

# Zephyranthes spp. Rain Lily<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

These dainty, funnel-shaped blooms pop up seemingly overnight after a heavy rain when grown in the wild, appearing in various shades of white, yellow, pink, rose, red, or orange. In cultivation, rain lily will flower throughout the year if kept alternately wet and dry with the majority of blooms produced in late summer or early fall. The narrow, grass-like foliage blends in well in rock gardens, borders, or it can be used in containers.



Figure 1. Flower—*Zephyranthes* spp.: Rain lily.  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Zephyranthes* spp.

**Pronunciation:** zeff-fer-RANTH-eez species

**Common name(s):** rain lily

**Family:** *Amaryllidaceae*

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

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7B through 11 (Figure 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year-round

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

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

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

**Origin:** native to Florida

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

**Uses:** naturalizing; edging

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 0.5 to 1 feet

**Spread:** 0.5 to 1 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches; 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** orange; pink; red; yellow; white; rose

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering; spring flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## 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; clay; sand; acidic; loam; slightly alkaline

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding

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

## Use and Management

Growing in full sun or partial shade, rain lily is tolerant of various soils and is moderately salt-tolerant. Bulbs can be left in the ground over winter if they are mulched heavily, or they can be lifted and replanted in the spring.

*Zephyranthes candida* has dainty, white, late-summer to spring blooms; *Zephyranthes rosea* has rose-pin blooms in

late summer; and *Zephyranthes sulphurea* has soft yellow, mid-summer blooms.

## **Pests and Diseases**

Propagation is by seed or division.

Problems include maggots and chewing insects.

Botrytis may be a problem.