

Agapanthus is a genus of ten species native to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa [Zones 9–10]. Some of these species are deciduous [those that are coastal] and others are evergreen [thrive inland], though most hybrids are leaf losing and hardier. The plant grows 10–20” tall and blooms in early spring to late fall.

It was introduced into Europe in the late 17th century as a greenhouse plant. It does however, grow out of doors in southern England and Ireland if heavily mulched in winter. Here in the US, agapanthus is usually grown in pots but if dirt planted, will have to be lifted and dried, and stored in a cool, dark, dry area awaiting spring planting.

This plant grows bold clumps with short stems producing long, narrow, arching leaves and a central flower stalk. The flower stalk ends in an umbel of 20–30 white or bright blue tubular flowers. The flowers are ideal for cutting or, if left in place, develop into decorative seed heads.

Cultivation: Agapanthus are very easy to cultivate; they require full sun to light shade and fertile, moist but well-draining soil. Often grown in pots, an organic soil based potting mix is sufficient. Water freely when in growth and sparingly during the winter if left in their pots. And apply a balanced, liquid fertilizer while in growth until the plant flowers.

These plants thrive along the edges of lakes, ponds, and streams where the winter is mild. If your property has free water and you chose to plant in its margins, be aware that Agapanthus will need to be dug and stored in the fall.

Propagation: As a tender bulb, they multiply by offsets and can be divided in the spring or fall. If grown from seed, they need spring [cold frame] and fall and winter protection and 2–3 years to flower. Divide every 5 years or when flowering declines.

Pests: Slugs and snails, and bacterial soft rot can occur.



This plant has become root bound in its pot.