

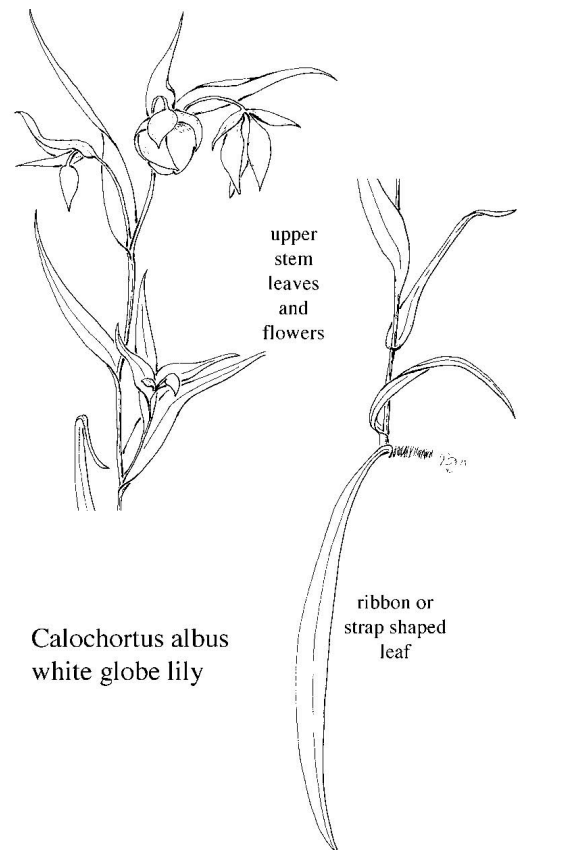
GREEN RIBBONS AND BOWS BY TONI CORELLI

The long, narrow green ribbon-like leaves lying on the ground are the first leaves of the white globe lily, also known as fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*). The large green bow-like leaves are the resting leaves of the checker lily; also known as Mission bells (*Fritillaria affinis*).

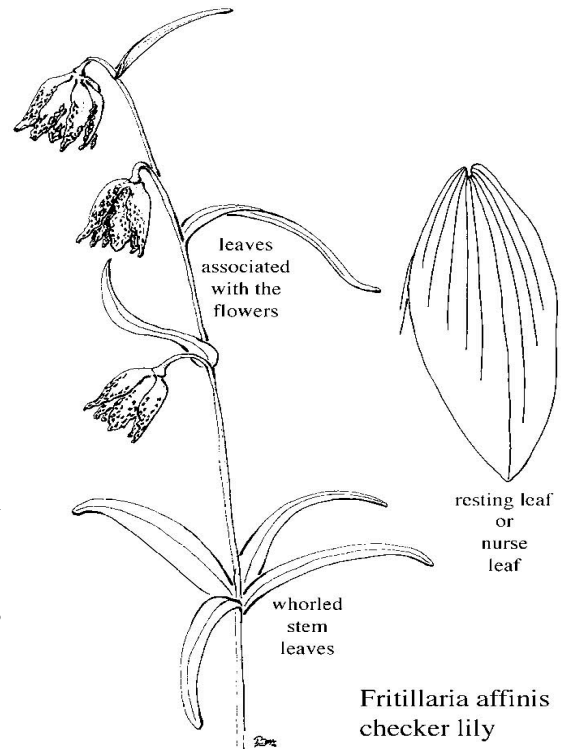
The underground bulbs of these plants produce these leaves. The purpose of these leaves is different for these two plants. Their function is to provide carbohydrates to the bulb to produce the stem leaves and flowers, but sometimes not in the same year.

For the white globe lily the bulb produces a ribbon-like leaf. It is often referred to as strap shaped and can be over a foot long. It is a solitary basal leaf and lies along the ground before the bulb sends up the flowering stem. The upper stem leaves associated with the flowers are upright and the flowering stem Illustration by Linda Bea Miller show branched white globe-like flowers. Usually the white globe lily stems, leaves, and flowers will be produced in the same season as the ribbon-like leaf. The white globe lily ribbon-like leaves are prolific this year and can be seen all along the trails in the woodland and chaparral; usually it flowers in late March-April.

For the checker lily, the bow-like leaves serve to add nutrients to the bulb to provide the strength needed to produce the flowering stem and leaves for another year. This broad bow-like leaf has been referred to as a resting or a nurse-leaf since usually the bulb will not produce the flowering stem and leaves in the same season. In the resting phase, this bow-like leaf is the only evidence that this plant is there this year. When not in the resting phase the bulb will send up a tall stalk with 1 or more whorls of leaves along the stem. Near the flowers are the other green solitary leaves. So the checker lily can produce three different leaf types, the bow-like leaf that allows the plant to rest that year, the whorled leaves along the stem and the solitary leaves associated with the flowers. The hanging bell-shaped flowers are of various shades of mottled yellow to green to brownish purple in a checkered pattern. There are already many checker lilies in leaf, bud, and flower along the trails in the woodlands. What a gift nature gives when from these leaves come the white globe lily and the checker lily.



Calochortus albus
white globe lily



Fritillaria affinis
checker lily