**Crinum spp. Crinum Lily**

Edward F. Gilman

**Introduction**

This large, coarse-textured, upright rosette of broad, light green, four-foot-long leaves is topped most of the year with great clusters of fragrant, spidery flowers (Fig. 1). A fine specimen plant, Crinums also make excellent underplantings for palms or other coarsely textured landscape plants. Plant four to six feet apart in a mass planting. Install a very low ground cover beneath and around individual plants or groupings to help "set-off" or display Crinum Lily. They accent any garden or landscape.

**General Information**

**Scientific name:** Crinum spp.

**Pronunciation:** KRYE-num species

**Common name(s):** Crinum Lily

**Family:** Amaryllidaceae

**Plant type:** bulb/tuber; perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8B through 11 (Fig. 2)

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

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

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** mass planting; specimen; accent; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.
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**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

![Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.](image)

**Description**

**Height:** 3 to 5 feet  
**Spread:** 3 to 5 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:** more than 36 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** white  
**Flower characteristic:** year-round flowering; pleasant fragrance

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches  
**Fruit cover:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** green  
**Fruit characteristic:** showy

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Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; 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: unknown

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

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

Well-suited to hot, dry locations, Crinum Lilies grow from what are among the largest true bulbs, some weighing over 40-pounds. Forming large clumps, Crinums should have plenty of growing room in full or partial sun on well-drained soils, and are moderately salt-tolerant. Crinums recover quickly from killing frosts in USDA hardness zones 8b and 9.

Species have blooms of white, pink, or rose, while others are striped with white and carmine, the so-called milk-and-wine lilies. Plants are available with maroon leaves at some nurseries.

Crinum x powelli cultivar 'Cecil Houdyshel' has fragrant, rosy-pink flowers. Crinum moorei, with a rose-red flower, is available in the cultivar 'Album' with white flowers and 'Roseum' with pink flowers. Crinum latifolium var. zeylanicum is the milk-and-wine lily.

Crinums are best divided during the winter when not actively growing. The large clump is simply lifted and some of the offshoot bulbs removed.

Crinum is a very sturdy plant and is only occasionally bothered by caterpillars or other chewing insects.

Pests and Diseases

No diseases are of major concern, but leaf spots could occur in moist shaded areas.