

Scientific name: *Crinum americanum*

Family: Amaryllidaceae

Common name: Southern Swamp Lily, American Crinum

Native Habitat: Native to the United States, Texas, along the Gulf Coast, through Florida, and up to North Carolina.

Hardiness zone: Zones 7-11

Exposure: Full sun, but will tolerate quite a bit of shade.

Form: Herbaceous, bulbous perennial

Soil Requirements: Loves to have wet feet.

Growth Rate: Moderate

Height: 18 to 24 inches

Leaf: The leaves of *Crinum americanum* grow from large fleshy bulbs that are approximately 3 to 4 inches thick. These glossy, linear leaves are bright green, strap-like, up to 3 inches wide and can reach great lengths of 1 to 4 feet long.

Flower: The flowering scape rises from the bulb on a succulent, cylindrical stem that is separate from the leaves and that can reach heights of up to 3 feet. At the tip of the stem an umbel of 2 to 6 extremely fragrant white or pink-tinged flowers appear. The flowers consist of 6 reflexed tepals that fuse at the base to form a 6-inch floral tube. The reflexed tepals can equal or exceed the length of the floral tube. The reverse of the tepals are a deep crimson and extends into the floral tube. This colouration contrasts beautifully with the paler tepals. Six prominent stamens consist of elongated, rosy filaments and are tipped with yellow curving anthers. Flowers can appear at anytime throughout the growing season but tend to bloom during late summer at Stonecrop.

Fruits: The fruits of *Crinum americanum* are green seed capsules, approximately 1-½ to 2 inches, and contain large, fleshy seeds.

Crinum americanum can be found growing freely in swamps, marshes, and riverbanks. However, at our Zone 5 garden, *C. americanum* is best used as a potted aquatic that lives in a shallow, rock ledge pool for the summer and over-winters in our polytunnels. *Crinum americanum* is the only native North American species of the genus *Crinum*.

