

# Plant now for summer color later



PHOTO BY BONNIE COURTER

Daylilies are wonderful plants for the beginning or busy gardener because they are relatively maintenance-free.

**Question:** I have always planted bulbs in the fall, but now I realize that there are also bulbs that I could plant now. What bulbs should I be planting in the spring?

**Answer:** I think that most people are generally familiar with the fall-planted bulbs such as crocus, daffodils, hyacinth and tulips. These bulbs are planted before the first frost in the fall and then provide beauty when we are at the tail end of winter, eagerly anticipating the arrival of spring.

However, there are also many varieties of bulbs, corms, rhizomes or tuberous roots that can be planted in the spring so we can enjoy the beauty of beautiful blooms all summer long and often into the fall.

As with anything you plant, the condition of your soil is the key to success. Well-drained soil with no clumps or rocks is a basic requirement. When selecting a place to plant, think about location and avoid areas that tend to be soggy, places where rainwater gathers.

Also consider the amount of sunlight a location will receive. At least six hours of sunlight are needed, and if you do happen to plant in a shadier spot, your flowers will probably bloom but the color may not be as vivid.

Now is the time to plant for south central Oregon. Our last date of frost has passed, and the soil is warming up. The soil temperature should be about 55 degrees.

If you plant too soon in cold and damp soil, what you plant may rot. If you wait until the soil is dry enough to work, you should be fine.

Once you start planting, mix in organic matter, compost and slow-releasing fertilizer. Always read the specific directions on the package, but as a general rule, most bulbs planted now need to be about 4-5 inches deep — except for begonias which should be planted just beneath the surface.

Ok, so what are your choices? I personally like



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*Master Gardener*

gladioli. Coincidentally, 2022 has been proclaimed as the “Year of the Gladiolus” by the National Gardening Bureau. Gladioli, commonly known as “glads,” are part of the iris family.

Gladioli are available in a variety of heights and colors. Gladioli corms can be left in the ground year-round in our zone. If you want continuous summer bloom, consider planting a section every 10 days or so.

If your goal is to have cut flowers, plant them in rows just because it will be easier to harvest.

If you are going to plant with other flowers, plant the corms in groups of seven for the best visual effect. If you are planting the taller varieties, make sure you stake them at planting time being careful not to damage the corms.

Another great choice for summer color would be canna lilies. Canna lilies are tropical bulbs that grow from a rhizome. Rhizomes spread quickly underground, so you will need to divide them every few years to avoid overcrowding.

This actually is one of the features I like about canna lilies because I just need to plant a few the first year, and the flower bed will be full of canna lilies within a few years with no additional expense or effort on my part.

Canna lilies grow straight up and can get quite tall depending on the variety and growing conditions. Because of this vertical growing habit, they are a great choice if you want to create a privacy screen.

Canna lilies are only available in warm colors: red, orange, yellow, and dark pink. These colors will attract the hummingbirds, and once the



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bloom dies back, the black clusters of seeds will also attract the birds.

Other choices that grow well in our region are the calla lily, cyclamen, dahlia and day-lily. If you only have a shady spot, then consider tuberous begonias.

All of these, plus more, are readily available locally and will grow well in Douglas County. Make your purchases, and get them into the ground soon, and then just wait for the beautiful summer blooms.

*Do you have a gardening or insect question? Contact the Douglas County Master Gardeners at [douglasmg@oregonstate.edu](mailto:douglasmg@oregonstate.edu) or 541-672-4461 or visit 1134 SE Douglas Ave., Roseburg. Douglas County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who help the OSU Extension Service serve the people of Douglas County.*

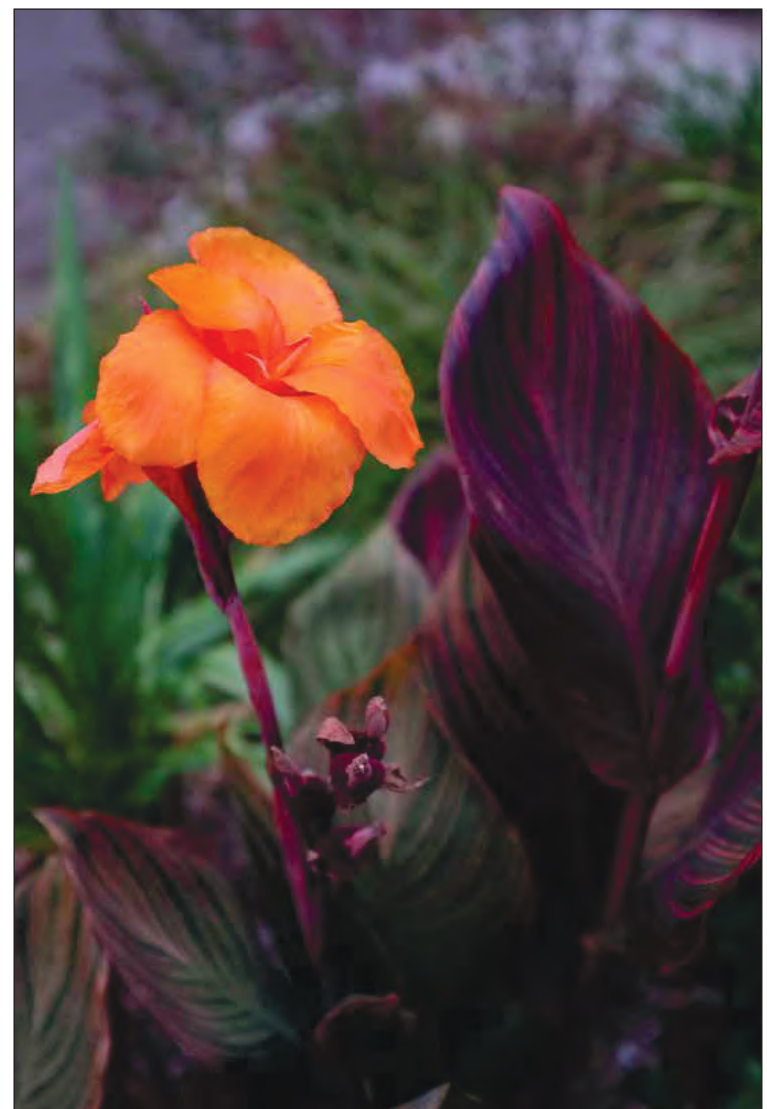


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