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*Hippeastrum puniceum*

[Synonyms : *Amaryllis belladonna*, *Amaryllis equestris*, *Amaryllis puniceum*, *Hippeastrum barbatum*, *Hippeastrum equestre*, *Hippeastrum ignescens*, *Hippeastrum purpureum*, *Hippeastrum pyrrochroum*, *Hippeastrum spathaceum*]

**BARBADOS LILY** is a bulbous perennial. Native to Middle America and the West Indies it has green centred, bright red flowers.

It is also known as *Amaryllis*, *Amaryllis lily*, Cacao lily, Easter lily, Equestrian starflower, Fire lily, *Fleur trompette* (Guadeloupe, Martiniquais), Knight's star, Lent lily, *Lis rouge* (Guadeloupe, Martiniquais), Orange lirio, and *Tararaco* (Spanish); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of pride, timidity, and splendid beauty.

Warning – internal use can cause dryness of the mouth, gastro-entiritis and nervous disorders. Some authorities would argue that Barbados lily is the true *Amaryllis*, not *Amaryllis belladonna* with which it is often confused.

*Puniceum* is Latin (crimson, carmine) meaning 'reddish, or rosy or reddish-purple or blood red'.

Today in temperate climates this species is probably most familiar as a pot plant.

The flowers attracted the attention of the famous Dutch artist, Piet Mondrian (1872-1944). It is believed he painted them in watercolours, three versions of them, around 1909.

In the Caribbean apart from arrow poison the bulb was also an ingredient in a mixture used to treat swellings and sores.