

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** California poppy – *Eschscholzia californica* or *Eschscholtzia californica*

**Best Variety:** *Eschscholzia californica* is the most common and is the state flower of California. There are garden forms with many different colors, most usually revert to orange or yellow when they reseed.

**Height & Width:** 6” wide, *Eschscholzia californica* has stems 8-24” long.

**History or Lore:** California poppy is known in folk medicine as a “mild sedative and analgesic, suitable even for children. The whole aboveground portions are harvested when in flower and dried. A rounded teaspoon of the chopped plant can be used for tea. Excess quantities can cause a slight residual hangover the next morning. Note to would-be “Opium Eaters”: The tea is functional, not fun.” (Michael Moore)

It has been used for pain relief, asthma, nervous tension, and stress relief, insomnia, and other sleep disturbances and anxiety.

**DISCLAIMER:** If you are interested in medicinal herbs, DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH!! YOUR HEALTH IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!!

**How to Propagate:** Sow seeds where plants are to grow; seedlings don’t transplant well. Sow in fall in mild-winter areas, in spring in colder regions. Broadcast on cultivated well-drained soil. If rain is absent, water to keep ground moist until seeds germinate. For large-scale sowing, use 3-4 lb. of seeds per acre. Birds are attracted to the seeds.

**Exposure Needed:** Full sun

**Soil Type:** California poppies grow well in poor soil with good drainage.

**Culture:** Drought tolerant, but watering in summer will extend the flowering season. Just to emphasize how tolerant this plant is, the following was taken from a website which computer generates its informational pages: “The plant prefers light (sandy), medium (loamy), and heavy (clay) soils. Requires well drained soil and can grow in nutritionally poor soil. The plant prefers acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It cannot grow in the shade. It requires dry or moist soil. The plant can tolerate maritime exposure.”

**Disease or insect problems:** Shade seems to be the only thing that gets this not quite native plant. One reference says that gophers low the long tap roots.

**Plant Interest:** Great for naturalizing in this are. It will bloom all summer long and reseed freely. It can be quite surprising where it turns up!

**Plant Name:** Columbine Flower

**FLOWER COMMON NAME AND SCIENTIFIC NAME:** Columbine is the common name for the genus *Aquilegia* flower. Columbines belong to the buttercup family, Ranunculaceae. *Aguila* means eagle in Latin and probably refers to their aerodynamic shape. They look like they could take off and fly at any moment!

**BEST VARIETY:** My favorite columbine variety is the Rocky Mountain Columbine or *A. caerulea*. It is native to the Rocky Mountains and is the state flower of Colorado. It grows 1 ½ feet to 3 feet high and 2 feet across and has blue and white flowers.

**HEIGHT AND WIDTH OF PLANT:** Columbine size depends on variety but can range from 2-4 ft. in height and approximately 18 inches across.

**HISTORY OR LORE:** The columbine was named after Columba, the Dove and was recognized as the symbol of Venus or Aphrodite. During Medieval times, doctors believed that dried Columbine flowers when powdered and made into a drink were a universal antitoxin. The Native Americans use minute amounts of the crushed Columbine seeds for headaches and also as a love charm. To control lice, they rubbed the seeds into their hair. I also read where it is potentially poisonous so don't try these things on your own!

**HOW TO PROPOGATE:** Columbines are very easy to start. They develop seed pods that will cause them to multiply in our garden. Most are not long lived and need to be replaced every 3 or 4 years. Seeds from hybrid plants will not look like their parent but will look very similar.

**EXPOSURE NEEDED:** Columbines need full sun or part shade.

**SOIL TYPE:** Columbines aren't particular about soil as long as it is well drained.

**CULTURE (fertilizer, water, pruning, or pinching?):** You'll want to remove the flowers after they bloom if you don't want the seed pods to develop. Also cutting back the old stems will produce a second batch of blooms.

**DISEASE OR INSECT PROBLEMS TO WATCH FOR:** Leaf miners are a potential pest, especially on hybrids.

**PLANT INTEREST (bloom time/seed heads/fall color):** The blossoms appear in spring and early summer. Depending on the variety they can be 3" across and come in various contrasting colors. Hummingbirds like all varieties and many birds enjoy the seed pods.

**Flower common name & scientific name:** Cosmos Asteraceae

Peak season: summer through fall.

Cosmos have sweet simplicity, with daisy like petals in white, pink, or red surrounding a yellow button like center, and ferny green foliage. They come after spring to brighten the garden for the summer.

Plant tall cosmos in the back of the bed so that the flowers in front will support. They also can be staked, but a few casual sticks, a picket fence or wall work just as well. Some grow to six feet tall. They look best over planted because they are airy. They do well as drifts or clumps. Dwarf types which grow 1-2 ft. tall make a wonderful addition to a meadow planting surrounded by low growing grasses and some English daisies. They reseed themselves to return year after year.

Some of my favorites are Sensation (3-6 ft.) and Sonata (1-1.5 ft). I have read about but not tried Seashell (3 ft) which has petals rolled into tubes. Also Pied Piper Red (2.5 ft tall) and Candy stripe (3 ft.) which has white flowers with crimson borders.

Yellow cosmos can grow to 7 ft. tall with fiery orange, scarlet, or gold flowers. You can find a million varieties in the catalogs and on the internet. I pulled up the cosmos name.. first getting international and interplanetary travel sites. Then going to flower finding over 2,000 hits for sites selling seeds and information on such a sweet plant.

**Soil Type:** Cosmos produce the best flower show when planted in average or even poor soil. Richer soil will encourage the plants to grow more foliage than flowers.

**Culture:** Give cosmos moderate water, but forget the fertilizer, they don't need it. When flowers are spent and only the central disk remains, dead head to prevent seed formation. You can leave a few see heads in placed at the end of the season for self seeding.

**Propagation:** Sow seeds at around 60 degrees in mid-spring.

**Disease or insect problems:** Stem canker, powdery mildew, aphids

**Plant Name:** Cranesbill Geranium

Family: Geraniaceae

Genus: *Geranium*

*Geraniums* are not to be confused with the colorful red, pink and orange “geraniums” that grace our window boxes, planters, and gardens each summer, and are actually bedding annuals from the genus *Pelargonium*, originally from South Africa.

Linnaeus placed the *Geranium* and *Pelargonium* together in his 1753 book ‘*Species Plantarum*’. *Pelargoniums* then became popular in Victorian plantings under the name *Geranium*. A French magistrate and amateur botanist, Charles-Louis L’Heritier de Brutelle recognized in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century that pelargonium should be a separate genus, but it was apparently too late to change the public’s ideas.

Our variable genus contains over 300 species of annuals and perennials, and the primary species and cultivars sold for our garden use will be listed below.

#### SIZE AND GARDEN USE:

*Geraniums* range in size from 4” to 4’ in height and width, with the majority being in the 1-2’ range, and are a clump forming spreading genus. They can be upright or trailing, and most are rhizomatous, making them excellent groundcovers. They are frequently seen at the edge of small forested areas, and beds, and are charming in rock gardens and with roses.

#### FOLIAGE:

The round lobed leaves are on long stalks, and almost as an attractive asset as the flowers. Some have excellent red, purple, or bronze fall foliage.

#### FLOWERS:

The flowers have five overlapping petals, two pointing in one direction, and the other three pointing in the other direction, may be bowl or sauce shaped, flattened or reflexed. They’re found in shades of blue, purple, pink, and white. The long beaked fruit resembles a cranesbill. The name geranium originates from the Greek word “geranos”, meaning crane. The fruits split suddenly when ripe, and the seed is shot upwards and outwards, reseeding itself generously. Most bloom over a long season. Sometimes they stop growing in the hottest part of the summer, and then rebloom vigorously in the fall.

#### HARDINESS:

Most of the geraniums we use in the garden are hardy geraniums, thriving in the northern temperate zones of North America and Europe , USDA plant hardiness zones 4-8.

#### EXPOSURE NEEDED:

In general they like part to full sun exposure.

#### SOIL TYPE AND CULTURE:

*Geraniums* are generally undemanding, and do well in most well drained and moderately fertile soils. They can prosper in alkaline clay loam. They’re relatively disease free and slugs do NOT like them.

#### PROPAGATION:

Most can be left for years before they decline. They spread themselves by seed and also are readily propagated by division, which can be done in early spring or fall. Take rooted

portions from an edge of a clump. Newly seeded volunteers are shallow rooted and easily removed if necessary.

#### MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON SELECTED *Geranium* varieties and cultivars

*G. argenteum* - Zones 5-6.

Pink or white 1 1/2 " flowers with darker veins, leaves covered with silvery silky hairs. Plant 3-5 " high and 6" wide. Bloom from late spring to early summer.

*G. x cantabrigiense* - Zones 4-9.

6-8 " high and spreading widely but slowly, making excellent ground cover Dark green leaves.

'Cambridge' - Bluish pink flowers, 3/4-1" wide.

'Biokovo' - White blushed pale pink flowers.

Both of above bloom late spring to early summer.

*G. cinereum* - Zones 4-9..

From Pyrenees. 8-10" tall and bearing trailing stems. Has 1 1/2" pale pink flowers with dark veins. Soft gray green leaves.

'Ballerina' - Pinkish with dark veins radiating from wine colored center, continues blooming into fall Leaves are grayish green. The manner in which the flowers "dance" probably gives rise to the name. POPULAR PINK HERE.

