



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Liriope muscari*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

This densely clumping, evergreen, grasslike perennial is quite attractive when grouped in a mass as a groundcover (Fig. 1). Spreading by underground rhizomes, Lilyturf quickly creates a 12-inch-tall, dark green mat, accented by attractive spikes of lilac purple blooms. Although frequently used as an edging, it is difficult to maintain it this way because of the spreading growth habit. 'Evergreen Giant' *Liriope* would be a better choice for an edging because it spreads very slowly.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Liriope muscari*

**Pronunciation:** luh-RYE-oh-pee mus-KAR-ree

**Common name(s):** Lilyturf, Liriope, Border Grass

**Family:** *Liliaceae*

**Plant type:** perennial; herbaceous; ornamental grass

**USDA hardiness zones:** 6 through 10 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** mass planting; edging; naturalizing; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

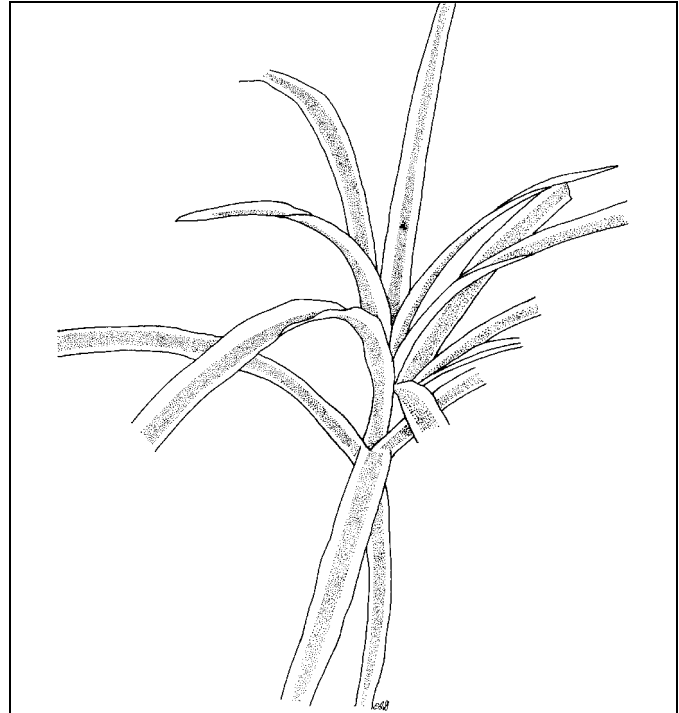


Figure 1. Lilyturf.

### Description

**Height:** .5 to 1 feet

**Spread:** 1 to 2 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** fine

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 12 to 18 inches

**Leaf color:** variegated

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** lilac, purple

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit cover:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** black

**Fruit characteristic:** showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

**Soil tolerances:** alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Preferring shade but tolerant of full sun (except in the hottest regions of the Lower South), Lilyturf establishes itself quickly on rich, moist, well-drained soils but will tolerate less suitable conditions. No more than four to six hours of full sun is recommended in USDA hardiness zones 9 to 11. Lilyturf should be fertilized once each spring but requires little care otherwise. Plant on 8 to 10-inch centers for quick establishment. Once established, Lilyturf will require irrigation only during the severest drought. Mow it once each year during late winter to get rid of last year's declining foliage.

Cultivars are available with variegated foliage, white and various shades of purple blooms. 'Grandiflora' has light lavender flowers; 'Majestic' has violet flowers; 'Munroe White', white flowers; and 'Variegata' has yellow-striped leaves, maturing to green, and dark violet flowers. Blooms on several of the cultivars are quite striking. *Liriope spicata* is slightly shorter and spreads much quicker by means of rhizomes. It makes a good companion ground cover to plant around fast growing shrubs since root competition helps check the growth of the shrub. Less pruning would be required on shrubs planted in the ground cover.

Propagation is by division of the clumps or by seed.

Problems include mites, slugs, snails, and scale. None except mites are usually of any consequence.

### Pests and Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.