

Lycoris Radiata getting ready to bloom

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These Red Spider lilies normally bloom about two weeks later than the Oxblood lilies (*Rhodophiala bifida*). Not really sure what country the spider lilies originally came from but the Oxblood lilies were native to South America and came from the Andes Mountain ranges. The Oxbloods were very commonly found in the older German communities in south/central Texas right after the American Civil War. Many thousands of Germans moved to Texas from Russia when the Russian Czar threatened to begin drafting their children in the 1870's. They had been living and farming along the Volga river. Entire settlements moved to the central USA. They were not legally allowed to bring seeds or plants to America but the German women took their hard shelled red winter wheat and sewed the seeds in between layers of their coats and jackets. They smuggled all of their seeds used in farming into America in this way. One of the "weed seeds" that was mixed in with the wheat seeds was a form of Thistle common in Russian fields along the Volga River. A highly invasive weed before herbicides and the Germans spread this thistle from south Texas to the Panhandle of Texas in every area they farmed. The thistle dried out in the fall and winter and would break loose from the soil and roll around casting off more seeds everywhere it rolled. This Thistle in Texas and the far Western States became legendary and most of you all know it by it's common name of the "Texas Tumbleweed". Made famous in B-grade Western movies. Keith Kridler