'Laurence Flatman' - Light lavender flowers with reddish center blotches between red veins.

*G. clarkei*- 'Kashmir White' All zones

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. Medium green leaves with 1 1/2" white flowers, pink veins, blooming late spring to early summer. Tolerates wet conditions better than most species.

*G. dalmaticum*- All zones.

From Balkans. Carpeting plant with soft pink 1 1/2 " flowers in late spring. Red fall leaf color.

About 4" high, tolerating sun or partial shade. Good for a rock garden.

*G. endressi* -. Zones 4-9.

From Europe and SE Asia. Bushy 1 1/2 " high mound spreading by rhizomes to 2'. Light green leaves and rose pink silvery flowers about 1" across. Blooms late spring into fall.

*G. himalayense* (*G. grandiflorum*) - Zones 4-7

Himalayan native. Plant is 1 1/2 ' high, spreading by rhizomes. Medium green leaves and blooms late spring into summer. Flowers blue with reddish veins and purple eye. Excellent deciduous bulb cover even in partially or fully shaded site. Plant 1 1/2' apart.

'Baby Blue' - Larger light blue flowers.

'Plenum' ('Birch Double') Less vigorous light lavender blossoms

*G.* 'Johnson's Blue' Zones 4-7.

(*G. himalayense* x *G. pretense* 'Buxton's Variety) Abundant blue violet flowers. QUITE POPULAR AND WIDELY SOLD IN BOISE. Excellent with pink or yellow roses.

*G. macrorrhizum* - Zones 3-8, from S. Europe.

From S. Europe. 8-10 " tall and spreading fast from rhizomes that root on soil surface. Sticky hairy leaves with strong musky scent and attractive yellow, orange or red autumn color. 1" wide flowers in white, pink, or magenta. Blooms late spring to summer, with repeat in fall.

'Album' - white flowers flushed pale pink

'A.T. Johnson'- Pink flowers blooming June to October, with reddish fall color.

'Bevan's Variety'- Deep magenta with red sepals.

'Ingwersen's Variety' - Bluish pink flowers with longer blooming season.

*G. maculatum* - WILD OR SPOTTED CRANESBILL Zones 4-9.

Native to E. North America. Only commonly cultivated native cranesbill. 11/2 ' tall with profuse 1 1/2" lilac pink flowers in spring to early summer.

'Album'- White flowers.

*G. x magnificum* - Zones 4-9..

Vigorous sterile hybrid cultivated for more than a century. Tall 2 1/2' clumps spreading steadily. Profuse 2" violet blossoms heavily veined in deep purple bloom late spring to early summer.

*G. oxonianum* - Zones 4-9.

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'Claridge Druce' - 2-3' tall clumps. Rounded 3-4 " leaves deeply cut between lobes. 1 1/2" cool pink flowers late spring to early summer. Good large scale ground cover which self sows profusely.

'Wargrave Pink' - Similar to above with glossy warm pink blossoms that resemble those of *G. endressi*, one of its parents.

*G. x phaeum* - MOURNING WIDOW, DUSKY CRANSBILL - All Zones.

Shade loving native of southern Europe, 2' high with clusters of dusky purple or maroon blossoms from spring to fall. Leaves often have brown markings.

'Lily Lovell' - Purple blossoms with white eye

'Samobor'- Light maroon flowers with leaves heavily marked in maroon.

*G. platypetalum* - Zones 4-9.

From Turkey. 1 1/2 " round quilted shallow leaves cut into scalloped lobes. Summer blooming flowers with notched petals in deep violet blue.

*G. pretense* - MEADOW CRANESBILL Zones 4-9.

Native from Ireland to Japan. Hairy leaves on 2' tall stalk, with 1" blue flowers, reddish veins. Self seeds profusely.

'Mrs. Kendall Clark'- Pale blue flowers with lighter veins.

'Striatum' - White blossoms irregularly splashed with violet blue.

*G. psilostamen* (*G. armenum*) - Zones 4-9.

Native to Armenia and Turkey. Clumps to 4' tall with big deeply cut leaves 1 1/2" long, and early summer magenta flowers with black centers and veins. Leaves brilliant flame color in fall.

'Bressingham Flair' - Lilac pink flowers on 3'tall plants

*G. x riversleaianum* - Zones 4-9.

Wide spreading silky foot high green leaves on long trailing stems from late spring through fall.

'Mavis Simpson' - Soft shell pink blossoms with dark veins.

'Russell Prichard' - Brilliant magenta rose.

*G.* 'Roxanne' - NEW AND HIGHLY ACCLAIMED CULTIVAR. (*G. himalayense* x *G. pretense* 'Buxton's Variety') Blooms are violet blue and with a white throat and darker blue veination, and are nearly 3" wide. Blooms late spring through early summer and then again in the fall, into October. Reddish brown fall foliage. Mine was obtained through "Klehmn's Song Sparrow" catalogue. Grows rapidly, likes morning sun and afternoon shade.

*G. sanguineum*.- BLOODY CRANESBILL. Zones 4-9.

Native from W. Europe to Turkey. Dense clump 8-18" high, spreading by rhizomes to at least 2 1/2'. Dark green 1-2" wide leaves deeply divided into 5-7 lobes that turn blood red in fall. Typical forms have purple to crimson flowers 1 1/2" wide late spring into summer, and will rebloom if cut to ground.

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'Album' - White flowers.

'Alpenglow' - 8" tall with vivid rose red blossoms.

'John Elsley' - Flowers pink with deeper pink reddish purple veins.

'Lancasteriense' - Light pink flowers.

'Maxfrei' and 'New Hampshire' -, Flowers reddish magenta with reddish purple veins.

'Shepard's Warning' - Rose pink flowers.

'Vision' - Variable seed grown strain with magenta flowers and purple veins.

*G. s.* 'striatum' - compact form only 5-6 " high, excellent rock garden or foreground plant.

*G. sylvaticum* .- WOOD CRANESBILL Zones 4-9.

Native from

Ireland to Siberia and south to Turkey. Shade and moisture loving plant blooming late spring to early summer. Flowers range from white to reddish purple.

*G. wallichianum*. - Zones 4-8.

Native of the Himalayas. Blooms from early summer until fall with white or purple flowers containing a white eye.

'Buxton's Variety' Pure blue flowers with white eye. Stout taproot not easy to divide, propagate from seed.

## HISTORY AND LORE:

History of the word geranium and the *Geranium/Pelargonium* confusion has been discussed above. Cranesbill geranium has long been used for medicinal purposes, primarily for internal bleeding and dysentery. The epithet “Bloody Cranesbill” for *Geranium sanguineum* is thought to be derived from its wound healing properties. In some areas it is known as Alumroot because of the astringent taste of the roots, which are used in making an astringent. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century some western Native Indian tribes reportedly used *G. maculatum* for treating gonorrhea.

*Geranium* has been included in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia and the National Formulary.

### **Plant Name:** Cyclamen

**Varieties:** There are many varieties of Cyclamen, and most all will grow in the Treasure Valley area with the exception of the *C. persicum* or Florists’ Cyclamen. *C. hederifolium* (*C. neapolitanum*) and ssp. *Peloponnesiacum* are likely to be the easiest to grow as they are even more tolerant of the cold. Be sure to read the label or consult a knowledgeable nursery person.

**History/Lore:** Cyclamens are native to central and southern Europe. Various varieties are from France, Ital, Yugoslavia, Greece, Albania, Algeria, and Syria.

**Propagation:** Propagation is by seed and often Cyclamens will self sow. Small hardys can sometimes takes years before producing a bloom, while others can bloom in just 7 months. It depends on the variety.

**Exposure Needed:** Again, depending on the variety, Cyclamens can be grown in sun, part sun, or shade.

**Soil:** Rich, damp, not soaking, porous soil with lots of humus makes them happy. They can be used in rock gardens if partial shade is provided, as “carpets” under Rhody, Camellias or other acid loving plants for a natural look, or as a bedding plant. Feed with a complete acid fertilizer. Let plant get somewhat on the dry side between waterings. Provide a pine straw mulch in winter. Always prune yellow leaves as pulling tears the corm. And always pull the flower stalk vertically away for a clean separation. Plant tubers 6-10” apart, ½” deep usually during the dormant period.

**Disease or Insects:** Cyclamen mite is a rare problem with black vine weevil showing up more often. Occasionally, Cyclamen get leaf spots and seldom, in our area, gray mold.

**Plant Interest:** This charming woodland plant is reliable in cold hardy areas, easy to grow, and depending on variety, usually blooms for a lengthy time from early spring to later summer. The plants can be from 3-10” tall and usually is about 9-10” wide. Blooms range from white to rose

pink and to deep purple. Leaves are usually mottled with greens, silvers, and white always providing interest. Most go through a near-leafless or dormant period in the summer.

**Flower Common & Scientific Name:** Dahlia

**Best Variety:** Various. There are 12 different flower types: single, anemone-flowered, collarette, peony-flowered, formal, decorative, informal decorative, ball, pompom, incurved cactus, straight cactus, semi-cactus and orchid flowered. Swam Island Dahlias list two more: waterlily and lacinated.

