

Eucharis

Family: Amaryllidaceae

Common Name: Amazon Lily

Origin: There are around 20 species of this plant which comes from South and Central America.

Appearance: They have broad leaves to 50cm long and 20cm wide. The narcissus-like flowers are produced on umbels to 80cm long containing up to ten flowers. The flowers are white with a yellow central corona which is sometimes tinged with green.

Culture: They prefer sandy soils enriched with organic matter, and warm temperatures. They do well in low light conditions since they mainly grow as

understory plants. Potted plants should be re-potted in summer after flowering.

Propagation: They are best propagated from offsets divided in spring.

Health: There are few pests or diseases of note.

Uses: Green house plants, indoor plants or conservatory plants in cooler climates. Border plants and understory plants in subtropical and tropical climates.

Cultivars/Species:

E. amazonica - broad deep green leaves with large pure white flowers borne in clusters of up to five. Prefers a shaded site.



Eucharis amazonica

Eucomis

Family: Hyacinthaceae
(or Liliaceae)

Common Name: Pineapple flower,
Pineapple Lily

Origin: There are around 10 recognised species of these plants which originate from southern parts of Africa.

Appearance: They have strap-shaped leaves in a rosette. The flowers are star-shaped with tufts of leafy bracts and borne in dense spikes.

Culture: They are reasonably hardy plants which prefer a well-drained but fertile soil. Plant in a sunny spot but provide shelter from winds. During winter in colder temperate regions, place mulch over the site where the dormant bulbs are planted.

Propagation: They may be divided after the leaves die back in the autumn, or

during early spring. Alternatively, they may be grown from seeds planted in spring and protected from frost during the first year using a cold frame or greenhouse. They may take several years to produce flowers if grown from seed.

Health: There are no particular problems with diseases though the leaves are sometimes targeted by aphids.

Uses: Container plants, conservatory plants, border plants.

Cultivars/Species:

E. bicolor - to 60cm tall. The flowers are pale green with a purple margin and are borne in autumn.

E. comosa (syn. ***E. punctata***) - to 1m tall. The flowers have very noticeable leafy-like bracts at the tip and are sweetly scented, light yellow with a purple ovary.



Eucomis humilis

Freesia

Family: Iridaceae

Common Name: Freesia

Origin: there are some 16-20 species which originate from southern parts of Africa mainly from the Cape Province region.

Appearance: These clump-forming plants have narrow green leaves to 30 long. They produce spikes of very colourful funnel-shaped flowers which are highly fragrant.

Culture: They prefer a free-draining sandy soil enriched with organic matter. They do best in a sunny spot sheltered from winds. Canes may be needed to provide support. Water freely during budding and flowering and apply liquid feed fortnightly. Ease off watering after flowering finishes in spring.

Propagation: Offsets may be divided from corms after leaves have died back. Alternatively, they may be grown from seeds sown in spring which have been soaked in water for one day beforehand.

Health: Diseases are more prevalent when grown in large numbers in greenhouses and include fusarium wilt and gladiolus dry rot fungus. Pests include the caterpillars of various moths and butterflies and aphids. Greenhouse plants are also prone to red spider mite.

Uses: Greenhouse plants, conservatory plants, border plants, meadow gardens, grassy banks.

Cultivars/Species:

F. x kewensis – to 60cm tall. These large flowering modern cultivars are available in shades of red, yellow, orange and blue.



Freesia laxa



Freesia

Fritillaria

Family: Liliaceae

Common Name: Fritillary

Origin: There are around 85 to 130 species of these plants which originate from the Northern Hemisphere.

Appearance: They usually have narrow linear leaves, often pointed at the tips. The nodding flowers are bell-shaped or cup-shaped and generally appear in the spring. Some have foul smells whereas other are sweetly fragrant. Many have chequered patterns.

Culture: They do well in any freely-draining soil in a sunny position, but prefer a fertile soil. They will do well in open ground or in pots. Unlike others, *F. meleagris* will thrive in moist conditions and in turf. The bulbs should be planted on their sides to avoid water penetrating their hollow crowns and causing them to rot. They should be left undisturbed for several years once planted although dead stems may be pruned down to ground level.

Propagation: They may be grown from seeds planted in summer when ripe straight after harvesting. Seedlings emerge the following spring. In cooler climates they are best kept in a cold frame for the first year before planting out. They generally take 4 to 6 years to flower.

Health: There are no particular problems with diseases although the plants may be eaten by the lily beetle and its larvae which can decimate them.

Uses: Border plants, container plants, rockeries, meadow gardens, greenhouse plants, grassy banks and lawn plants.

Cultivars/Species:

F. imperialis (Crown Imperial) - to 60-90cm tall. The glossy, lanceolate leaves are produced in whorls on the stem. The terminal flowers are borne in spring in pendent clusters. They are tulip-shaped to 5cm long, and may be purple to yellow. There are a number of named varieties.

