



CALIFORNIA POPPY

Eschscholzia californica (*Escholtzia* honors Johann Escholtz, entomologist, surgeon and friend of the Prussian naturalist who collected and named this plant, *californica*, is for its place of origin.)

Why it Was Chosen to Reseed Wildfire Burned Areas:

- California poppy is a hardy perennial well adapted to hillsides, dry fields, and disturbed areas.
- It is widely used for environmental enhancement.
- It has proven to be a good colonizer in areas of poor, droughty soil.
- This species is native to California.

How Much to Use:

On wildfire burn areas, use a broadcast seeding rate of 0.5 to 1.0 pound per acre.

It is always used as part of a mixture.

Home owners can buy this in seed packets where other flower seeds are sold. Use 4 ounces of seed for a 10,000 square foot area.

Other Uses in California:

California poppy's chief uses are for erosion control and as an ornamental. (Who says it can't be attractive and useful?)

These two qualities make it a favorite in highly visible areas that require protection, such as roadsides and sites disturbed by natural or human-origin disasters.

Background:

The flower was chosen as California's state flower by the 1903 State legislature, and grows wild throughout the state.

Undaunted by the toxic sap, California Indians used the poppy as a source of food, boiling the foliage as a green. From the plant they also extracted an oil, which they used on their hair. The California Blue Book suggests that the Indians believed that the gold extracted from the hills by the white men was layer upon layer of golden poppy petals, driven deep into the earth by falling rain.

Insights for Homeowners:

If allowed, California poppy will continue to reseed itself, but does not tolerate significant competition. It lasts longer on poorer soils, where it holds a competitive advantage.

What it Looks Like



California poppy grows 1 to 2 feet high with lacy (highly dissect) leaves, 2-3 inch yellow to orange flowers that open in full sun. A thin, ribbed seed capsule, 3-4 inches long, replaces the flower.

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