**Height & Width:** Flower sizes are as follows:

AA: flowers over 10" or more

A: flowers 8-10" across

B: flowers 6-8" across

BB: flowers 4-6" across

M: flower up to 4" across

P: flowers up to 2" across

Dahlias grow from 1-5' tall, from huge dinner plate to midget pompoms. Small dahlias can be grown as annuals.

**How to Propagate:** Dahlias are tuberous perennials that can be propagated by seed, division, or cuttings. This can be done in either the fall or spring. To propagate by cuttings in fall, after the first heavy frost, lift the clumps without breaking any tubers. Allow to dry for a few days. Store tubers in sand or peat moss in a box in cool, frost proof cellar. Never store in plastic bags, as I did, and they all rotted. Examine them from time to time to check for shriveling.

Two weeks before outdoor planting in the spring, put the tubers on damp paper or soil. Separate the clumps so that each piece crown has an eye on it. To take cuttings, each fleshy portion must have a piece of old stem with an eye attached in order to grow. Make holes deep, incorporate fertilizer in bottom of the hole, plant with the tuber in a horizontal position 6" deep. Stakes should be put in at the time of planting. As the shoots grow, gradually fill the hole with soil. Cuttings root in 10-15 days.

**Exposure Needed:** They require full sun, at least 8 hrs. of direct sunlight is best. They prefer morning sunlight, but not hot afternoon sun. Good air circulation.

**Soil Type:** Prepare soil a few weeks before planting. Beds should be well drained and in an open, sunny location. If you have heavy soil, work in sand or peat moss. Bone meal is ideal used at planting time. Enriched, mulched soil will provide even temperatures at the roots. Top dress in summer with rich compost. Avoid high nitrogen fertilizers. Water when sprouts begin to appear. Watering too early increases the chance of rotting tubers. Water well during extended dry periods.

**Pruning (disbudding):** Disbudding should be done mid-July. Best flower result when the side branches and flower buds are removed, leaving only the strongest terminal bud. Small bedding dahlias do not need disbudding. Staking is also necessary when the stems are 10-12 ft high.

**Problems:** Tuberous roots in storage may develop tuber rot which is caused by fungi. The roots rot rapidly when stored in warm, humid conditions. Another problem is improper storage procedures which may lead to shriveling of the tuber.

Dahlias may also be susceptible to wilt disease which is in the soil. Symptoms are lower leaves turning yellow. Older plants may be stunted. Flowers heads droop and the root system may be partially decayed. It is best to destroy infected plants.

Once dahlias start blooming in the summer, there is a continuous flood of flowers until frost. They are tender perennials, forming tuberous roots that have to be dug and stored in the fall in our climate.

**Cut flowers:** They make beautiful bouquets. After cutting blooms, place cut stems in 2-3" of very hot water (160 degrees) and allow to cool for one or two hours. This will "set" the blooms and make your arrangements last for 4-6 days.

If you have never been to Canby, OR for the dahlia festival in late August, it is well worth the trip. Swan Island Dahlias alone have over five acres in dahlias.

### **Plant Name: Delphinium**

Common name: **Delphinium**  
Scientific name: *Delphinium elatum*

**Is a genus of over 250 species of annual (larkspur) and perennial members of the buttercup family; often referred to as the crowfoot family because the leaves of most species are three lobed.**

Best Variety: *Delphinium chinensis* **Compact growing only to 15 inches**  
**Heat tolerant**  
**Bloom all summer**

*Delphinium elatum*

*D. x belladonna* (shorter and branch freely)  
cv. 'Cliveden Beauty' is sky blue, 3 ft tall  
Bellamosum is dark blue  
Casa Blanca is all white.

*D. grandiflorum* a popular short variety (1 ½ to 3 feet)

**Blue Minor is deep blue  
Cambridge Blue is light blue  
cv. 'Album' is white**

Height & width of Plant

**The most spectacular are the Pacific Giant hybrids which grow to 4-6 feet.  
Space 2 – 3 feet apart**

History or lore:

**The garden development of the delphinium was done in England during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**

How to propagate:

**Easily grown from seed – since the plant blooms well only for 2-3 years, it is wise to grow new replacements from seed each year. Stored seeds do not germinate well and so should be planted as soon as seed is gathered. Sow in a mixture of 2 parts garden loam and one part sand.**

**Propagate asexually by division in the spring when the growths are 3-4 inches high. Divide every three years by digging them up, washing away the soil and cutting clumps into sections each with plenty of fibrous root and one strong stem, then plant immediately with crowns 2 inches below the surface.**

**Can also be grown from cuttings and in such can keep varieties true. Take cuttings when the shoots are about 3 inches long taking care to get a small piece of the crown with each piece. Use a rooting medium of clean sand or vermiculite  
Establish plants need no winter protection in the Treasure valley.**

Exposure needed:

**Prefers warm summer days and cool humid nights and therefore thrives along the Pacific coast and in parts of New England.  
Likes full sun with protection from the wind and well drained soil.**

Soil type:

**Prefers a neutral to slightly acidic soil, pH 6.5**

Culture (Fertilizer, water, pruning or pinching?):

**The tall hollow stalks need to be staked**

**Delphiniums require extremely high fertility to produce the best flowers  
Are voracious feeders requiring well fermented compost and abhors chemical fertilizers. Liberal applications of phosphate rock and potash rock will result in healthy plants and superior flower spikes.**

**Limit the plant to 3 spikes the first year.**

Disease or insect problems to watch for:

**Too many spikes will exhaust the plant and under stress are susceptible to black spot and crown rot. Young growth is also prey to slugs and snails which can be discouraged by a sprinkling of clean, sharp sand or wood ashes around the plants.**

**Plug the cut ends of the hollow stems with clay, wax or mud to prevent water getting in and rotting the crowns. There is no cure for crown rot, only prevention. Once it starts, destroy the plant and begin again.**

**Black spot may infect leaves in summer. Good air circulation helps control it, but may need sulfur dusting.**

Plant interest (bloom time/seed heads/ fall color?)

**Flowers are valued for their spikes of spectacular blooms that are long lasting when cut.**

**Color ranges from all shades of blue as well as white and shades of lavender to pink. Many have a center or 'bee' of a contrasting color.**

**If the first spikes are cut out as soon as they finish blooming, secondary spikes will develop which will bloom for two or three weeks after the main spike.**

**Plant Name:** Euphorbia

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** Euphorbias are an especially diverse group of plants commonly known as spurges. They are primarily from Africa, western Asia, Europe, and North and South America. They range in form from large cactus like trees and shrubs in Africa and Arabia to summer annuals on the Great Plains. Although there are numerous Euphorbias in cultivation, they all belong to a single genus of more than 2,000 species. You guessed it, *Euphorbia*.

You are familiar with lots of Euphorbias, even if you aren't aware of it. Some are noxious weeds, Leafy Spurge and Spotted Spurge. Your Christmas poinsettia is a spurge, as is the common house plant called Crown of Thorns. Snow on the Mountain and cushion spurge are common in Idaho gardens. Many are sold in garden centers wrongly labeled "cactus". Large, cactus like Euphorbias are found in bank lobbies and shopping malls. You've seen them: they look like organ-pipe cactus, without the spines.

**Best Varieties:** Some of the best species for this area are listed in the accompanying table. Wood spurge, Robb's spurge, Fire on the Mountain, *E. dulcis*, *E. griffithi*, Snow on the Mountain, *E. palustris* and cushion spurge are excellent bedding plants. Cypress spurge and Donkey-tail spurge make good rock garden specimens. *Euphorbia charicias* and *marinii* are large scale-perennials. Finally, crown of thorns, poinsettia, and many of the cactus-like spurges

make excellent indoor-outdoor plants, enjoying a place on your patio during the frost-free months.

The flowers of spurges are much more than flowers, they are complex collection called by botanists, a cyathium, accompanied by modified colored leaves called bracts. This aggregation is easiest to see in the poinsettia. The cyathium has scent and nectar-producing glands to attract insect pollinators. Those that attract butterflies and bees have large, showy bracts, and these are the species that we want in our homes and gardens.

All Euphorbias have a milky latex, which is mildly irritation to very poisonous, depending on the species. Always wash your hands carefully, immediately after pruning or handling spurges. Getting the latex in your eyes or mouth can be a painful experience! Euphorbias were named after the Greek physician, Euphorbus, who lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. He was a physician to King Juba II of Mauritania, a client king of Rome. Euphorbus was believed to have used euphorbias as a medicinal herb. Recently, a patent has been taken out for the use of an Australian spurge to treat skin cancers.

**Propagation:** Propagating Euphorbias is a snap, in fact not propagating them is often the problem. In fact, garden correspondent Ketzell Levine has coined the word euphorbic for plants that easily spread beyond where you want them. Just dig up the wanderers, they root easily. Succulent species like *E. myrsinitoides* and the more cactus-like spurges can be propagated from stem cuttings and root as easily as sedums or cactuses. Spurges can also easily be grown from seed.

**Soil Type:** Most spurges appreciate fast-draining soil in full sun. A few can tolerate partial shade. *Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Robbiae' and 'Rubra' are among those rare plants that can tolerate dry shady places. *E. charicias* is also dry-shade tolerant. At least one spurge, *E. palustris*, the marsh spurge will grow in wet or boggy soil. All others like fast draining soils but are not usually picky about the richness of the soil. A look at the table will show you that many species are happy in a relatively dry area. Most spurges can do well in poor soils.

