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FOR THE GARDENER

Lilies (*Lilium*)

Hardy and half-hardy bulbous flowering plants introduced into this country around 1596. In all there are some 200 varieties and many hybrids, so far as the amateur is concerned only two classifications are necessary, the hardy outdoor and the greenhouse varieties coupled with those which will tolerate lime and those which are lime haters.

The lily is a native of wasteland all over the northern hemisphere and they thrive in regions where the air is moist, such as mountains, river valleys and so on.

Generally the plants do not like a too rich soil or feeding, but moisture is essential in order to get the best out of them. Most lilies do not like lime, but some species will tolerate it, they, for the most part do not do particularly well in bog peat owing to the acidity but are quite happy with leaves and well rotted manure or compost. Fresh animal manure should not be used as this tends to set up fungoid diseases.

When preparing the ground for planting the earth should be well broken up and deeply dug. Surround the bulbs with sharp sand about ¼" over and under, this helps to keep away excessive wet, slugs and also helps to keep the bulb clean and healthy.

Hardy lilies can be planted either in

the Spring or Autumn. Depth of planting is controlled by the fact as to whether the specie is stem rooting or basal rooting. Stem rooters need to be about 6" deep whilst the basal types only need be about 4". Soil should be drawn up around the stems when they grow as the roots tend to come above the surface.

Wild lilies like to be grown with grasses and shrubs so it should be remembered that cultivated lilies appreciate similar treatment, bearing in mind that they like to have their heads in the air and sunshine. Ideally plant amongst dwarf shrubs.

A few good hardy varieties are:

L. Auratum — Stem rooting, Golden Rayed Lily of Japan.

L. Candidum — White Madonna Lily of the old cottage garden, grows anywhere and likes lime.

L. Hansori — Stem rooting. Golden Yellow spotted with brown.

L. Hanryi — Stem rooting. Likes being grown with shrubs, tolerates lime. Deep Orange/Yellow.

L. Regale — The Royal Lily, very fine specimen, stem rooting. Quite happy on limestone soil. Colour is white inside with wine colour on the outer.

L. Willmottiae — Marvellous plant which will grow up to 8 feet in height and can bear as many as 70 flowers.



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