

Planting SPECIES Lilies



Excerpted from LET'S GROW LILIES and LILIES by Edward McRea.

Congratulations you are going to grow a wild lily, the grandparents of all lily hybrids.

Species lilies fall into three categories of growing difficulty. Easy for the beginner; lily happy to live in a garden, medium difficulty; lily may demand special home, and Expert for the dedicated ready to give the lily everything it demands. [must provide exact wild habitat or exacting virus control] this may not be possible for every gardener. The best way to grow a species lily is by seed as this will acclimate the plant from the beginning to your garden. However many of us just can't wait to see a lily bloom and thus buy bulbs.

Species are categorized into seven sections. Martagon, American, Candidum, Oriental, Asiatic, Trumpet & Dauricum.

2012 sales give you 2 Martagon species, 2 American species , 2 Asiatic species

Martagon Section:

L. martagon album native to Eurasia in limestone hills at wood edges in well drained well watered soil. Grows 2- 6 feet tall in gardens and has as many as 50 flowers. Grow as per martagon hybrids

L. tsingtauense native to China it grows in limestone hills in moist open woodlands or herbaceous areas. The hollow stem will reach 15 inches to 3 feet late July it will bear 1- 6 flowers up facing star shaped orange-red with reddish spots. Flowers scented. Grow where it is lightly shaded by other plants with ordinary moisture. It prefers and acid soil with rich humus

American Section:

L. pardalinum [leopard lily] native to Oregon and California. Natural habitat is near woodland streams. Stem grows 4- 7 feet tall the blooms are carmine red inside from tip to mid point and chrome yellow from mid to base large spots are gold ringed in chocolate. This lily prefers cool moist soil with shade at base and full sun on upper plant. It should be divided every four years as it is prolific under good growing conditions. It is a parent of the Bellingham Hybrids.

L. superbum native to Atlantic seaboard. Loves rich humus moist slopes in acid bogs and marches. stalk can reach 10 feet with 40 blooms large pendant turk's cap flowers of mainly orange-yellow with red tips but can vary. Centre is green, throat is spotted with brown. July- August flowering. In the garden this lily should have lime free moist soil. Plant 6- 12 inches deep. Shade soil with shrubs and have top in full sun. Virus susceptible.

Asiatic Section:

L leichtlinii native to Japan. Mountainous moist grassy rich soils. comes In two colours orange and yellow. Grows 2- 4 feet pendant reflexed blooms in July August. prefers a moist humus soil. There are many varieties of this species. **SORRY NOT AVAILABLE 2012**

L. henryi citrinum native to central China. In gardens may be 5- 8 feet tall and have 1- 30 flowers. better conditions create better stems. July- August blooms are yellow turk's cap [orange in Henryi]. Henryi is preferred for hybridizing and is used extensively for Orienpet hybrids. Plant deep in full sun in limed soil.

RULES:

1. **Good drainage.** Lilies hate wet feet. Even when they require moist soil they want it well drained. Some Species are particular about this so make sure your soil is amended to a good depth at least 24 inches. Good mix of vermiculite or grit [large sand – tiny gravel] ensures the drainage through your soil. Do not use regular sand with clay soil as you will make dirt concrete.
2. **Where to plant.** Try to give them as close to the habitat they are used to. If you got a local bulb It may be easier to acclimate your lily as it has already experienced Alberta.
3. **Lilies love Humus.** Make sure your soil is rich in humus and well drained. Plant in raised gardens or on a slope. Amend your soil to provide the requirements your lily needs.
4. **Plant promptly.** Leaving your bulb out will only dry it out and leave it more stressed.
5. **How deep?.** Refer to individual species requirements if deeper than 6 inches is required
6. **Spacing.** plant 3- 6 inches apart.
7. **Feeding:** Water Immediately. some species want acid – add a bit of peat moss. Some species want lime- add lime to soil. Use a soil test kit to find out what soil you have and amend accordingly.
8. **Mark where you put them.** Label them with their name. Draw out a map of your garden. Nothing worse than losing the tag and forgetting that there is a bulb where you are digging to plant that new shrub or perennial. Some lilies are not vigorous growers like the hybrids so might not appear every year or may decline. If you need to dig down to see what is what be careful to not damage the bulb so you can relocate if necessary.
9. **Mulch.** Depending on the species you may have to mulch the tender ones. Some may need to be grown in the greenhouse. ARLS will not sell these as they are more for experts. If you feel you have to own a difficult lily contact NALS for species growers. www.lilies.org
10. **Extra diligence.** We have the Lily Beetle in Alberta inspect your lilies regularly as the beetle and larvae can strip a lily down to stems in days. Species are more susceptible to virus & disease. The good news is that Alberta is not prone to virus so your lily has a good survival chance. Fence them from the deer protect them from voles. ARLS provides bare bulbs cleaned and washed. For extra insurance you should soak your bulb in 1 part bleach to 10 parts water for 5-10 minutes to kill any fungus and parasites before planting in your garden.