F. meleagris (Snake's Head, Snake's Head Fritillary) - to 30-45cm tall. They have glaucous leaves up the stem and bear bell-shaped nodding flowers either in pairs or single flowers. The flowers are white with a purple chequered pattern and look something like a snake's head. There are many different varieties.



Fritillaria acmopetala

Galanthus

Family: Amaryllidaceae

Common Name: Snowdrop

Origin: There are around 20 species of this plant which come from all over Europe.

Appearance: Each bulb produces two to three lanceolate leaves. The leafless stalk bears white drooping flowers comprised of three inner petals and three longer outer petals.

Culture: They do well in most soils but prefer moist, rich soils in a shaded spot. They do best in cool areas in full sun or semi-shade. They need plenty of light from midwinter to mid spring and can be grown successfully amongst other plants or in lawns so long as they receive light during this time.

Propagation: Plants may be propagated from seeds which need to be kept moist and shaded. They can also be lifted

when they have finished flowering and individual bulbs with roots and leaves attached may be divided.

Health: The leaves and flowers may be affected by grey mould which kills them. Pests include the narcissus fly maggot which may burrow into and destroy bulbs, and eelworms which may cause distorted growth or death.

Uses: Woodland garden, lawns and grassy banks, border plants. Good for rockeries and under deciduous trees.

Cultivars/Species:

G. nivalis (Common Snowdrop) – of variable height between 7.5 and 20cm tall. Strap-shaped glaucous leaves and dainty white bell-shaped flowers to 2.5cm.

G. plicatus - to 15-20cm tall. The margins of the leaves are turned under when young. The flowers are to 2.5cm long.



Galanthus elwesii



Galanthus nivalis 'Ophelia'

Galtonia (See Ornithogalum)

Gladiolus (syn. Homoglossum)

Family: Iridaceae

Common Name: Corn Flag, Sword Lily

Origin: There are around 260 species most of which originate from Africa, particularly South Africa. Around 10 species originate from Mediterranean Europe and Asia.

Appearance: They have slim, linear, pointed, dark green leaves which are ribbed. Whilst the natural species have relatively small flowers, the many commercially produced cultivars and hybrids have large and flamboyant flowers which are produced on thick stems and all face the same direction.

Culture: These are hardy bulbous plants and they are widely grown in many countries. Provided the soil is well-drained, they adapt to most soils from clays to sands. The soil pH should be around 6.0 to 7.0. When adding compost or manure, lime is also often added to stop the pH dropping too low. In frost-free warm climates they can be grown all year round and left in the ground. In cooler areas, plant in spring after the frosts have finished. The shoots emerge 2 weeks after planting and take 80 to 90 days to flower. Pick the flowers when the bottom flower starts opening. Leave the corms for 4 weeks after picking flowers then lift the corm, dust with a fungicide, and store dry. Avoid wind damage by tying plants to stakes, or with the aid of a windbreak. Plant in a sunny position.

Propagation: They may be propagated from small cormlets divided from the main corms in autumn after the leaves have yellowed. They should be planted in spring and will take several years to produce flowers. Alternatively, they may be grown from seeds planted in spring. These also take several years to produce flowers but are often not true to type.

Health: Iron deficiency is a common problem. Diseases include various rots such as core rot of stored corms. Other diseases include gladiolus scab which causes red spots on leaves and death of plants in wet conditions, gladiolus dry rot which causes blackened spots and lesions and eventual death, and gladiolus yellows which causes yellow stripes on the leaves followed by dieback. They are also susceptible to virus diseases such as cucumber mosaic virus which may cause white marks on the flowers or chlorosis of the leaves. Aphids and thrips are problem pests which may infest stored corms or growing plants. Caterpillars may also eat corms or upper plant parts.

Uses: Cut flowers, border plants, fence lines, or greenhouse plants and summer border plants in cooler climates.

Cultivars/Species:

G. x colvii (Scarlet Gladiolus) - to 60cm tall. The scarlet-red summer flower spikes are to 25cm long. Individual flowers have a yellow throat and are up to 7.5cm wide. There are many cultivars with different flower colours.

G. 'Golden Standard' - a large-flowered hybrid to 60-120cm tall. These have a 50cm long flower spike and individual golden-yellow flowers to 10-17cm wide.

G. 'Madame Butterfly' - a butterfly hybrid to 130cm tall. These have individual flowers to 5-10cm wide which are a lustrous shell pink colour with salmon and mauve throats.

G. 'Richard Unwin' - a primulinus hybrid to 100cm tall. These have loose flowers in a flower spike to 40cm long. Individual flowers have a hooded top petal and are velvet-like chestnut red with cream stripes.



Gladiolus Grand 'Passion'