Blue flag iris has wonderfully textured, light-green foliage emerging directly from the ground in dense clumps. It grows 12 to 18 inches tall, producing lavender-blue flowers about 4 inches across in the spring. They are native to boggy areas where water stands all year long. The plant is grown and used for its foliage effect as well as the flower display. The plant flowers for a short period in the spring but the coarse-textured, upright foliage makes this a year-round favorite for a wet garden spot. On 2-foot centers, a thick ground cover can be formed in about 2 years. The individual plants will be nearly indistinguishable by that time. Although full sun is tolerated if soils stay moist, a well-drained, partially shaded location provide best habitat for Iris. Plants can be allowed to dry out slightly in a shaded location with little damage to foliage or flowers. As with other irises, over-fertilization will encourage foliage growth at the expense of flowers.

**Type:** perennial

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8b through 11

**Uses:** border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; water garden; accent

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Height:** 4 to 7 feet  
**Spread:** 1 to 3 feet

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

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

**Soil tolerances:** acid; slightly alkaline; clay; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

Photo: UF/IFAS