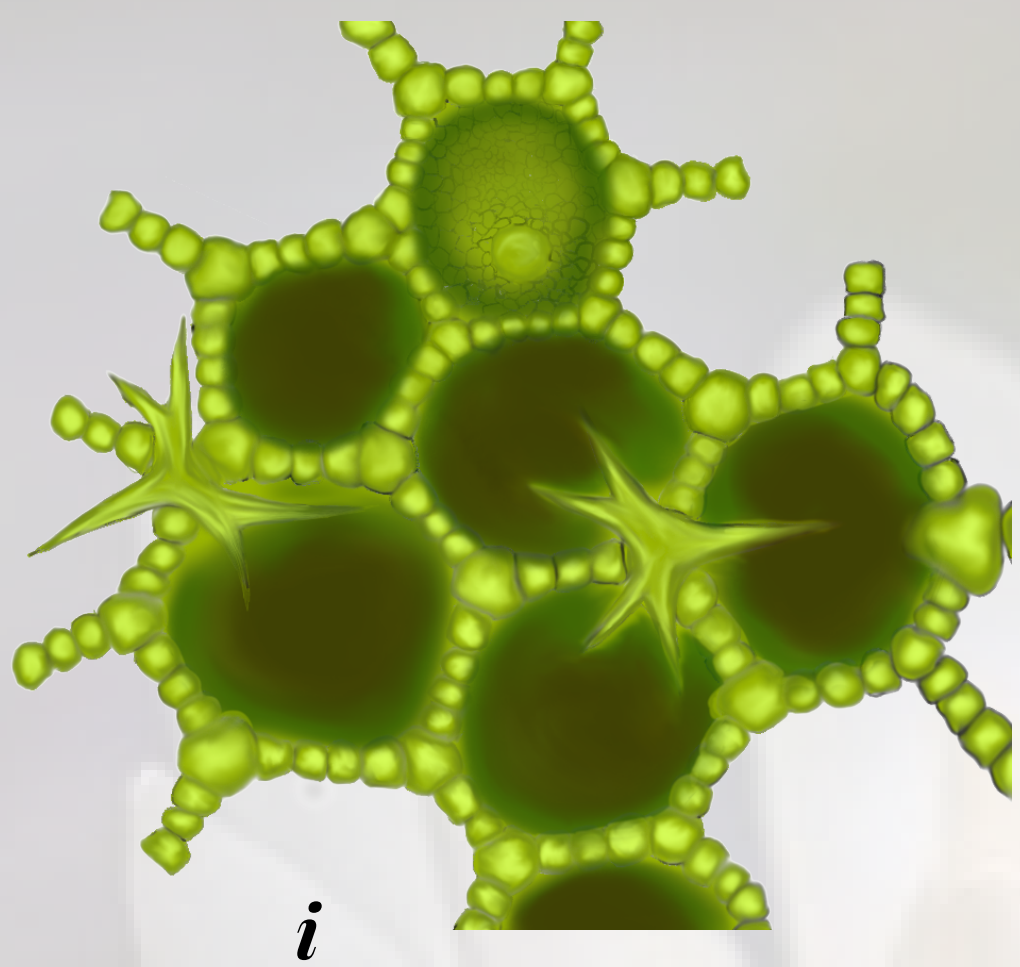


# Nymphaea alba

## Section through the stem



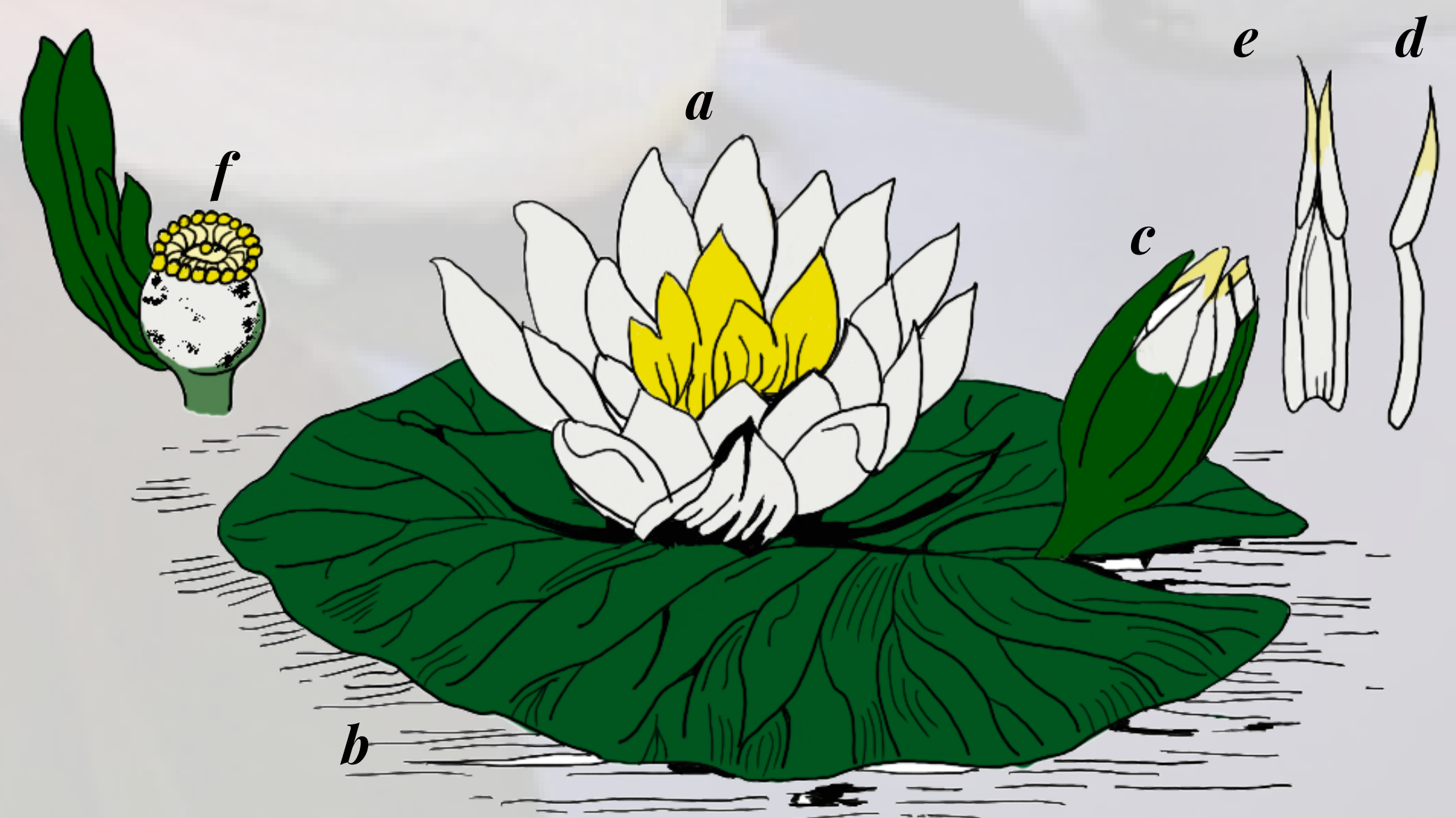
White water lilies are aquatic plants, part of the Nymphaeaceae family, which includes over 50 species. They are perennial plants that can be found in the Danube Delta. The root (rhizome) acts as an anchor for the plant, tying it to the bottom of the body of water. The stems are thick and long, full of air canals. The smooth leaf, which floats on the surface of the water, are either oval or round, with straight or wrinkled edges, reaching up to 30 centimetres in diameter. A single plant has several leaves, which occupy a surface of circa 1.5 m<sup>2</sup>.

The water lily possesses two types of leaves: floating leaves that aid in respiration and underwater leaves found beneath the floating ones. The former have an air chamber, a long petiole, and are heart-shaped. Respiration takes place through the waxed upper part of the leaf, whereas the pigments present in its lower part transform sunlight into caloric energy. The flower consists of 20 pure white, discreetly scented, spirally-arranged petals. The flower only opens at certain times during the when the sun shines the brightest, usually being completely open only around noon, from 11 to 15.

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- Legend:**  
 a. flower  
 b. leaf  
 c. bud  
 d. stamen  
 e. section through stamen  
 f. gynoecium  
 g. section through flower  
 h. stem  
 i. aerated tissue  
 j. root



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