Poinsettias, crown of thorns, and the hundreds of succulent Euphorbias need to be treated as house plants. They can all be taken out after all danger of frost has passed, and given a summer vacation on the patio, window box, or porch. Like garden spurges, they need to be in fast-draining soil. Cactus mix works well with the succulents. Succulent species should be given little or no water during the winter. Succulent euphorbs, like cactuses, have been so popular that African countries have no digging laws, like many southwestern states in the U.S. Poinsettias can be more to rebloom, but because it is difficult, and because they often grow into a large bush over the summer, most people throw them away at the end of the summer, if not before.

**Culture:** Spurges put on a showy mass of flowers at their appointed time. Many species seed down so readily, from explosive capsules, that spent flower stalks should be removed, when they become unsightly, and before the seed is released. This is especially true of the donkey-tail spurge and *E. amygdaloides*. In Colorado, the donkey tail spurge has been added to the list of noxious weeds. In Idaho, only leafy spurge and saw-tooth spurge are on the list. Let's keep the

garden spurges from joining them. Except for removal of the spent flower stalks, and beating them back with a stick, Euphorbias do not need pruning.

**Diseases:** Some species will develop powdery mildew, so do not water with overhead sprinkler, if it can be avoided. Although poinsettia culture has a problem, garden spurges are amazingly free of diseases and pests. The most common cause of death in poinsettias and succulents is over watering. You can't kill a crown-of-thorns, even if you want to, as far as I can tell.

**Plant Interest:** Euphorbias have it all, ease of growth, freedom from disease, spectacular flower displays, and versatility. Don't leave them out of your garden, and if they are tropical, as first frost approaches, don't leave them out in your garden.

**Plant Common & Scientific Name:** Hosta

The common name for this plant is the Plantain lily according to the Western Garden Book but most people call this plant its scientific name which is the hosta.

**Best Variety:** The pick the "best" hosta would be matter of taste. I like the hybrids 'Krossa Regal' which can grow 2.5' tall and wide and 'Patriot' which grows 15" tall and spreads to 3' wide. I also love the miniatures like 'Golden Tiara' which can grow 3-4" tall and wide and the tiny 'Louisa' which grows 2" tall.

**History & Lore:** The documented history of hostas dates from the late 1600's when botanists from the Dutch East Indies Company began collecting them. In recent years, interest in hostas has risen to the point that it competes annually with daylilies as one of the most desired and valuable garden perennials.

**Propagation:** Propagation is done by divisions in spring when the plant is showing early growth. It is best to dig up the whole plant and carefully divide by hand.

**Exposure:** Hostas grow best in filtered to full shade. The soil should be fertile, well drained, but moisture retentive.

**Disease or Insect Problems:** Hostas attract slugs but the heavier leaved hostas like "Krossa Regal" are less likely to be eaten. Diseases are not a factor.

**Plant interest:** Although flowers are not the selling point, Hostas do bloom in early summer. The flowers can range from white to purple. Some blooms are fragrant.

Hostas are a must in shade gardens. They add texture and a lushness to the planting beds.

**Flower Common & Scientific Name:** Lady's Mantle, *Alchemilla*

Over 300 species worldwide. Can be found in meadows, among mountain rocks and in scrub.

**Best Variety:** *Alchemilla mollis* from Romania and western Russia. The variety sold in the U.S.

**Height & Width:** Approximately 12" high with a spread of 24"

**How to Propagate:** Propagate by seed (self sows) or preferably by division every 6-10 years in spring and fall. It will self propagate by seeds and stolons.

**Exposure Needed:** Full sun is necessary avoid hot afternoon sun which can scorch foliage.

**Soil Type:** A rich soil is necessary for optimum growth and flowering.

**Culture:** Fertilize in spring with a layer of compost worked into the soil. Additional balanced fertilizer may be applied instead/in addition. Lady's Mantle likes regular watering, with moist soil, well drained. Note: In my garden, Lady's Mantle is planted in clay soil and thrives. After flowering, cut the flower stem down to basal foliage, or gently pull the stem free, which provides the addition of light and air to the plant. Avoid shearing to the ground, as the plant will die. Pinch off scorched leaves if needed. Lady's Mantle will overwinter more successfully if one waits till spring to cut the plant to basal foliage. There are no serious problems with disease or insects.

**Plant Interest:** Lady's Mantle blooms in June through July. The clusters of tiny star-shaped blossoms are light chartreuse, at the top of a long stem. The flowers may be left on to provide winter interest, or removed for drying to use in dry arrangements (they air dry).

Each plant has 9 to 11 rounded, neatly toothed leaves of a darker chartreuse than all the flowers. Overhead watering or rain causes water droplets to bead on the soft leaves giving it a "crystal" appearance.

**Flower Common & Scientific Name:** Blazing Star, Gary feather  
*Liatris spicata*, Asteraceae Family

**Best Variety:** 'Blue Bird' – blue-purple flowerheads  
'Floristan Weiss' – white flowerheads  
'Kobold' – deep purple flowerheads

**Height & Width:** 12-14" H x 18" W

**History or Lore:** None found

**How to Propagate:** Division in spring or sow seed in containers in a cold frame in autumn (won't flower until second year when started from seed).

**Exposure Needed:** Full sun, will tolerate light shade

**Soil Type:** Rich, slightly sandy, moist, well drained soil  
Will not tolerate wet heavy soils in winter

**Culture (fertilizer, water, pruning):** No fertilizer needs listed, drought tolerant, will not tolerate soggy soils, cut back seed heads after bloom or leave for birds throughout winter and cut back in spring. Plant in spring or fall.

**Disease or insect problems to watch for:** Stem rot and leaf spots commonly occur. Slug and snail damage. Mildew if insufficient sunlight and air circulation.

**Plant interest (bloom time/seeds heads/fall color):**

Perennial Zone 3-10

Blooms summer to fall in colors of blue, white pink, lavender, or purple

Flower spikes open from the top down

Flowerheads attractive to bees and butterflies

Good for cutting and flower arrangements (fresh or dried)

#### **FLOWER COMMON NAME & SCIENTIFIC NAME:**

Lily of the Valley *liliaceae* / *Convallaria*

#### **BEST VARIETY:**

*Convallaria majalis* var. *rosea*, small pale pink flowers, not as vigorous as white-flowered species. *Convallaria majalis* cultivars with variegated foliage include: '**Albostriata**', dark leaves with white to cream longitudinal stripes; '**Aureovariegata**' (syn. '**Striata**'), gold stripes; '**Aureomarginata**', cream-to yellow-edged leaves; '**Hardwick Hall**', broad leaves with pale margins; '**Prolificans**', unusually shaped flowers.

**HEIGHT:** 4 – 8 in / **WIDTH:** 3 – 5 in

#### **HISTORY OR LORE:**

Lily-of-the-valley has been cultivated since at least 1000 B.C., which is not surprising considering its unique and intense fragrance and ease with which it grows. The sole species in the genus, the type for its family, the Convallariaceae, is a low spreading perennial found over much of the northern temperate zone. Its vigorous rhizomes can colonize a large area and in spring produce bright green lance-shaped leaves and short-stemmed white flowerheads of bell-shaped blooms (a form with pale pink flowers is available), followed by red berries. Seventeenth-century herbalists recommended lily-of-the-valley to strengthen the heartbeat, and the plant does indeed contain glycoside compounds used in modern heart medications. All parts are poisonous.

### **HOW TO PROPAGATE:**

A cool winter is required for proper dormancy so plant clumps or single pips (upright small root stocks) in November or December. The rhizomes, known as pips, are somewhat invasive in loose soil. Propagate by division. Can be potted for blooms indoors.

### **EXPOSURE NEEDED:**

Plant in dappled shade / half sun.

### **SOIL TYPE:**

Plant in deep, rich, moist, well-drained soil with ample humus.

### **CULTURE (FERTILIZER, WATER, PRUNING OR PINCHING?):**

Grow in cold hardiness zones 3 – 9.

### **DISEASE OR INSECT PROBLEMS TO WATCH FOR?:**

Subject to anthracnose, leaf spots, root-knot nematode and lily-of-the-valley weevil. Leaf spots seem to be the most troublesome.

### **PLANT INTEREST (BLOOM TIME / SEED HEADS / FALL COLOR?)**

Spring-early summer-flowering, fragrant whitish flowers. Ground cover; use as carpet between camellias, rhododendrons, pieris, under deciduous trees or high-branching, not too dense evergreen trees.

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** Marigold

Family: Compositae; Genus: Tagetes; Species: T. erecta-African Marigold, T. patula-French Marigold, T. tenuifolia pumila-Dwarf or Signet Marigold; T. lemoni – lemon and mint scented leaves, T. lucida-leaves used as tarragon flavoring; Triploid hybrids – cross between T. erecta and T. patulae to produce non-stop blooming.

**Best Variety:** They all grow well in the Treasure Valley. See individual seed packets or seed catalogs for specifics.

**Height & Width:** T. erecta: 2-4 ft tall x 1-2' wide

T. patula: 1-2' tall x 1' wide

T. tenuifolia: up to 1' tall and wide

T. lucida: 2' tall

Triploid: depends on variety

**History or lore:** all varieties originated in Mexico and Central America. Said to keep pests out of the garden. Yellow flowers fed to chickens will give yellow meat

**How to propagate:** Plant seeds in February in house or greenhouse. Will need 70 degree soil, uncovered or barely covered seed and keep moist. Aphids, scale, and white fly a problem until set out in mid to late May.

