

# PLANT of the MONTH

## Flax Lily - Dianella species

Dianella is a genus of about 35-45 species occurring in Australia, New Zealand, Pacific islands and Africa. About 25 species occur in Australia but there are also a number of unnamed species as well.



Up to 20 flowers occur on branched inflorescence that extend beyond the leaves.

The flowers are light to deep blue, about 1 cm in diameter with yellow stamens and appear from early spring to mid summer.

Birds and butterflies are attracted to the flowers of the Flax Lily.

Dianella caerulea plants are perennial herbs, often in grass-like clumps or spreading colonies by rhizomes. The strappy leaves are broadly linear in shape to about 0.75 m high.



The flowers are followed by round green fruit which mature into a beautiful bright blue. These are held into the autumn giving an impressive show in the garden.

Be careful not to eat the fruit or seed of most Dianella species as they can be toxic.

Because flax lily plants are compact, they also make excellent edging for borders, driveways, paths and lawns, where they will need very little care and maintenance.



Propagation can be carried out from seed which is best sown when reasonably fresh. No special pre-treatment is necessary. Plants can also be propagated by division of established clumps.

Flax Lily is popular in cultivation as it is generally hardy in a range of climates and soils. It tolerates at least moderate frost and extended dry conditions. The plants prefer an open, sunny location.



*Patersonia sericea*

Another option for your garden is Patersonia sericea – purple flag iris. This is native to the south coast is a reliable garden plant for hot dry positions on sandy soil with good drainage.