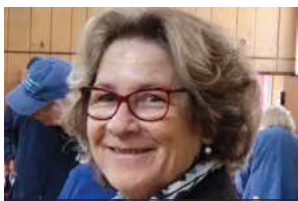


Agapanthus can help any landscape

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Agapanthus can often be confused with amaryllis belladonna, seen here.



Debby Finley
Ask a Master Gardener

Question: We are landscaping our yard and plan to include agapanthus. Is that a good choice?

Answer: A good landscaping choice, the Agapanthus genus consists of seven species, sometimes called Lily of the Nile or African lily.

Native to the dry outcroppings or moist mountain meadows of South Africa, they prefer full sun, minimal watering when established, and well-draining soils. Avoid planting in the shade as they won't flower as much. They love a regular dose of fertilizer to keep the blooms going all season long.

Agapanthus offers evergreen or semi-evergreen leaves in winter, delighting us with inky blue, pale sapphire, purple or white blooms reaching several inches across for a long period, mid-summer to early autumn. Deciduous types that lose their leaves are the toughest, hardiest agapanthus and



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTH CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Agapanthus, often confused with daylilies and amaryllis, is a good landscaping choice. It requires full sun, minimal watering and well-draining soil. They make good border plants are also work well in containers.

are more tolerant of cold than others.

It is a good border plant and suitable for containers. Plant in the spring, from the end of March into April. Most gardeners report that their agapanthus plants are rarely eaten by deer and as a rule Agapanthus species are pest-hardy, neither being much attacked nor drastically affected by garden pests, except for snails.

Agapanthus excel in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 8 to 10, Roseburg being 8b and 9a Zones.

Agapanthus has run into some uncertainty as to its classification among plants. Although it looks similar to the daylily, it is not a lily. Originally placed in the lily family, agapanthus was then shifted to the amaryllis family, then moved to the onion family, then back to the

amaryllis family before landing in its own family: Agapanthaceae.

Agapanthus are considered sisters to the familiar holiday Amaryllis and the Amaryllis belladonna, known as the belladonna lily or naked lady. This delightful plant develops clusters of trumpet-shaped, aromatic pink flowers appearing on 30-inch stalks in late summer. The leaves emerge after

flowering, so the stems are bare when flowers are produced; hence the nickname.

Agapanthus is a tough survivor in the face of chronic drought and is a popular perennial that grows and spreads from fleshy, bulb-like rhizomes, similar to daylilies. A type of storage root, rhizomes retain nutrients within their roots and can be easily divided to create more plants.

For agapanthus grown in the ground, it is not necessary to divide the plant regularly. However, removing faded blossoms from the stem will encourage new growth and prevent the plant from wasting energy on seed production.

The most common variety is Agapanthus orientalis, an evergreen plant that produces wide, arching leaves and stems that reach heights of 4-5 feet. Varieties include white flowering types such as Albus and blue varieties like Blue Ice.

Agapanthus africanus is an evergreen variety that displays narrow leaves, deep blue flowers with distinctive bluish anthers, and stalks reach heights of no more than 18 inches.

Agapanthus flower globes make excellent cut flowers by themselves or mixed with other summer blooms, and will attract foraging bees and butterflies to your garden.

Do you have a gardening question? Contact the Douglas County Master Gardeners at ask.extension.org/ask. Presently, the plant clinic is closed until further notice due to public safety orders.