Seeds may be sown directly into the garden in mid May. Stems cuttings will work.

**Exposure:** Full sun, even in the Treasure Valley.

**Soil Type:** Any in the Treasure Valley.

**Culture:** fertilizer-avoid high nitrogen. Balanced every week for best bloom. Water: keep soil moist for the first 10-12 days after setting them out then weekly pinching. *T. erecta* blooms better if older blooms are removed. The others do not require pinching.

**Diseases:** Aphid, scale, and white fly a problem in the greenhouse. A small amount of systemic after the 2<sup>nd</sup> set of leaves appear is very helpful. In the garden rarely is there any problem.

**Plant interest:** Flowers are copious. Some don't care for the scent of marigolds. None are frost tolerant, but may be wintered over in the greenhouse in pots.

**Plant Name:** Pansy

**Common Name & Scientific Name:** Common name is Pansy. Scientific name is *Viola x wittrockiana*.

**Difference between Viola and Pansy:** Pansy grows from the ground on one main stem and branch above the ground. Flowers are larger and more round than *Viola*. *Viola* branches below ground with many plants sharing the same root system. Flowers are smaller.

**History:** The origin of the pansy began in Iwer, Buckinghamshire, England. In 1800, gardener William Thompson began crossing various *Viola* species. Then comes the new species *V. x Wittrockiana*, -PANSY, a boom that no longer had lines of dark color on the flower but huge blocks of color on the lower petal called the "face".

**Description:** Pansy-lightly scented flowers-is a compact plant, not more than 9 inches in both height and spread and bears many stems. The leaves are medium green, coarsely notched, oval or heart shaped. It can be used for color massing, edging, containers, and window boxes. Pansy blooms are single with five petals that are rounded in shape. Pansy flowers have one of the three basic color patterns. Blooms can be single, clear color such as yellow or blue. A second pattern is single color having black lines radiating from its center. These lines are called penciling and are similar to *Viola* markings. The last type of flower is probably the most familiar one has a dark center called "face".

**Soil:** Moist, compost enriched well draining soil.

**Location:** Morning sun or part shaded areas.

**Cultivars:** There are 250 cultivars. Most of the cultivars are part of a series. A series consists of several cultivars that vary in color, but share qualities such as hardiness, forms, markings, and flower sizes. The size of a pansy bloom will fall into three categories: Large 3-4 inches, medium 2-3 inches, and multiflora 1-2 inches.

**Large flowers:** Accord series-introduced in 1992, these pansies have large blooms on short sturdy stems. There are 8 single colors, both faced and clear and a mix

Lyric series-bred in 1985, freedom of blooms and weather tolerance. It is available in 5 colors, all faced or in a mix.

Majestic Giant Series – 1966 all America selection winner. Free flowering habit and stands up to heat and cold particularly well. There are 6 colors and a mix, all faced.

Medallion Series: have extra large flowers in 6 colors, and a mixture, all faced.

Swiss Giants: An old fashioned European Pansy. Bred in Switzerland. Good for cut flowers because of large flowers on long stems.

### **Medium flowers**

Crown series-all colors, no face. There are 9 colors, all are early flowering and bright spring color.

Imperial series- Most of the blooms are faced. This series prized for its nonfading colors and vigorous growth. Imperial blue is favorite color for gardeners and is 1975 winner for all American Selection winner. There are unique colors in this series such as pink shades.

Joker series-this pansy is velvety purple with orange faces. The plant has a compact habit and may grow 8 inches wide.

Roc series – introduced in 1985. Roc refers to V.x Wittrockiana, the pansy botanical species. Roc also refers to the rock solid garden performance. Has 9 colors with or without a face.

Springtime series- has a wide rainbow of 17 colors, heat and cold tolerant. A reliable performance plant.

### **Multiflora Flowers**

Crystal bowl series- all are clear colors without a face. There are 11 colors in this series. A compact plant, does not sprawl in the garden.

Maximum series- produce lots of blooms, 14 colors with faced flowers. A compact plant. Heat and cold tolerance. Its unusual flower color is light blue with dark blue face that is outlined in white.

Padparadja – named for the rare brilliant orange sapphire. The blooms do not fade under heat stress.

Universal series- this series has early blooming flowers. There are 13 colors and a mixture may be clear colored or faced. Cold tolerant during southern winter and heat tolerant in northern summers.

**Propagation:** by seed. Seeds are fine and best started indoors. When seedlings are 1 to 2 inches high transplant at 6 inch intervals outside in the garden or in pots.

**Culture:** Pansies grow well in cool weather and will tolerate a light frost or cold night temperature. Water the soil deeply, not the plants leaves. Fertilize with well balanced fertilizer or one with slightly higher nitrogen.

**Diseases:** Root rot- the first sign of root rot is yellow leaves. The plant then becomes stunted and dwarfed in stature. Leaf spot- leaves will develop spots of red, brown or yellow. Mildew- Plants show white powdery deposit on leaf and stem surfaces. Plant leaves and stems may become stunted and brittle.

**Pest:** Aphids, spider mite, and slugs.

**Plant Name:** Peony

**Common/Scientific Name:** The common name is the Peony (Pe-e-ne). The peony is from the genus *Paeonia* and the family of Ranunculaceae which is the buttercup family. Most of the herbaceous peonies are of the *Paeonia lactiflora* which are the hardy bushy perennials that die back each year. Tree peonies (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) have a somewhat woody, persistent vase and are usually taller than the herbaceous kinds with more abundant and larger blossoms but not as long lived.

**Best Variety:** The two types of peonies that are generally grown in the home landscape are the paeonia hybrids or the garden peony and the tree peony or paeonia suffruticosa.

**Height and Width:** The peony hybrids usually grow from two to four feet in height. Peonies need ample room for development so plant them three to four feet apart. They will be productive, of high quality, and easily cultivated at that spacing.

**History or Lore:** The peony was cultivated in China, Siberia and Japan over 2,500 years ago. The first peonies were brought to Europe and later to the United States around 1800. Descendants of the early “immigrant” types may still be found growing happily in Indiana where it is the state flower. (See page 2 of Answers.com)

**How to Propagate:** They are available in bare root stock. Plants should be planted or divided in October when they are dormant. Spring planting is less desirable but can be done.

**Exposure:** Peonies like free air circulation, full sunlight, and some protection from strong winds. Don't crowd them together.

**Soil Type:** Peonies thrive on a wide range of soils; but clay loam is best. It must be well-drained and yet should hold moisture.

**Culture:** Do not cultivate deeply in order to prevent disturbing the root system. If you want huge blooms, leave only the large terminal bud on each stem. Remove other side buds. Picking flowers does not injure the plant, but removing the leaves does. So cut flower stems short, leaving at least two leaves per stem on the plant. Best time to fertilize is immediately after the flowering season. ¼ cup of 10-10-10 fertilizer scratched into the surface is adequate. When they become dormant, cut stems close to the ground and remove all refuse.

**Disease/Insects:** Peonies have few pest problems. The most frequently occurring pest is the botrytis blight and leaf blotch, both fungal diseases. They are also susceptible to Phytophthora blight and Verticillium wilt. These conditions usually occur during wet springs. Prompt removal of infected material and thorough fall cleanup are essential for control. At first signs of infection, apply a fungicide. Avoid any overhead irrigation. The only insects that can occur are scales which are seen on stalks and leaf bases in later summer. The presence of ants on peony blooms is neither beneficial or harmful to the plant. Ants are simply attracted to the sugary liquid secreted by the flower buds.

**Plant Interest:** (Refer to Factsheet-Ohio State page 2) They are reliably winter hardy, easy to grow, develop large showy flowers useful in garden or as cut flowers and are usually insect and disease free. The plants are attractive when not in flower with glossy dark green foliage.

**Flower Common & Scientific Name:** Phlox, Paniculata

This flower is a North American native. It is wonderful in your garden. Fragrant clusters of magenta, white, pink, lavender, blue, orange, red, or bicolor. It grows on tall stalks.

During Victoria times bouquets were given to ladies by men as an amorous gesture.

**How to propagate:** Propagate by cutting in the fall or early spring. Divide every 3-4 years. Pinch out tops when 9" tall to prolong flowering. They flower in late spring to summer. You can purchase bare root in the spring. The sweet scented clusters make them one of the best of cut flowers. Wonderful!

**Exposure Needed:** Full sun to light shade.

**Culture:** The zones are 3 – 8. Many need staking. 18" apart in sun or light shade. They will mildew with overhead watering.

**Soil Type:** Fertile, moist, well drained soil.

**Eva Cullum:** Dark pink, 30" high and 36" wide. They are disease resistant.

**Little Boy:** Two tone blooms. They are purple with white centers. Flowers are mildew resistant. They are 3 ft. wide x 3 ft. tall.

**David's Lavender:** These are mildew resistant, vigorous, and long blooming. 4' high x 3' wide.

**Orange Perfection:** Bare root, 2' high x 2' wide.

**Star Fire:** The best deep red. Height is 2-3' x 3' wide.

**David:** The best white. It has huge heads of fragrant flowers. They are mildew resistant.

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**Plant Common & Scientific Name:** Lumbagos or Leadwort; *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*.

