

# Spring-run spiderlily

(*Hymenocallis rotata*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_botanical\\_terms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms).

Fall is a wonderful time to float down one of North Florida's beautifully clear spring-fed rivers, their shores resplendent with wildflowers! Among them, the Spring-run spiderlily (*Hymenocallis rotata*) stands out with its large white flowers rising out of the shallow water along spring run and river edges. The bright blooms are a beacon for their primary pollinator, Sphinx moths.



Photo by Damien Rockwood

Spring-run spiderlilies have dark green, nearly erect strap-like leaves that arise directly from an onion-like bulb and grow to about three feet long. A single flowering scape grows to a similar height or a bit taller and typically bears two to four blooms. Flowers have a slender floral tube that is divided at the tip into six long narrow white tepals. Above the tepals sits a thin white membranous staminal cup that holds the bases of prominent long stamens, each with large noticeable anthers bearing yellow pollen.

The genus *Hymenocallis* is from the Greek *hymen*, meaning "membrane," and *callis*, meaning "beautiful." The species epithet *rotata* is Latin for "circular."

Florida is a diversity hotspot for the genus *Hymenocallis*. It is home to 13 of the 16 species native to the United States; seven of them are endemic to the state.

**Family:** Amaryllidaceae (Amaryllis family)

**Native range:** Eastern Panhandle and peninsular Florida south to Hillsborough and Orange counties

To see where natural populations of Spring-run spiderlily have been vouchered, visit [www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu](http://www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu).

**Hardiness:** Zones 8B–9B

**Lifespan:** Perennial

**Soil:** Saturated sandy soils

**Exposure:** Full sun to part shade

**Growth habit:** up to 3 feet

**Garden tips:** Suitable for a naturalistic setting, the Spring-run spiderlily requires inundation and would do best in the shallow waters of a slow-moving stream.

Plants are available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit [www.PlantRealFlorida.org](http://www.PlantRealFlorida.org) to find a nursery in your area.



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