

## Niagara College Greenhouse & Nursery Success Sheet No. 37

### Daylily

The name “daylily,” or *Hemerocallis*, comes from the Greek words *hemera*, meaning “day,” and *kallos*, meaning “beauty.” The name refers to the blooms’ lasting only one day. The daylily is a popular perennial due to its adaptability, durability, versatility and long life span.

The flowers bloom from late spring to mid summer and are available in a wide variety of colours, sizes and textures. Once established, your plant should give you years of enjoyment.

#### Description

Although not a true lily, the daylily is so named because of its lily-shaped flowers, which emerge from masses of sturdy, grassy leaves. Varieties are available in every colour except blue and pure white. The flowers can be plain, ruffled, striped or bicoloured. The size of the daylily ranges from 30 to 120 cm tall and wide.

#### Planting Requirements

Daylilies are best planted in zones 3-9. They should be spaced 30 to 120 cm apart in the soil. Although they should be planted in spring, they can be planted anytime during the growing season.

Daylilies are hardy, but they will do best in a well-drained, fertile soil with high levels of organic matter. Fertilizing should be done in spring and mid summer for better blooming.

Daylilies are not very particular with their lighting requirements. They will do well in

full sun to full shade; however, more shade means fewer flowers.

#### Division

If the number of blooms begins to decline, the plant may require dividing. You can divide your plant every three to five years. This process is best done when the plant is dormant, usually during late fall to early spring. However, you should not divide your daylily in extremely cold, wet or dry weather. The poor conditions may make it difficult for the new plants to re-establish themselves.

#### Pests and Diseases

The daylily is generally disease and pest free although you may see some common problems. Thrips are insects that generally feed on flower buds and can cause pale streaks on the petals. Japanese and cucumber beetles will eat buds, flowers and leaves. A disease known as crown rot may be seen if soil is wet in hot, humid weather.

#### Uses

The daylily is commonly used in mixed borders. Taller cultivars tend to make attractive accent plants. Shorter-growing cultivars can make excellent ground covers, especially since they need little maintenance. Daylilies can also be planted in containers using the faster-growing and more-upright cultivars.

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#### Niagara College Greenhouse & Nursery

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