Lumbagos belongs to a group of deciduous perennials and shrubs from eastern Africa and Asia. Plumbago is Latin meaning “lead” due to its use to treat lead poisoning. It was first collected by Russian botanist Alexandar von Bunge who named it, then introduced by Rober Rotune who found it growing in Shanghais in 1946. It is a wiry, semi-woody, mat forming perennial which spreads by rhizomes to form an attractive groundcover.

Like many groundcovers, it can be somewhat invasive in optimum growing conditions.

**Height & Width:** Plumbago grows 6-12” tall and can tolerate full sun to part shade in Boise. I personally have it growing in both sunny and shady locations. While the foliage is magnificent in the shade, it is not as floriflorus.

**Soil:** It can be grown in average to dry soils and is hardy form USDA zones 5-9. Plumbago prefers well drained rich acidic soil, (but hey, what doesn’t), but tolerates sandy and clay soils too.

**Insects and Diseases:** Plumbago is extremely resistant to pests and diseases and rarely damaged by deer.

**Propagation:** It can be propagated by dividing the roots in the spring.

Plant Interest: Plumbago is late to emerge in the spring, making is a perfect compliment to spring bulbs. After bulbs are finished blooming, Plumbago grows up and disguises the ugly foliage. The Plumbago leaf is smooth, shiny and quite attractive. I like the foliage so much, I would use it even if it never flowered or colored in the fall. Plumbago adds a great leafy-green texture to summer gardens. From mid summer through frost, small electric blue flowers grace this plant. Flowers are 5-petaled, ½-3/4 inch diameter appearing above and among the foliage. Plumbago really puts on a spectacular show in the fall when the blue flowers are nestled among the orange-red foliage (Bronco fans gotta love it!).

I have not seen any cultivars of Plumbago here in Boise. I also could not find much information on cultivars on the internet, except for a mention of a blue flowered one called “Willmott’ and a yellow one called. ‘Gold’. Plumbago looks beautiful in a container, spilling over a wall, or in a rock garden. A great border plant under trees and shrubs, it would probably rival Vinca, Pachysandra or English Ivy if it didn’t die to the ground in winter (but who’s perfect, right?).

**Flower Common & Scientific Name:** Poppy; Papaver from the family Papaveraceae

**Best Variety:** no specific favorite, each has merits

**Height and Width:** generally less than 24” in height, single plant less than 6” wide.

**History or Lore:** Poppies are native worldwide

Meconopsis, the blue poppy from the Himalayas as well as the yellow cambrica, a Welsh native seen from the Pyrenees to Oregon

Argemone, the Mexican prickly poppy that looks like cactus.

Glaucium, the Icelandic, alpine group of poppies, native to Asia but also including the Eastern US bloodroot (sanquineum)

Papaver Rhoëas. It thrives in undisturbed ground and is a common site on farmland throughout Europe and Eurasia. It is the poppy in the famous WWI poem by John McCrae: "In Flanders Fields the poppies blow, between the crosses, row by row.."

**How to Propagate:** Poppies are best propagated by seed, in some short lived perennials, the only way. Collect seed the moment it is ripe; quickly dry in a cool place. Seed should be freed of chaff which may harbor pests or disease. Most seed does not store well so should be used as soon as possible. Alternately, very young seedlings may be transplanted; older plants have a thickened single taproot and do not transplant well.

**Exposure Needed:** Alpine varieties thrive in full sun but will tolerate half-sun; shade loving varieties are Meconopsis cambrica and Glaucium sanquineum.

**Soil Type:** A good garden soil is best for starting poppies, they grow in sandy soil well. Some prefer acid soil, as Meconopsis blue. When they do grow in alkaline soil, they tend to become pinkish, like hydrangeas.

**Culture (fertilizer, water, pruning, or pinching):** Compost or light fertilization is helpful but not essential; poppies are used to "scree" which is rocky ground. Once established, the sun loving varieties do not require much water. They should be left to grow naturally, pinching is not effective.

**Disease or insect problems to watch for:** Young seedlings may succumb to fungus; once established this is not a problem. Most poppies are not attractive to pests when grown in a manner of liking to the plant. Some poppies dislike systemics anyway so are best left alone.

**Plant interest (bloom time, seed heads, fall color):** poppies are generally mid to late Spring bloomers, some blooming into early July. The foliage is attractive, as are the bud-and-bloom stalks, with nodding usually fuzzy buds.

Flowers of two or three sepals that pop open to reveal the petals, from four to sixteen depending on variety. The sepals drop off in the mature flower. The seed heads are also attractive and vary distinctly by species; stalks will sway in the winds and seeds will drop away from the mother plant.

**Shrub Common & Scientific Name:** Rosemary; *rosmarinus officinalis*; Lamiaceae Family, Evergreen shrub

**Varieties:**

Upright:

- 'Arp', 4'h x 4'w, hardiest to -10F, discovered in Arp, TX, medium blue flowers
- 'Blue Spires', 5-6'h x 5-6'w, excellent for hedge, good for cooking
- 'Golden Rain', ('Joyce deBaggio'), 2-3'hx2-3'w, golden leaves with/dark vein
- 'Gorizia,' 4-5'h x 4-5'w, reddish brown stems, leaves 2" long and broader than most
- 'Miss Jessup's Upright', 4'h x 2'w, thin leaves on slender stems, pale violet
- 'Tuscan Blue', originally brought to England from Tuscany, 6-7'h x 2'w, deep Violet-blue flowers. Some nurseries sell "Blue Spires" under this name.

Semiupright:

- 'Albus', 6' x 6', white flowers veined in pale lavender, hardy to 0F
- 'Benenden Blue', ('Balsam'), 3'h x 4'w pine fragrance, bitter flavoring with turpentine hint.
- 'Hill Hardy', 5' x 5', compact, stiff foliage, light blue flowers, hardy.

Prostrate:

- 'Collingwood Ingram', 2.5'h x 4'w, not good for cooking, piny flavor, deep blue.
- 'Hugtington Carpet' ('Huntington Blue') 1.5'h spreads quickly, best variety for ground or bank cover. Pale blue flowers.
- 'Ken Taylor', sport of 'Collingwood Ingram', has same deep blue flower but is lower growing w/greater tendency to trail.
- 'Severn Sea', 1.5'h trail widely, one of the cold hardiest trailers, sky blue flowers.

**Height/Width:** Depending on variety, from 8-12" to 6' tall and from 14-18" to 4-6' wide. USDA zones 8-10, Sunset zones 4-24

**History/Lore:** Rosemary is an evergreen native from Mediterranean area growing wild on rocky hillsides. Its genus name means "dew of the sea". It is tolerant to salt spray. It is known as the "herb of remembrance" and is thought to strengthen ones memory. A line in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia says "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance". Italians tossed rosemary springs onto the grave as a symbolic gesture to remember the life of the deceased. Greek scholars placed rosemary wreaths on their heads to stimulate their brains and aid memory before exams. It is also considered an herb of love, loyalty, and friendship. One legend claims that rosemary got its blue flowers when the Virgin Mary hung her cloak on a rosemary bush to dry.

**How to Propagate:** From stem cuttings at any stage during the year. Plants readily root wherever the branches touch the ground (layering). If plant becomes woody or bare at the center, may cut back selected branches by half to encourage new growth. But be sure to cut into leafy wood as plant will not regrow from bare wood. Tip-pinching is a good way to control shape and encourage bushy growth.

**Exposure Needs:** Full sun but will tolerate light shade. Requires excellent drainage. Somewhat drought tolerant, but likes an occasional “misting”.

**Soil Type:** Likes sandy or chalky, slightly alkaline soil. Optimum pH is 6.8 but will tolerate a range from 5-8. Commercial potting soil with additional perlite for drainage may be used when growing in pots.

**Culture:** Grows best in full sun but will tolerate partial shade. Like its native Mediterranean area, it thrives on well-drained soil and does not tolerate “wet feet”. Tip-prune new plants to shape and encourage bushy growth. Upright varieties (4-5’ h x 3-4’ w) maybe pruned into hedges. Prostrate varieties perform well as ground covers, or hanging over rocky walls or even as hanging potted plants. The 1” long resinous, aromatic leaves (strong, piney fragrance) grow thickly along the stems. Leaf color ranges from dark green or grey-green to golden above and grayish white beneath. Leaves of most creepers are about half inch shorter than those of uprights and much glossier. Tiny flowers range in color from traditional blue to pin, white and lavender. It generally flowers in spring, but some prostrate varieties can bloom continuously throughout the year. Fertilize sparingly; avoid it until later winter, when new growth begins and longer day length enable plants to utilize added nutrients.

**Disease or insect problems:** Rarely suffer from any pest or diseases, especially outdoors. When planted in pots indoors, they can occasionally be attacked by scale, aphids, mealy bugs, spittlebugs, thrips, spider mites, and white fly. In humid conditions, fungal diseases can be a problem such as powdery mildew, botrytis, and rhizoctonia.

**Plant Interest:**

Cooking- Rosemary has been used as a culinary herb for centuries in many different cultures. Flowers can be added to dishes and salads to add color and flavor. Dark green, pine-like needles are highly aromatic and their addition adds robust flavor and aroma to dishes. They make good additions to soups, sauces, vegetables, and meat. The flavor pairs especially well with poultry, beef, lamb, cheese, and eggs. This is a good use for tip-prunings. Even the striped stems may be used as a stick for kebab meat or to brush on a marinade to add flavor.

