

# Aztec Lily

## *Sprekelia formosissima*

Aztec lily, or Jacobean lily, is one of just three known species of the genus *Sprekelia* in the amaryllis family (Amaryllidaceae). *Sprekelia formosissima* is the one usually grown for its showy flowers. Flower color is typically scarlet to deep crimson but there are some pink selections, a white cultivar, and others that have lighter colored midribs or white edges on the red tepals. Unfortunately the flowers last for only a few days then quickly shrivel. The species does not consistently flower every year, but some selections or hybrids are much more reliable bloomers. Each bulb may produce more than one flower stalk annually, but usually in sequence and not at the same time. This plant resents being disturbed and may not flower for several years after being dug or divided.

**Type:** tender perennial bulb

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8 through 11

**Uses:** mass planting; specimen; naturalizing; border; accent; attracts butterflies

**Origin:** native to Mexico and Guatemala

**Height:** 1 to 3 feet      **Spread:** 1 to 3 feet

**Plant spacing:** 8 to 12 inches

**Light requirement:** full shade to part sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; alkaline; clay; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** low

**Soil salt tolerances:** moderate

**Invasive potential:** low

**Pest resistance:** Excessive soil moisture may cause the bulbs to rot or not flower

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Photo: University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension