

## To Summarize

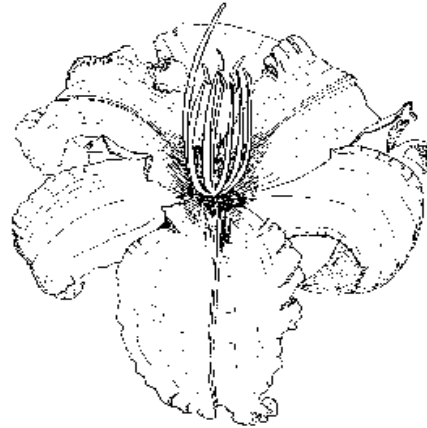
- Add organic matter to soils. Add sand to clay soils.
- Raise beds.
- Till the soil to a depth of 12-14" deep.
- Check pH reading.
- Space plants at least 18" apart.
- Divide clumps every three years.
- Barely cover the crown when planting in South Louisiana. When planted farther north, the crown is planted deeper.
- Don't water a newly planted daylily if the soil is normally damp.
- Apply mulch to protect plants from winter freezes.
- Control daylily plant pests.
- Fertilize in early spring and late fall during cooler temperatures.

We gratefully acknowledge additional informational contributions from: AHS/American Hemerocallis Society

Mr. Clarence Crochet, Crochet Daylily Gardens in Prairieville, LA

Mr. Butch Drews of Naylor's Garden Center (on chemicals), Baton Rouge

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*For more daylily information:*

[www.ahsregion13.org](http://www.ahsregion13.org)

[www.daylilies.org](http://www.daylilies.org)

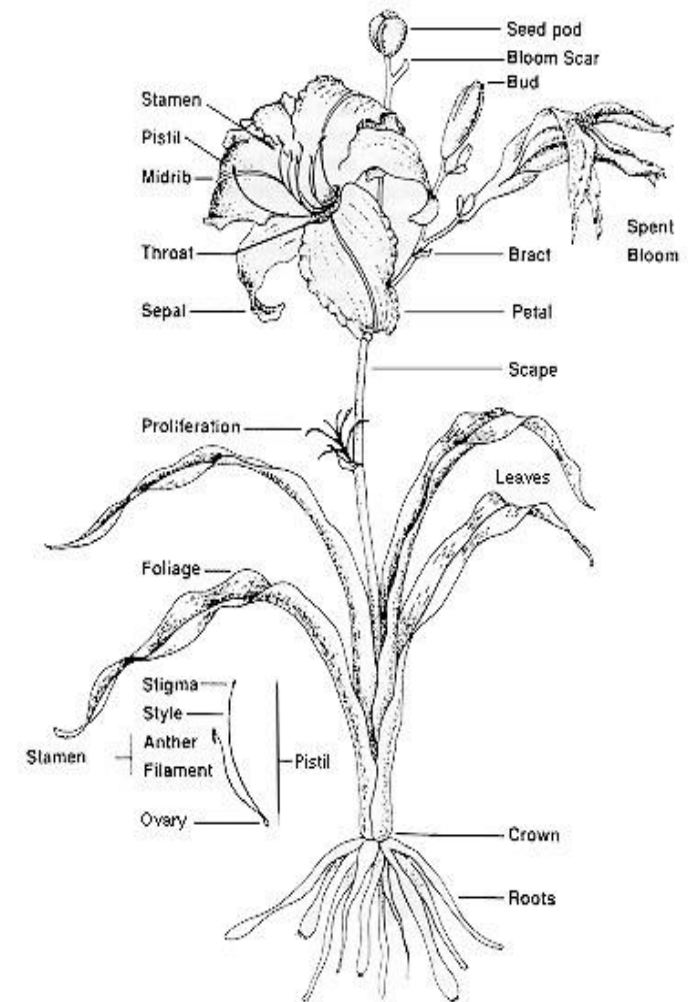
[www.brdaylily.org](http://www.brdaylily.org)

[www.eatel.net/~crochetgarden/](http://www.eatel.net/~crochetgarden/)

<http://www.dayliliesetc.com/>

Courtesy of  
**DELTA Daylily** (Lafayette)  
**SELDS** (Southeast Louisiana Daylily  
Society in New Orleans) &  
**BRDS** (Baton Rouge Daylily Society)

# Growing Daylilies in South Louisiana



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**They are not just yellow anymore!**

## Daylily Culture in South Louisiana

**Daylilies come in many colors**, from white, pink, orange, gold, lavender, purple, and to the darkest red. There are also many types of blooms, from the large flowers, to the intermediate, to the miniatures. There are also single and double blooms, spidery types and unusual form blooms. There are various foliage habits from evergreen to dormant; and heights of flower also, from the minis (under 6") to tall types reaching over 4 feet!

**Planting time** for daylilies from pots can be done almost any time in Louisiana, but spring and fall plantings are more desirable because the weather is not too hot at these times. Bare rooted daylilies are best planted in October in south Louisiana or in early spring or March so they may establish before the summer heat.

**Daylilies grow well in many types of soil.** They will benefit greatly by growing in soils that are well drained and which contain a good amount of organic matter. Add composted cow manure, compost, composted pine bark mulch or other organic matter to the soil every three years in daylily beds.

In much of south Louisiana, it is almost a necessity **to raise daylily beds** above the surrounding soil surface. Do this by adding a mixture of good planting mix and topsoil; also add 1/3 sand if the soil is mostly clay. Remember add organic matter as listed above with any addition of sand or soil. This mixture should be tilled into the soil to a recommended depth of 12–14 inches, minimum of 8-10 inches.

**Check soil for the pH reading**, or better yet, have it done by L. S. U. soil lab through your county agent. Cost is tiny and the return is great. Many

large garden centers may be pick-up points for the Soil Lab and can assist you. Daylilies like a pH of about 6.5.

**In planting, space daylily plants at least 18" apart**, and then divide the subsequent clumps every three years. Do not crowd the plants in the growing beds. Undivided clumps will result in a decreased number of blooms.

**Plant so that the crown** (where the roots meet the leaves) is just under the soil surface; no more than a half-inch. The planting hole should be 2" wider than the pot or root spread and should be 1" deeper than root depth. In center of this hole, make a mound in the soil (as you would for a rose bush) and drape the roots over the mound. Cover the roots with soil, just covering the crown of the plant. Press gently to settle the soil—please, no “stepping on” or stomping.

**If the soil is normal/moist** (not too dry or too wet), don't water for several days – up to 8-10 days. In this time the plant should begin to "green up" and show growth in the middle of the plant. If needed, this is the time to water. Water regularly, of course, in dry weather. The usual 1-inch per week is sufficient.

**A mulch layer in winter is desirable.** 3" to 4" of clean pine straw that lets the soil breathe is best, but old bagasse, pine bark mulch or seedless grass clippings will protect the plants from freezing, if applied in the fall or early winter. This, of course, also inhibits weed growth and development plus helps to conserve moisture in the soil.

**Regular garden maintenance** is the best plan for all pests and disease control.

**Daylilies have three serious plant pests.** Aphids show up in the early spring and have tiny, fuzzy white soft bodies. Malathion is a good basic aphid

killer. **Thrips** arrive in January but you see the damage during bloom season, look for bumps on the buds. Thrips must be controlled by January/February applications of Malathion or better yet, the chemical Idacloprid (trade name Merit). **Spider mites** (micro size bugs causing white splotches in blooms) in dry weather. Mites can be controlled with Malathion or the product Pentac but it may be hard for the average gardener to obtain over the counter. A strong spray of water can “knock them off the plants” and an application of insecticidal soap gives some control. (Do NOT use Kelthane on daylily plants for mites.) Neem oil may prove useful for all three pests. **Daylily rust** can be a problem during spring and fall cool weather. Nickel Plus originally for pecan rust is now labeled for daylily rust, and very effective. Some control is possible with alternating applications of Daconil & Headline.

**Most daylilies should be fertilized** in the fall, in late February for spring “green up” and when active growth has begun in late April/early May. A 1/5<sup>th</sup> strength application can be made after most of the flowers have bloomed. Good plant fertilizer for daylilies should include the minor elements. Some to look for would be Milorganite, Nutricote, Growers Special, Growers Supreme, or any with N-P-K ratio with lower P as in 3-1-1 or 9-3-6 could be used.

Note: Try not to use 8-8-8, 12-12-12, or 13-13-13 that in time can result in excess levels of phosphorus (P) in our Louisiana clay soils.

**A wise investment in your garden is that of joining a local club, making a friend of the most knowledgeable gardener you can find or of the plant expert at your favorite local garden center!**