**Introduction**

The Swamp Lily is a herbaceous perennial native to the southeastern U.S. (Fig. 1) that rises from a 3 to 4 1/2-inch thick, fleshy bulb. The linear, leathery leaves grow in a rosette. These glossy leaves are bright green and reach a length of 1 to 4 feet. White or pink-striped flowers sit atop a succulent, cylindrical flower stalk that is 1 to 3 feet tall. A 6-inch-long floral tube bears 6 petals and sepals, and rosy stamens that are tipped with yellow emerge from the throat of this tube. These striking, fragrant flowers appear in the spring, summer and fall seasons of the year. The fruits of the Swamp Lily are lobed seed capsules that are 1 1/2 to 2 inches thick.

**General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Crinum americanum*

**Pronunciation:** KRYE-num uh-mair-rick-KAY-num

**Common name(s):** String-Lily, Swamp-Lily

**Family:** Amaryllidaceae

**Plant type:** perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7 through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

---


2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.
Crinum americanum String Lily, Swamp Lily

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: mass planting; specimen; accent

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 1 to 2 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet

Plant habit: spreading

Plant density: open

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches; more than 36 inches

Leaf color: purple or red

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white; pink

Flower characteristic: year-round flowering; pleasant fragrance

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit cover: dry or hard
Crinum americanum String Lily, Swamp Lily

**Fruit color:** green

**Fruit characteristic:** showy

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** usually with one stem/trunk

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

### Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** extended flooding; clay; sand; acidic; slightly alkaline; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** good

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

### Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### Use and Management

String Lily will spread quickly to form an attractive groundcover and is lovely when used as an edge or border around a pool of water. Plant them on 3 to 4 foot centers to form a solid mass effect.

Swamp Lily can be successfully raised from offsets or seeds.

**Pests and Diseases**

This plant is relatively pest free except for chewing grasshoppers.