Fairy Lily

Dietes grandiflora



Fairy Lily flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 3 feet

Flower Height: 4 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Fortnight Lily, Large Wild Iris

Description:

Pretty white blooms with golden blotches and violet centers, on slender stalks, above clumps of upright stiff narrow leaves; needs consistently moist soil in full sun; blooms all season; deadhead to avoid aggressive re-seeding

Ornamental Features

Fairy Lily features showy spikes of white orchid-like flowers with violet overtones and a gold blotch rising above the foliage from mid spring to mid fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive sword-like leaves remain dark green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Fairy Lily is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. 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 plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep. Trim off the flower heads after they fade and die to encourage more blooms late into the season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Fairy Lily is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Fairy Lily will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity extending to 4 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. The flower stalks can be weak and so it may require staking in exposed sites or excessively rich soils. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.

Fairy Lily 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.