

# media release

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## "Gardening Made Easy!"

Helpful advice from the Nursery & Garden Industry, NSW & ACT

### Luscious Liliums

Liliums have a wonderfully exotic aura about them with their show off blooms and often a heady fragrance. There is a mystique about them with the notion that they are tricky to grow. Far from it! Liliium bulbs are amongst the easiest to grow with very rewarding results. The Liliium as a flower goes back a long way!

It was Pliny the Elder (23 – 79 AD) who described the plant "As fair and noble as the rose." The Lily was used for its medicinal and healing virtues in ancient civilisation and was to become a sacred symbol in the Middle Ages in monastic gardens. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, several European species had been discovered but the botanical explorations to China and Japan in the 1800 and 1900's produced many more stunning species of this popular plant.

Liliums make perfect garden and potted plants. The flowers are striking, particularly so if you group a few bulbs close together to get a massed effect. Many have a delicious fragrance and the colour range is from the purest white through to regal wine red. Virtually every colour of the spectrum is catered for, apart from blue. Some blooms have speckled throats, some are bi-colour and some, like the delightfully named Turks Caps, have petals that reflect backwards to resemble a Turkish turban. Liliums can grow quite tall, whilst some varieties are more suited to growing in pots as they are more compact.

Liliums bloom from about mid November through for 2-3 months depending on variety. They could require staking in the garden but place the stake in the ground carefully so as not to disturb or damage the bulb.

Where and when to plant?

- Firstly, the bulbs are never really dormant. That's why you see them cosseted in wood shavings or peat moss in the bags at your local garden centre. It's to keep them from drying out too much. Buy them as soon as you see them in store and plant immediately
- Place the bulbs in well composted soil about 8 – 10 cm below the soil surface. Fertilise with GardenGold every 6 weeks
- Liliums like warm heads and cool feet. In other words keep the soil protected so it stays cool by growing lower perennials surrounding them. An easterly facing position is perfect
- They can be left in the ground for several years to multiply. Always allow to die back naturally

Enjoy some Liliums in your garden or on the patio this year. They are so easy to grow and very rewarding.

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