Abyssinian Gladiolus

Gladiolus murielae

Plant Height: 24 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 6 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 7

Other Names: Peacock Orchid, Acidanthera murielae, Sword Lily

Description:

An exciting variety that displays large, striking white blooms with dark burgundy blotches in mid-summer; best grown in humusy, well drained soil in full sun, but very adaptable; protect from strong winds

Ornamental Features

Abyssinian Gladiolus features showy spikes of white orchid-like flowers with creamy white throats and a burgundy blotch at the ends of the stems from early to late summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its sword-like leaves remain dark green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Abyssinian Gladiolus is an herbaceous perennial with a rigidly upright and towering form. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.



Abyssinian Gladiolus flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Abyssinian Gladiolus in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Abyssinian Gladiolus is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Abyssinian Gladiolus flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Abyssinian Gladiolus will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 6 inches apart. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Abyssinian Gladiolus is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.