

America's Favorite Perennial: The Daylily

By *Binion Amerson*

Do you remember those tall orange lilies growing along the edge of your grandmother's vegetable garden? What about those beautiful and colorful lilies growing in the ditch along the countryside as you traveled to visit your grandmother? Chances are those orange flowers were daylilies and most likely were the wild *Hemerocallis fulva* species. Daylilies in Texas, the United States, and around the world have come a long way in the last century. From solid orange single and double flowers, they have developed into almost every color imaginable except blue. There are now beautiful solid reds, yellows, whites, pinks, and lavender single and double daylilies. There are multi color daylilies with different color eyes and edges. And the edges are ruffled beyond your dreams. And, there are now spiders and spider variants with long spiraled petals and sepals. There are even fragrant daylilies.

Daylilies provide many days of color in Texas gardens. In the Dallas area, daylilies are easily grown in raised beds of sandy loam and are almost disease free. Here, they bloom from mid-spring to late summer, with the peak being in late May and early June. Insect pests include easily controlled aphids and thrips.

Among the more popular inexpensive daylilies grown in the Dallas area are:

- ELIZABETH SALTER (Salter 1990), a ruffled pink.
- WIND FRILLS (Tarrant 1978), a spider-like pink.
- WEDDING BAND (Stamile 1987) a ruffled cream with a yellow edge.
- STRAWBERRY CANDY (Stamile 1989), a strawberry pink blend with a rose-red eye.
- JASON SALTER (Salter-E. 1987), a small yellow with a purple eye.
- MAGIC CARPET RIDE (Kirchhoff-D. 1992), a mandarin red with an orange-red watermark.
- LACY MARIONETTE (Tarrant 1987), a yellow spider.
- MIDNIGHT MAGIC (Kinnebrew 1978), a dark red.
- BITSY (Warner 1963), a small lemon
- PARDON ME (Apps 1982), a small red.
- TEXAS SUNLIGHT (Lewis-J. 1981), a small gold.

There are a number of gardens throughout the DFW metroplex where you can see daylilies of all colors and sizes.

- Amerson Daylily Garden*, 13339 Castleton Circle, Farmers Branch; 972-241-1726.
- Bozeman/Taylor Daylily Garden, 302 Meadowcreek Drive, Mesquite, 972-270-1530.
- Causey Daylily Garden*, 8204 Firestone, Flower Mound, 817-430-6260.
- Hurst Park Daylily Garden*, 405 Crosstimber, Hurst; 817-268-5189.
- Mitchell Daylily Garden, 3734 Blue Trace Lane, Farmers Branch, 972-481-9312.
- Nichols Daylily and Iris Gardens*, 3363 North Haven Road, Dallas, 75229; 214-352-2191.
- Pine Branch Daylily Garden*, Brookston, TX 75421; 903-785-0206.
- Smith Daylily Garden*, 198 Keith Dr., Allen, TX, 972-929-6496.

These gardens are at private homes, so please call to arrange a convenient time for visiting. Those gardens marked with an asterisk (*) sell daylilies.