PLANT OF THE MONTH

LANDSCAPING DEPARTMENT

LARGE WILD IRIS



Dietes grandiflora

Large Wild Iris/Groot Wilde-Iris

PLANT TYPE: BULB
SA DISTRIBUTION: EASTERN CAPE, KWAZULU-NATAL, WESTERN CAPE
SOIL TYPE: SANDY, LOAM
FLOWERING SEASON: SPRING, EARLY SUMMER, LATE SUMMER
PH: ACID, ALKALINE, NEUTRAL
FLOWER COLOUR: WHITE, YELLOW
ASPECT: FULL SUN, MORNING SUN (SEMI SHADE)

November is a month of sunshine, growth, and full garden displays — and few plants capture this vibrance quite like *Dietes grandiflora*, commonly known as the **Large Wild Iris** or **Fortnight Lily**. With its graceful, sword-like leaves and striking white flowers marked by splashes of violet and yellow, this hardy indigenous perennial has become a favourite across South Africa's landscapes — and for good reason.

OUTENIQUASBOSCH WILDLIFE VILLAGE

PLANT OF THE MONTH

LANDSCAPING DEPARTMENT

GROOT WILDE-IRIS



Characteristics

Native to the eastern and southern regions of South Africa, *Dietes grandiflora* thrives in a variety of conditions, from **full sun** to **partial shade**. It's perfectly suited to the climate of the Western Cape, especially during November when its flowers appear in abundance. Each bloom lasts just a day or two, but don't be fooled — the plant produces a steady succession of blossoms, ensuring a near-continuous display over the summer months.

The Forthnight Lily forms neat, upright clumps of long, narrow, dark green leaves that can reach up to **1.2 metres** in height. The plant produces tall, slender flower stems that rise elegantly above the foliage, each bearing several blooms during the warmer months. The flowers are eye-catching — **pure white** with **yellow** and **violet** markings — and are followed by slender seed pods that dry and split open once mature. Its evergreen nature and clumping habit make it ideal for mass planting, borders, and areas needing a structured, architectural feel.

OUTENIQUASBOSCH WILDLIFE VILLAGE

PLANT OF THE MONTH

LANDSCAPING DEPARTMENT

LARGE WILD IRIS



Why The Large Wild Iris?

Beyond its visual charm, *Dietes grandiflora* plays an important ecological role. Its nectar-rich flowers **attract** a range of **pollinators**, including bees and other beneficial insects. The plant's dense, fibrous root system also **helps control erosion**, making it particularly useful for stabilizing slopes or retaining embankments.

In indigenous gardens, it pairs beautifully with other water-wise species such as *Agapanthus africanus*, *Chasmanthe floribunda*, and *Arctotis* varieties, creating a layered, textural effect that supports both biodiversity and beauty.

This plant is a landscaper's dream — **low-maintenance** yet visually impactful. *Dietes grandiflora* is drought-tolerant once established, though it appreciates the occasional deep watering during dry spells. It thrives in well-draining soil and doesn't require regular fertilizing.

After the flowering season, **remove spent flower stalks** and tidy up old foliage to encourage new growth.

OUTENIQUASBOSCH WILDLIFE VILLAGE