

# *Crinum x amabile* Giant Spider Lily<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The giant spider lily is a herbaceous perennial that rises from a 3 to 4½ inch thick, fleshy bulb. The linear, leathery leaves grow in a rosette. These glossy leaves are greenish-red and reach a length of 2 to 4 feet. Red and pink fragrant flowers sit atop a succulent, cylindrical flower stalk that is 1 to 3 feet tall. A 6-inch-long floral tube bears 6 petals and sepals, and rosy stamens from the throat of this tube. These striking, fragrant flowers appear most abundantly in the spring, summer and fall seasons of the year. The fruits of the giant spider lily are lobed seed capsules that are 1 ½ to 2 inches thick.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Crinum x amabile*: Giant Spider Lily  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Flower - *Crinum x amabile*: Giant Spider Lily  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Crinum x amabile*

**Pronunciation:** KRYE-num x uh-MAB-ill-lee

**Common name(s):** giant spider lily

**Family:** *Amaryllidaceae*

**Plant type:** bulb/tuber; perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8B through 11 (Figure 3)

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

1. This document is FPS156, one of a series of the Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1999. Revised October 2023. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.

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**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Uses:** mass planting; specimen; accent

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 3 to 5 feet

**Spread:** 3 to 5 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** spiral

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** more than 36 inches

**Leaf color:** purple or red

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** purple; red

**Flower characteristic:** year-round flowering; pleasant fragrance

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** green

**Fruit characteristic:** showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; usually with one stem/trunk

**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:** extended flooding; clay; sand; acidic; slightly alkaline; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Planted in mass, giant spider lily forms an attractive tall ground cover and is lovely when used as an edge or border around a pool of water. It is often planted alone in a small landscape as a specimen to accent an area. Locate it near a walk or patio to enjoy the fragrant flowers.

This lily is best grown in soils that are moderately moist. Irrigation during dry weather, especially in the summer, is recommended. Plant this lily in full sun to partial shade for best growth and flowering. The giant spider lily is moderately tolerant of salt spray and will grow well in coastal communities away from the direct salt spray.

## Pests and Diseases

Leaf spot disease appears to be the biggest problem.