

Agapanthus orientalis Agapanthus, African Lily, Lily_of_the Nile¹

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Introduction

Clusters of large, blue, funnel-shaped flowers appear atop long stalks in summer and early fall, rising above the coarse, strap-like, green leaves (Figure 1). Flowers make a wonderful display in mass plantings. They can also be used as accents in a small garden or by the patio.

General Information

Scientific name: *Agapanthus orientalis*

Pronunciation: ag-uh-PANTH-us or-ee-en-TAY-liss

Common name(s): Agapanthus, African Lily, Lily of the Nile

Family: *Amaryllidaceae*

Plant type: perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 9 through 11 (Figure 2)

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: mass planting; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; accent; edging; attracts hummingbirds; suitable for growing indoors

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 2 to 4 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet

Plant habit: upright

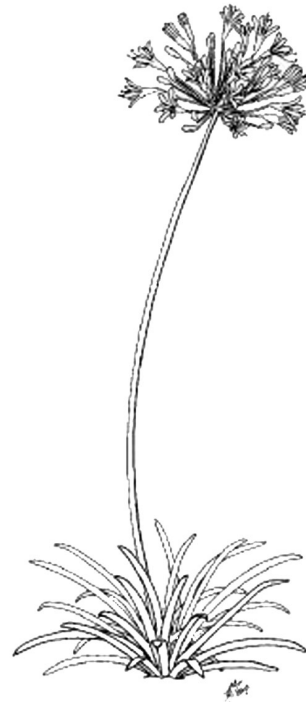


Figure 1. Agapanthus.

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: linear
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: blue; lavender; purple
Flower characteristic: summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: no fruit
Fruit characteristic: no fruit

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: not applicable
Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: occasionally wet; slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam
Drought tolerance:
Soil salt tolerance: unknown
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Growing in full sun or partial shade, Agapanthus is usually left undisturbed for several years and will form a large clump, making an attractive groundcover or accent plant. Agapanthus prefers moist, organic soil conditions but can endure drought once established. Plant about 18 to 24 inches apart for a thick ground cover effect.

Available cultivars include: 'Albus,' white flowers; 'Flore Pleno,' double flowers; 'Variegatus,' with striped leaves; and 'Nanus,' a dwarf, compact form.

Propagation is by division or seed.

Disease resistant selections are available for humid climates.

Problems include chewing insects, maggots, and borers.

Pests and Diseases

Botrytis can devastate a planting, especially in humid climates in the eastern U.S. Try the disease resistant selections in the East.