



**Surprise Lily**  
*Lycoris squamigera*

Plant Height: 12 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 8 inches

Spacing: 6 inches

Sunlight: ☉ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Other Names: Magic Lily, Resurrection Lily

**Description:**

A cluster of surprise lilies makes a striking accent anywhere; looks great in the semi-shaded woodland garden or along edges where the withering summer foliage won't be an issue; it is also used in containers; it can be divided every 3 or 4 years

**Ornamental Features**

Surprise Lily features showy clusters of fragrant rose trumpet-shaped flowers with white overtones, buttery yellow throats and lavender streaks at the ends of the stems in mid summer, which emerge from distinctive purple flower buds. Its narrow leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

**Landscape Attributes**

Surprise Lily is an open herbaceous perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Surprise Lily is recommended for the following landscape applications;



*Surprise Lily flowers*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



*Surprise Lily in bloom*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

### **Planting & Growing**

Surprise Lily will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 8 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 6 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen! As this plant tends to go dormant in summer, it is best interplanted with late-season bloomers to hide the dying foliage.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by multiplication of the underground bulbs.

Surprise Lily is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.