

Papaver - Growing Guide

Caring For Papaver Orientale

Oriental poppy

These are popular clump forming perennials which originate from the Caucasus, Turkey and Iran. The numerous improved and varied hybrids which grace our gardens today are all fully hardy and spread by runners. They do best in fertile or improved soils which have had manure or compost added before planting. Full sun is required for them to flower properly and the soil should not get waterlogged in the winter as this may cause the clumps to rot. P. orientale varieties are some of the most spectacular plants for a mixed or herbaceous border.

P. orientale varieties have erect white bristly stems and 12in leaves with lance shaped toothed segments. From April to June these plants produce a succession of solitary cup shaped flowers which are 4-6in across on tall stalks of 18-36in in height. The flowers do not last long but they do not all come out at once. It is debatable if Papaver orientale hybrids need supports in the garden to keep the flowers from blowing over in wind or rain. Since the leaves are not that tall these can look unsightly so it is really a matter of choice depending on the shelter available in your own garden.

The leaves of P. orientale varieties begin to die back fairly soon after flowering and may well need a tidy up before autumn. The seed heads form quickly after flowering and have a 'pepper pot' shape. In the early years after planting it is sensible to remove these to allow the plant more energy to grow and develop below ground level. However, once mature you may want to collect these seed heads as they turn brown and sow them in containers in the spring.



Papaver orientale



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Papaver nudicaule
'Moondance'



Papaver nudicaule
'Moondance'



Papaver orientale
'Harlem'



Papaver orientale
'Harlem'



Papaver orientale 'Patty's
Plum'



Papaver orientale 'Patty's
Plum'



Papaver orientale 'Perry's White'



Papaver orientale 'Pink Ruffles'



Papaver orientale 'Royal Wedding'



Papaver orientale 'Royal Wedding'



Papaver 'Papillon'



Papaver 'Papillon'

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/OIKq08j3Fzo>

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