Lily of the Nile
*Agapanthus orientalis*

Introduction
Clusters of large, blue, funnel-shaped flowers appear atop long stalks in summer and early fall, rising above the coarse, strap-like, green leaves. Flowers make a wonderful display in mass plantings. They can also be used as accents in a small garden or by the patio.

General Information
Scientific name: *Agapanthus orientalis*
Pronunciation: ag-uh-PANTH-us or-ee-en-TAY-liss
Common name(s): Agapanthus, African Lily, Lily of the Nile
Family: Amaryllidaceae
Plant type: perennial; herbaceous
USDA hardiness zones: 9 through 11 (Fig. 2)
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; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; accent; edging; attracts hummingbirds; suitable for growing indoors
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description
Height: 2 to 4 feet
Spread: 1 to 2 feet
Plant habit: upright
Plant density: moderate
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: medium

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: linear
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy
Flower
Flower color: blue; lavender; purple
Flower characteristic: summer flowering

Fruit
Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: no fruit
Fruit characteristic: no fruit

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
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: occasionally wet; slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam
Drought tolerance:
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other
Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management
Growing in full sun or partial shade, Agapanthus is usually left undisturbed for several years and will form a large clump, making an attractive groundcover or accent plant. Agapanthus prefers moist, organic soil conditions but can endure drought once established. Plant about 18 to 24 inches apart for a thick ground cover effect. Available cultivars include: ‘Albus’, white flowers; ‘Flore Pleno’, double flowers; ‘Variegatus’, with striped leaves; and ‘Nanus’, a dwarf, compact form. Propagation is by division or seed. Disease resistant selections are available for humid climates. Problems include chewing insects, maggots, and borers.

Pests and Diseases
Botrytis can devastate a planting, especially in humid climates in the eastern U.S. Try the disease resistant selections in the East.

by Edward F. Gilman