Horticulture- Planted in the garden, rosemary is purported to keep cabbage butterflies away. It is seen frequently pruned into topiary shapes, like lollipop-shaped hearts, or circles. Especially at winter time, Christmas tree topiaries take advantage of their natural, pine fragrance of the rosemary plant. Some creeping forms have twisting, swirling branches good for bonsai specimens.

Medicinal- The English herbalist Nicholas Culpepper wrote about rosemary’s memory properties in his 1653 *Complete Herbal*. In Germany, rosemary is approved for use in digestive complaints. Today, research is being done on rosemary’s antioxidant properties and their effect on the brain (remembrance). Rosemary incense was burned to fumigate courtrooms in seventeenth century France and England as well as during WWII in French hospitals, desperate for supplies. Rosemary oil is used in cosmetics, soaps, and deodorants, hair tonics, and other health care products. It was reportedly first distilled by Raymundus Lillus about 1330 AD. It

has antifungal and antiviral properties as well as used externally to relieve acne, oily skin, dandruff, and eczema.

Crafts- Potpourris, wreaths, mantel decoration, sleep pillows, dyes for yarn and fabric.

### **Flower Name:** Rose

A single long stemmed red rose placed between the front teeth of a flamenco dancer adds to the sizzle of the dance. A rambler cascading along a white picket fence or arbor speaks sweetheart. And in old England in 1455 the white rose of York (rosa alba) and the red rose of Lancaster (rosa gallica) used as emblems of battle in “The war of roses” speaks volumes for the passion of the civil war they represented. Rosa, from the family of rosacea in my estimation the most romantic flower, evoking great passion in those who use them for enjoyment and especially those gardeners who become enamored by them.

The word “rose” comes from the Greek word rodon meaning red. Ancient roses were a deep crimson color, which the ancient Greeks believed, to have come from the blood of Adonis. Roses have been called the “queen flower” and have certainly reigned in gardens all over the world longer than any other flower. Fossilized roses more than 35 million years old have been found. They also appear in fresco painted at Knossos in Greece dating back to 1500 BC. Some other interesting historical tidbits: Cleopatra is said to have entertained Mark Anthony on a carpet of rose petals in ancient Egypt. Romans used roses with everything, especially at banquets, because they believed the petals were protection against drunkenness. The first simple Damask roses in shades of white and red with but 5 single petals and a perfume-laden center were first brought to Europe and Damascus during the Crusades.

Roses are divided into four groups: bush, climbing, shrub, and groundcover.

Bush roses: Form the largest category with seven subgroups: hybrid tea, polyantha, floribunda, grandiflora, miniature, heritage (old), and tree (standard) roses.

\*Hybrid tea: Considered a modern large flower rose. It has narrow buds, long stem with large many petaled flowers. Plants are 3-5 feet tall and bloom repeatedly. This type of bush outsells all over types combined. The first variety ‘La France’, appeared in 1867. These roses are grown for perfection.

\*Polyantha: Considered a modern landscape bush. They are short, compact plants with small flowers produced abundantly in large clusters. They are hardy, easy to grown, and bloom throughout the season.

\*Floribunda: Also considered to be a modern landscape rose, they are a cross between hybrid teas and polyanthas. Hardy, compact, and easily grown plants with medium sized flowers borne profusely in short stemmed clusters. These roses are grown for floral effect rather than perfection.

\*Grandiflora: Narrow plants, 5-6 ft. tall, large flowers, long stemmed clusters bloom summer to fall.

\*Miniature: Own root roses having no graft. Flowers and foliage proportionately smaller. Quite hardy and rebloom repeatedly.

\*Heritage: Roses prior to 1867 (the dividing line between old and modern roses). They are divided into two categories: Old European rose, which are the albas, centifolias, damasks, gallicas, and moss roses. They are the oldest groups derived from species native to Europe. Most flower in the spring and are hardy in cold climates with little or not winter protection. The second group of heritage roses are the Asians. In this category are the Chinas, bourbons, damask perpetual, hybrid perpetuals, noisettes and teas.

\*Tree (standard): These roses are created when any rose variety is grafted onto a specially grown trunk. They are 1-6 ft. tall and are not winter hardy.

Climbing roses: These are a group of roses with long, flexible canes that make it possible to attach them to supports. There are the large flowered climbers, which have thick sturdy canes growing to 10 ft. They bloom throughout the summer. The next group are the ramblers, which have thin canes growing to 20' or more. They have smaller flowers than the climbers.

Shrub roses: These grown broadly upright and numerous arching canes reaching 4-12 ft. Most are hardy and easily grown. Many varieties produce showy red or scarlet fruits or hips.

Groundcover roses: Sometimes referred to as shrub roses, they have prostrate, creeping canes producing low mounds.

In an article for Better Homes and Gardens, Craig Summers Black pretty much says it all for passionate rose growers, "Sometimes you have to wonder why people even grow most roses. The science of pruning defies logic, the necessity of their chemical coddling defies justification, their spindly habit defies gravity, and their precocious blossoms defy gardeners". For a novice grower like me, each year the American Rose Society rates modern roses and some old roses on a scale of 1-10. The higher rated roses are likely to do well in most climates. The American Rose Society also has a selection of "All American Rose Selection Varieties" which are roses that received top scores after several years of testing in nationwide test gardens. These suggested varieties are a great way to introduce roses into your garden with success. Gertrude Jekyll, a heritage rose specialist tells us in her book "Roses for English Gardens", "Own root roses have several advantages: Given more bloom, bloom more continuously, do not produce suckers, and live much longer. They also perform much better than grafted roses in poor soil, and in poor growing conditions." I have had a couple of heritage roses and have definitely found this to be true. Another thing to consider when choosing a variety to grow is that here in the Boise area where summers are hot, flower open rapidly. Varieties with few petals (under 30) may go from bud to flat-open blossom in several hours; those with more petals take longer to open and stay attractive longer. Some of the intimidation in growing roses in part comes from the fact that there are almost as many opinions of rose growers on their care as there are number of varieties. For the most part, the consensus is: Roses need a site that gets sun at least 6 hours per day with humus rich soil and good drainage. Spacing bushes can be critical because you want to ensure good air circulation. A good rule of thumb when planting more than one bush is take the estimated mature height of your bushes and average them. An example being the mature height of one bush is 6' while the one you want to plant near it is 4', add the two figures together, 10' divided by 2, spacing requirement is five feet. Ramblers and climbers spacing are approximately 6-8 ft. apart. Prune in early spring to keep hybrid tea, grandiflora, and floribunda roses vigorous and blooming. Many of the newer shrub type need very little pruning. Heritage species, and climbers that bloom once a year bear flowers on previous years growth, so prune tips 25% to just a few inches when blooming is over, and always remove suckers. When all is said and done, the

best way to grow this flower is with passion. And always remember, “You get a thorn with every rose, but ain’t those roses sweet?”

**Plant Name: Salvia**

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** The family of Salvia is Lamiaceae (lay-mee-AY-see-ee). Salvia is the Genus name and the Species is coccinea (Kok-Sin-ee-uh). Lady in Red (also called scarlet or Texas Sage) is the cultivar name.

**Best Varieties:** There are over 900 species of salvias. Lady in Red has flower spikes that are longer and less cluttered with blooms, which give the plants an airy grace and more of a shrub-like appearance.

**History or Lore:** Salvia coccinea is a South American tender perennial treated as an annual. Salvias have been growing in popularity because they flower for a long period; do well in hot dry conditions, and they provide an incredible variety of fragrance, bloom, habit, and color. Salvias include some of our best summer-blooming annuals and perennials.

**How to Propagate:** Propagation is done by sowing seed on the surface and just covering with vermiculite. Sowing time is February-March. Germination takes 7-29 days. Plant outside after danger of frost.

**Exposure:** Lady in Red does best in full sun to part shade. It is hard in Zone 9 and may overwinter near the coast.

**Soil Type:** Grows in any well-drained soil.

**Culture:** Plants respond to fertility and watering by growing larger and producing more blooms. Pinching off the bloom spikes will keep the plant in bloom from late spring until early frost.

**Disease or insect problem:** Salvias are relatively problem free. They can be subject to damping-off of seedlings, stem and root rot, powdery mildew, Botrytis blight, aphids, spider mites, and whiteflies. Diseases are most common in greenhouses or in cool, wet weather conditions. Insects are mainly problems in greenhouses.

**Plant Interest:** Lady in Red has bright red flowers in whorls on 10 inch spikes. Bloom time is mid summer to mid fall until frost. It performs well in containers and small space gardens. The red flowers are irresistible to humming birds, butterflies, and bees. It blooms prolifically and reseeds very reliably if seed heads are allowed to dry on plants.

**Plant Name: Shasta Daisy**

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** Shasta Daisy, family, Asteraceae.

Scientific Name: *Leucanthemum x superbum* (formerly *Chrysanthemum x superbum*) a perennial with white daisy flowerheads and dark green, narrow toothed leaves.

**Best Varieties:** The species is rarely grown, as cultivators with improved flowers have been introduced.

L.x s. **‘Snow Cap’** has a dwarfing habit, with white daisy-like flowers.

**‘Whirral Supreme’** has large double flowers with a golden center.

**‘Alaska’** is an old-fashioned hardy form that seems to hold up longer than most cultivators before division is needed (4-5 years).

