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ThingsGreen.com Garden Tip

by America's Natural Master Gardener™, Nick Federoff



Conquer strap plants by dividing them! Strap plants are those that don't have leaves you're accustomed to seeing on a tree or shrub. Their leaves are modified and kind of look like thin or wide belt straps growing out of the ground. Some strap plants are: daylilies, Lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus*), Clivia and Fortnight Lily (*Morea*). Nearly all strap plants grow some kind of flower. Some flowers are grown on large stocks while others on dainty, tiny stalks. Either way, they add to every landscape.

Right now is a good time to divide strap plants since they aren't actively growing. There are many benefits to dividing plants. Strap plants have a tendency to clump and grow tightly together. Dividing opens them up so air, sunlight and moisture can penetrate better. This, in turn, will strengthen the plants warding off insects and disease. In addition, flowering will be more prolific.

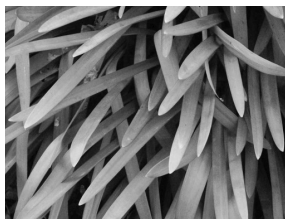
The first thing you want to do is dig up the plant – the whole thing! The nice part is you don't have to be gentle doing it. Just make certain you get root when you dig it up. Without the root, this process is worthless.

Now, it's time to divide. Sometimes you can wiggle the individual plants apart. You'll need to salvage a few roots of each plantlet. If it's too hard to pull them apart feel free to use a knife to cut roots and tubers. As long as you leave a few roots with each plantlet it should grow again.

Now it's time to cut the leaves down. Leave about six inches (6") of green and cut it straight across. You should now be left with a stub of green leaves, a small whitish stalk and a few roots. O.K., let's replant them in the ground, in a container or give them away! Just don't bury them too deep. A good rule is one-half inch (1/2") above roots. Follow up with a feeding of Miracle-Gro Organic Choice Plant Food and a soaking of water.

With the extra plants give them away to friends, neighbors and relatives. Or, put a price of fifty-cents on them to see how many you can sell. They are valuable!

Let's talk plants! Feel free to call me 24/7, toll free at 1-800-405-NICK(6425). And, see my videos at www.oregister.com/rie and click on ThingsGreen.TV.



Agapanthus africanus - Lily of the Nile



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