

Giant Hybrid Lilies Are 8-Foot Dazzlers

The modern hybrid lily, although it has its roots in antiquity, bears little resemblance to its ancient brethren.

Modern hybridizers seemingly work miracles each year in creating new hybrid strains whose blooms almost surpass belief in number, size, brilliance and variation of their colors.

They make a garden or cut-flower display that can only be termed dazzling.

As an added bonus hybrid lilies are extremely hardy, particularly the American varieties, many of which are grown in Oregon's fertile fields.

By selecting different varieties you can have lilies blooming all summer long. "Giant Royal Lilies," some of which have blooms up to eight inches across, provide flowers from June to August when planted as a collection.

Some of these giants produce as many as 20 blooms and an Ohio gardener had a cascade of 23 extra large blooms on a single stalk.

Lily bulbs should be planted as soon as possible after they arrive; they never go dormant as do some other bulbs such as tulips and daffodils. If immediate planting is not possible, the bulbs can be stored successfully in dampened flats of peat moss.

There are only a few basic rules in the planting of lilies, the most critical being a site with good drainage. The importance of this aspect is emphasized in the North American Lily Society's handbook, "Let's Grow Lilies," which says about drainage: "It is Rule No. 1 for success with lilies... also Rule No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5."

ONE METHOD of assuring good drainage is to plant on a

slight slope. Another is to prepare a raised bed. Whatever the site you select for your lilies, it will be their home for several years; a little soil preparation will pay rich dividends for many summers. Lilies like soil that is slightly acid, porous, well-aerated—a long way around a short piece of advice: "add lots of humus." You can hardly use too much humus, says the N.A.L.S. handbook, about one part of humus to one part of soil is a good ratio. Leaf mold, compost or peat moss are examples of good humus that will lighten a heavy clay soil and help a sandy soil retain moisture.

If possible, add another part of sand and mix everything to a depth of 12 to 18 inches; lily roots can range far. Cover the smaller bulbs with about three to four inches of soil and the larger ones with about four to six inches, working the soil

thoroughly around the bulbs to eliminate air pockets.

For a large show of color, plant at least three bulbs of one color to a group; one hole can be used for the grouping and large bulbs, such as J&P's Giant Royal Lilies, should be planted about six inches deep and spaced 18 inches apart.

Immediately after planting, water thoroughly—even if it's raining says the N.A.L.S. handbook, to make doubly certain moist soil snugs in around the roots.

A HELPFUL last step is to

cover the soil with a thin mulch such as rich compost or decaying leaf mold to discourage weeds, preserve moisture and stabilize soil temperatures during the fall and winter.

When you cut your lilies for arrangements, be sure to leave at least 25 of the stalks and leaves for nourishment of next year's blooms. There will be plenty of blooms for both inside and out. Those left in the garden should be cut off as they fade; leave all foliage and the stalk.

When the stalk has completely yellowed, it should be cut down.

There are few investments that can match the new hybrid lily; not only does it provide you with magnificent blooms, but the original bulb makes others, eventually providing you with numerous copies of itself.

Hybrid lilies support their exotic blooms on stalks that measure from 12 inches to eight feet, depending on variety, but there is no yardstick that can measure the beauty and gardening pleasure they afford.



ECHO VALLEY CONDOMINIUMS — A community of 122 apartment and townhouse homes is being converted from rentals to condominium ownership. Echo Valley, located on 12 Mile just west of Orchard Lake Road in Farmington, consists of nine colonial style buildings, and a clubhouse with a swimming pool.



The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

Did you know you can plant an air conditioner and air purifier in your backyard for only \$3 or \$4?

It's available in many different sizes and colors, cost of maintenance is practically nil, and it is guaranteed not to become obsolete. In fact, it will last many times longer than any other air conditioner on the present market. This conditioner has a net cooling capacity on the average equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners in operation 20 hours a day.

It will in no way add to the electrical energy crisis now faced by some parts of the nation.


The "conditioner" we're talking about is a shade tree, or a fruit tree. Properly planted, this tree can also reduce summer room temperatures as much as 20 degrees. Trees not only eliminate the "attic furnace" but will help cut your fuel bill by as much as 30 per cent by acting as a windbreak. To heat an ordinary house, it takes twice as much fuel at a temperature of 32 degrees, and a wind of 12 miles per hour as it does for the same temperature and a wind of three miles per hour.

So now that your gardening chores are winding down, why not give some thought to planting either shade trees or fruit trees in your backyard? Trees act as blotters for soaking up noises (up to 75 per cent and dust.)

FREE: If you want an illustrated booklet on landscaping, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope and ask for "Landscaping Hints."

GREEN THUMB CLINIC: A reader writes: "I read that lily of the valley plants are poisonous. Is that true? We have a lot for drinking purposes, and around the well is a good growth of lily of the valley plants. Will this pollute our water? Something is making the water taste very bad."

Answer: no, the lily of the valley plants will not pollute



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Mums Next In Series

"Growing Chrysanthemums" will be the next program in the fall series. "How Does Your Garden Grow?"

The lecture will be in the third floor sewing room of the J.L. Hudson Co.'s downtown store from noon to 1 p.m. Monday, Oct. 9.

William Collins, Michigan State University staff member

and Extension agent from Mt. Clemens, will speak on mums and their culture. Representative flowers will be on display and the lecture is free.