**‘Becky’** has an outstanding thick substance to it’s leaves and stems, and its 3 ft. height is self supporting, and is later flowering, normally from July to October with deadheading.

**‘Silver Princess’**, a dwarf form (12 inches) is a flowering machine. Cutting down in September and annual division may help to keep it strong.

**‘Switzerland’** grows to about 30 in. and holds up well even in storms, and has a long bloom period.

**‘T.E. Kilen’** has thick, sturdy stems at 24-30 in. and stands well. There are many other forms which have been introduced in the nursery trade.

**History or Lore:** Daisies with single petal form were used for pulling petals off to find out if “someone loves me, or loves me not”.

**How to Propagate:** By division (every 2-3 years) in winter, or by basal cuttings taken in spring. To divide large, thick clumps, use the double-fork method.

**Soil Type:** Moist, rich, well-drained soil. Good winter drainage is essential for survival.

**Exposure Needed:** Shasta daisies need full sun.

**Culture:** Deadhead to lateral flower, bud, or leaf. Cut to basal foliage after all flowering is finished. Sporadic rebloom may occur, but the flowers are usually smaller in size and numbers<sup>1</sup>. They are heavy feeders and benefit from a light spring fertilizer and then a liquid fertilizer in early summer. They need deadheading, and taller forms require staking. Do not plant in autumn. Avoid prolonged drought, and maintain good air circulation.

Shasta daisies are often short lived. According to some authorities, the short life span of Shasta daisy may be that they flower themselves to exhaustion.<sup>2</sup> By cutting the plants down in early Sector before vegetative growth is stimulated and plants can form buds for next year’s shoots, possibly extending the plant’s life. Not reliably hardy in zones 5, and may require division every 1-3 years. ‘Alaska’ daisies pinched in late May flowered at 18-20 in. and 1 week later than the 3 ft. tall unpruned plants.

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<sup>1</sup> Well-Tended Perennial Garden

<sup>2</sup> Well-Tended Perennial Garden

Plants cut back by about one-third at the same time had similar bloom time and mature height as the pinched plants. For this reason, pinching is more desirable.<sup>3</sup> Deadheading can prolong bloom, particularly on first-year plants, which often will flower from June until frost.<sup>4</sup>

**Disease or insect problem:** None specific to this flower. When buying plants, do not choose plants with thick, flat stems.

**Plant Interest:** Flowering is usually June to July. After cutting back to basal growth, the nice deep green basal growth looks great in the autumn garden and holds up well through winter.<sup>5</sup>

**Plant Name:** Trillium (Wake Robin)

**Flower Common Name & Scientific Name:** Trillium Liliaceae

**Best Varieties:** T. grandiflorum – most common  
Several choice double-flowered forms available, T. erectum or Purple Trillium, dark reddish-purple

**Height & Width:** 1 ½ ft. tall by 1 foot wide

**History or Lore:** Trillium have attracted splendid common names:  
Toad shade (for its fancied resemblance to a toad-size umbrella)  
Wake-robin (for its appearance with first robins)  
Birthroot (for its medicinal uses associated with childbirth)  
Stinking Benjamin (purple)- blossom exudes an aroma of a rain-soaked mitt (?).  
Rhizomes reportedly contain steroids which have been used in folk medicines for everything from hastening childbirth to treating snakebites and asthma.

**Propagate:** Rhizome scoring, seed, cloning, test tube cultures. Very slow difficult process in commercial propagation. Poaching in national parks has been a chronic problem.

**Exposure:** Partial or full shade, woodsy floor under more dense canopy shrubs, trees, etc.

**Soil Type:** Humusy, moist, well-drained soil with protection from strong sun and drying winds. Top with fresh layer of leaves or other organic mulch every autumn to keep soil rich and moisture-retentive.

**Culture:** Moisture loving plant. Supple ample water all summer long as the following year's leaves and flowers are found on the rhizome in late summer.

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<sup>3</sup> Well-tended Perennial Garden

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**Disease or insect problem:** Slugs, deer, rodents like the rhizomes, other grub seekers. Virulent fungal diseases are rare. Very long-lived plants.

**Plant Interest:** Distinctive spring blooming ephemeral that grace our native woodlands and woodland gardens. Parts of trillium flower and its accompanying leaves occur in threes or multiples of three. Viewed as a whorl of three leaves (bracts) with a solitary flower lasting up to 3 weeks. More than 50 species inhabit North America and Asia. The hotbed of diversity lies in the southeastern US where half reside.

**Plant Common & Scientific Name:** Yarrow; *Achillea millefolium*

**Best Variety:** The variety of yarrow that I like best is “Paprika”. I like its clear red color. This plant has 2” clusters of tiny bright red flowers on top of 4-6” spikes over thick fern like foliage.

There are also many others including pink, white, and yellow. You can use the color that works best for your situation.

**Height & Width of Plant:** This plant ranges in height from 18-24” and a single plant can be from 12-18” wide. However, this plant is rhizomemist so it spreads very easily. It always seems to be a lot bigger than it is.

**History or Lore:** Yarrow is a native to Europe and Asia. Legend has it that Achilles was taught the medicinal virtues of Yarrow by the centaur Charon, who was skilled in herb lore. Achilles used the herb to heal his soldier’s bleeding wounds. Yarrow has an ancient and honorable reputation as a wound herb, particularly efficacious for stopping the flow of blood.

Yarrow as said to be “excellent to stop inward bleeding”. Yarrow was dried, powdered, and mixed with other wound herbs or used by itself fresh, as a poultice for wounds that would not stop bleeding. These preparations were said to immediately stop the flow of blood. Dried and powdered Yarrow leaves, if dropped in the nostrils, stopped nosebleeds. A decoction of Yarrow in white wine was drunk as a remedy for too copious menstruation. For the same purpose, large amounts of fresh plants were boiled in water, and the patient sat over the beneficial stem to absorb it.

Oddly enough, this stauncher of blood could actually cause nosebleed if a fresh leaf was inserted in the nostril and twisted. This was sometimes purposely done, it being believed at one time that nosebleeds cured headaches.

Yarrow as a favorite wound herb of the Anglo-Saxons. They also employed it to heal burns and the bites of poisonous snakes and insects. The fresh leaves were chewed to relieve toothaches.

The Pennsylvania Dutch knew Yarrow as Schoof Ribba. They prepared a “sweating tonic” from the whole plant to reduce fever, and a tea made with the leaves was supposed to have a beneficial effect on the liver and gall bladder. Horses were fed Yarrow to cure them of intestinal worms.

Yarrow tea was a popular remedy for influenza. It was thought to induce copious sweating, thus reducing the dangerously high fever of this disease. Yarrow tea was considered a good remedy for severe chest colds as well. The dose was one ounce of the dried herb to one pint of boiling water. It was strained and drunk warm and sweetened with honey or sugar. Sometimes a dash of cayenne pepper was added.

Yarrow is still official in Central Europe as a tonic and stimulant.

The British Herbal Pharmacopoeia (1971 edition) lists Yarrow as an “antipyretic, diaphoretic..astringent and diuretic.” Modern herbal doctors use it to treat fevers, amenorrhea, and diarrhea.

Yarrow was strewn across the threshold of a house to keep out evil influences and was worn to guard against evil spells. Country people tied sprigs of it to a baby’s cradle to protect the infant from witches who might try to steal away its soul, which they believed to be a real possibility in cases where there had been a delay in baptizing the infant.

Yarrow was frequently included in wedding bouquets and garlands, where its presence was said to guarantee true love between the married pair for seven years!

Yarrow was considered a beneficial herb among the Chinese. It was said to be useful in improving respiration, skin, and muscle tone and if taken for a long while, was believed to increase intelligence. It is called shih in Chinese and is said to grow in exceptionally plentiful amounts at the grave of Confucius. According to Chinese legend, one hundred Yarrow stalks grew from a single root. When the plant was a thousand years old, three hundred stalks would grow from the root. Such was the power of this plant that wolves, tigers, and poisonous plants would never be found near it.

Modern herbal doctors employ preparations of Yarrow to treat pneumonia, nephritis, and Bright’s disease.

Yarrow is a good companion plant in the vegetable garden. Its root secretions are said to be strengthening to other plants and actually make them more disease resistant. Yarrow is said also to keep ants and harmful insects away.

**How to Propagate:** If you let the blooms go this plant will go to seed very easily. It only takes seeds from this plant a little over a week to germinate. When I am trying to propagate this plant I simply divide it. I just pull out a little piece of root and a few leaves. With that small of a piece it takes about a year to get a good-sized plant.

**Exposure Needed:** Grows well in full sun. Yarrow is very drought resistant once established.

**Soil Type:** Yarrow will grow well in almost any soil.

**Culture:** Do not over fertilize or water otherwise these plants will get leggy. If they do get leggy, just cut them back they are sturdy and will grow and bloom again. This plant is very drought resistant once established. When blooms start to fade dead head to promote new growth and continued blooming.

**Disease or Insect problems to watch for:** There aren't many diseases or insects that bother Yarrow however it does have a tendency to become a weed if not controlled. It can and will become very invasive. One way to slow this down is by deadheading the plants as the flower head begin to fade.

**Plant interest:** Yarrow blooms from early summer through fall. This plant makes nice long-lasting dried flowers. This plant also attracts butterflies. I like the fern like foliage before it blooms in late spring.