



WILD ROSE
College of Herbal Medicine

California poppy

Eschscholzia californica

Native
to North
America



Description & Harvesting: California poppy is an annual or short-lived perennial, 5-60 cm in height, erect or spreading, with a succulent taproot in perennial specimens. The leaves are basal, lime-green and succulent, divided

many times so as to have a lacy appearance. The flowers arise from leafless stems, first blooming in spring and then periodically throughout the growing season and are either solitary or arise as a successive growth from axillary shoots, forming yellow to orange, bowl-shaped, four-petaled flowers, each petal 2-6 cm long. Some individuals may display white, cream, pink, or red flowers. The flowers give way to long horned seed capsules, 3-9 cm long with a round ring around the base, containing many small seeds, brown to black in colour, 1.5-1.8 mm in diameter.

California poppy is found in open and grassy areas, in lower altitudes, extending from the Columbia River valley in Washington state southwards into the Baja peninsula of California, westward to the Pacific ocean, and in the south, eastward into New Mexico and Texas. In its southern range, California poppy can interbreed with *E. mexicana*.

History & Folklore: Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838), a German naturalist named the genus in honor of Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz, Chamisso's close friend and physician on the expedition on which Chamisso first encountered them. California poppy is the state flower of California. Herbalists all over the world have long known the

Other names:

Amapola de California

Family:

Papaveraceae

Parts Used: aerial portions, whole plant

Taste & Energetics:

Bitter, cooling

Actions: sedative, anodyne, anxiolytic, antidepressant

This is an excerpt of our full plant monograph which is available to members of the Herbal Village