

Grand Spider Lily / Giant Crinum / *Crinum asiaticum*

Description

This crinum lily makes an imposing presence in the garden. Dark green strap-like leaves may be more than 3 feet long by 4 inches wide. These are held erect and arranged in a spiral rosette to form impressive clumps up to 5 feet in height by 7 feet in width. The leaves emerge from huge bulbs that may weigh ten to twenty pounds! Flowers are shaped like tubes that flair open into a crown of narrow petals. The flowers are white and are arranged in clusters atop thick, succulent stems. This crinum is native to tropical areas of Asia. It is now a favorite landscape plant in Florida, the gulf coast, California and other warm climate areas. Their drought resistance make them useful in xeriscapes. Also does well in containers. If growing in containers, it's best to allow soil to dry slightly between waterings – use a well draining, sandy soil mixture. Too much water will rot the bulbs. Repot as necessary to keep the lily's growing vigorously.

Prefers bright sunny situations but will grow in part, or even full, shade. Provide average water. Does well in dry soils and is drought tolerant. **Hardiness:** USDA Zone 9 - 11. You can grow this crinum in Zone 8, but foliage is killed by freezing winter temperatures.

Propagation: To propagate crinums, dig up a clump and separate the small offset bulbs from the parent bulb. Plant these in pots or directly in the garden where they will quickly root to form new plants. You may also plant the bulbils that form after the flowers.

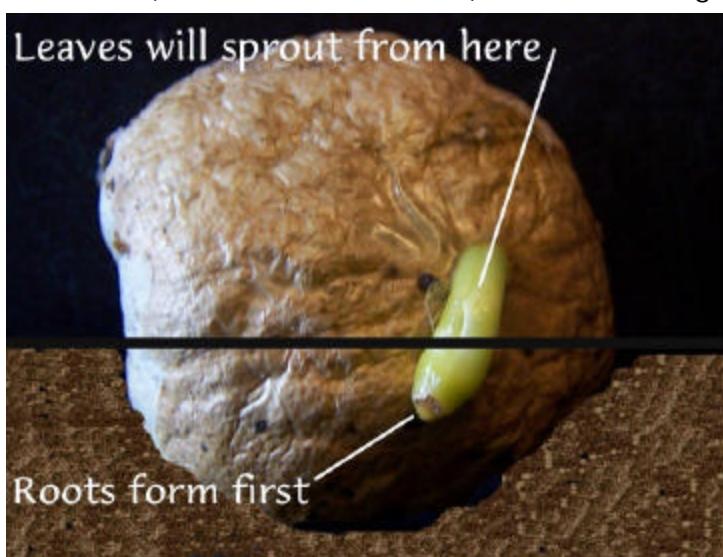
Planting instructions: If your bulbils have not yet started to sprout, lay them down flat in sandy, well draining soil with the 'dome' of the bulbil to the top.

Press into the soil about $\frac{1}{2}$ way – so you can still see the top half of the bulb. Water sparingly, they don't need a lot of water, and keep in a shady/part sun area until germination. It may take up to 30 days for germination. If your bulbil begins to sprout from the top, I usually then turn it on its side (see instructions below). The first thing to sprout will be the ROOT – keep this in mind!

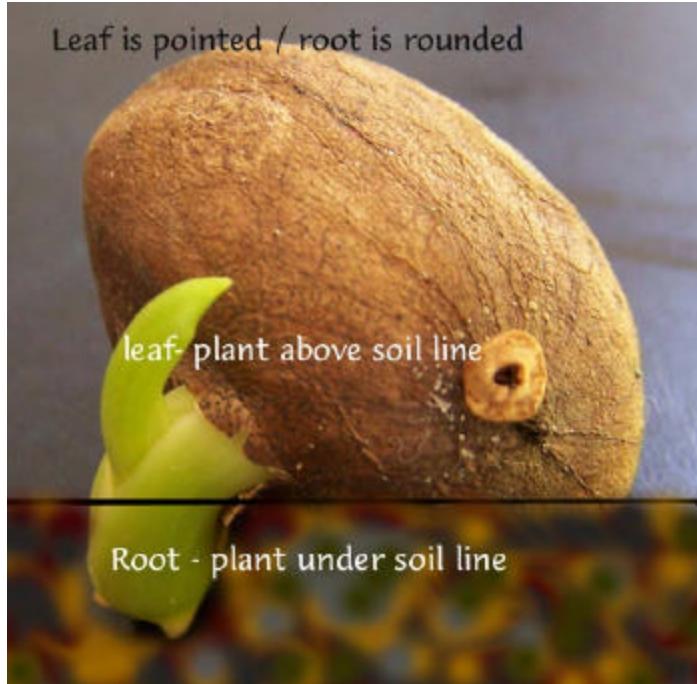
This should be turned so it can grow down into the soil.

If your bulbils have already begun to sprout, plant them in well draining, sandy soil with the root sprout pointing DOWN into the soil – see photo to right. Don't cover the entire green sprout, as the leaves will also form from this spot. Cover about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the sprout with soil.

If you have any bulbils that have BOTH LEAVES AND ROOTS sprouting, see next page.



Sometimes you will receive bulbils with BOTH leaves and a root already sprouted. This is how it would look:



The ROOT needs to be planted DOWN where it can reach the soil. The root is more round and may have 2-3 small 'bumps' on the bottom, the leaves are more pointed.

Do not over water. Soil can stay moist or you can let it dry between waterings, but don't leave in standing water. Keep in a shady/part sun spot until leaves form; then may be moved into more full sun, if desired. (In nature, these would fall under the main plant, in the shade, for germination.) When moving from shade to sun, be sure to 'harden off' your plants by placing them in the sun for longer periods each day until the leaves have 'hardened' to it. Moving a plant from shade to full sun can burn the tender leaves. Allow your plants time to adjust to the change gradually to keep from burning the leaves.

As always, if you have any questions, please email me: onalee@aol.com .