



## POPPIES

With their stem ends in boiling water for them from a root section, and bright, cheery, about 20 seconds or by holding they may even come back up in silky-textured them over the flame of a match or their original location after you flowers, poppies are a must-have candle. Condition the flowers by thought you had moved them. for any sunny garden. They standing them in cold water for ( This happened to me! ) provide outstanding color for the several hours before arranging.

late spring/early summer border Following are some varieties to and are brilliant accents in cut Caring for these delicate-looking consider. flower bouquets. beauties is not difficult.

Undemanding plants, Oriental Traditionalists will want to grow Oriental poppies are hardy poppies do not require dead- red poppies. Try Beauty of perennials with large, showy heading, and they thrive in soils Livermore for its 4 to 6-inch, flowers in gorgeous, rich, of poor fertility, as long as they oxblood red flowers with saturated colors in May to June. have good drainage. Although contrasting black markings on 28 Black stamens contrast with the they prefer full sun, they will to 30 inch stems. Those looking colorful flowers, creating a tolerate some light shade. The for a shorter version may want to stunning effect. Long, strong foliage goes dormant shortly after try Soho, a rich red with large, stems hold the blooms well flowering, and can be clipped crinkled flowers, growing only 15 above the deeply cut, coarse- back as it starts to decline. Plan to 18 inches tall.

textured, fuzzy foliage. Attractive on planting annuals or late- seed capsules follow the flowers, emerging perennials such as If you are more into pinks, plant extending the season of interest. baby 's breath to fill in the gap Helen Elizabeth, a 24 to 36 inch For the most dramatic effect, as the poppies ' foliage dies coral pink or Karine, a soft blush plant these beauties in groups— back. Foliage will re-emerge in pink with a maroon center. If you their flashy flowers will be seen late summer and stay semi- would like something really from a distance. As an added evergreen through the winter. different, check out Patty 's bonus, Oriental poppies are Leave it intact to provide a Plum. Its ruffled red-violet flowers unappetizing to foraging deer, natural protective, insulating are truly spectacular.

rabbits or squirrels. mulch. Division is not needed often, maybe every five or six For a pure, satiny white, try Royal If you like, cut some of the years, when the quality of the Wedding. Its black centers flowers to use in bouquets as a plants or flowers noticeably create a striking contrast that focal point or an accent. Harvest declines; this is best done after really makes it a standout. them in the morning when the the foliage re-emerges in July or Those looking for even more buds are just about ready to August. Be aware that these variety may want to check out open. Poppies contain a milky plants develop a deep taproot variety may want to check out white sap, and the stems need to and can be hard to transplant. some of the annual or biennial be sealed. Do this by dipping the You can, however, propagate types of poppies.

Papaver rhoeas (Flanders poppies (genus Papaver), but poppy) is an annual poppy with downy, light gray-green foliage. The species has bright red flowers, sometimes marked with black at the petal base in summer. (It is the traditional Memorial Day poppy.) Renee's Seeds offers a variety called Legion of Honor, with brilliant crimson, 3-4-inch flowers on 1 1/2 to 2-foot stems. Also try the sweetly fragrant Shirley Series with single, semi-double or double flowers in pink, yellow or orange shades. Grow from seed in well-drained soil and a sunny location.



Legion of Honor

California poppies are not true

Eschscholzia. They are self-seeding annuals that are native to the California and Oregon coast. Their flowers are similar to Oriental poppies, but smaller, in yellow, orange and red shades, on delicate, 12 to 18 inch stems. They bloom in late spring to early summer, lasting for about six weeks. The bluish green foliage is also delicate, and finely cut. Pretty seedpods follow the flowers. Deadheading will prolong the blooms, but allow some of the plants to go to seed to perpetuate your planting. California poppies like similar conditions to Oriental poppies—very good drainage and full sun. Plant them from seed where you want them to grow as early as possible in the spring. They are tolerant of frost and will bloom best if planted early.

Renee's Seeds offers some lovely California poppy mixes. Check out Tropical Sunset, a stunning mix of brilliant sunset colors. If your tastes run towards pinks, try Dusky Rose, a wonderful soft pastel pink.



Dusky Rose

All of the annual poppy varieties look pretty naturalized in a meadow-like setting, or weaving between other garden annuals. If you start from seed, please note that poppy seeds are very small. Mix them with sand to get more even distribution when broadcasting.

Like their perennial cousins, annual poppies make good cut flowers if picked in the morning just as the buds begin to open. Again, seal stem ends with boiling water or over a flame, and condition in cold water before arranging.