



Plants Featured in Growing Flowers From Seed

A Horticultural Happy Hour with C.L. Fornari

Nicotiana sylvestris – a tall, white annual. Fragrant, attractive to hummingbirds. Start seeds indoors in late-April or early May. Transplant outside in late May. Like other *Nicotiana* varieties, this can self-seed in future years.

Rudbeckia hirta – a native black-eyed Susan. Good cut flower and pollinator support plant. Self-sowing in the garden if you don't mulch.

Centaurea cyanus – aka bachelor's buttons. Blue flowers with a wildflower look. Grow these in and among other plants because they don't flower all summer. Drought tolerant, a bee favorite, edible. Sow directly into the soil in mid-May. Good to combine with other self-seeders.

Zinnia elegans – Every garden should have some zinnias. Either start indoors in early May (don't start too early!) or directly in the ground in late May. As soon as you plant in the garden, or as soon as the seeds germinate outside, spray with rabbit repellent. Dust with diatomaceous earth for earwigs and slugs when tiny. Cut flowers frequently to encourage more to form.

Lathyrus odoratus – aka sweet peas. These are cool-weather plants, so don't expect them to flower all summer. Once the heat of July hits, they close up shop. Soak seeds overnight before planting. Plant in early May directly outside – don't start these indoors.

Tropaeolum majus – aka nasturtiums. Look for the trailing or climbing varieties you want more leaves and flowers to eat. Smaller varieties are fine in containers. The trailing will scramble over the ground or up fencing etc. Plant seeds directly in the ground. Don't stress if they get some aphids.

Cosmos sulphureus – Bright Lights cosmos – a favorite of bees and butterflies. Self-seeds prolifically. Start indoors in early May or put seeds directly in the ground at the same time. Grow in full sun, well-drained soil.

Helianthus annuus – aka sunflowers. Buy the seed for the size you want to grow. Plant them either indoors in the second week of May, or outdoors at the end of May. Spray with liquid rabbit or deer repellent as they grow if these critters are a problem in your garden. Don't start seed too early.

Dahlia pinnata – Dahlia blend. These flowers attract bees, are great for cutting, and are varied in colors so you'll be constantly entertained and surprised. Plant the seeds indoors in late April or early May.

Borago officinalis – aka borage. This herb is good for attracting bees to the garden and the flowers are edible. Use them in salads or as garnishes on drinks. Plant the seeds in full sun around the end of May. Borage often self-seeds.

Verbena bonariensis – aka Brazilian vervain...although I don't know anyone who actually calls it anything but *Verbena bonariensis*. So get with the scientific name and grow this amazing self-seeding annual. Start the seeds in pots outside in March so they have some cold time. Once you get it going, it will plant itself. Butterflies love this in the fall. Great cut flower!

Ipomoea alba – aka moonflower. If you need lots of fast, annual vine growth for privacy, this is the one for you. Soak the seeds overnight in water before planting the next day. Grow in sun – plant seeds indoors in early May (no sooner!) or outside at the end of May. These vines grow lots of green before flowering at the end of the summer. Fragrant, night-flowering.

Eschscholzia californica – aka California poppies. A low-growing, early summer flowering annual that you should plant directly outside by sprinkling the seeds directly on the ground. Drought tolerant, self-sowing. Grows in gravel

Papaver somniferum – bread seed poppy. Sprinkle the seeds on bare ground in fall or early spring. Learn to recognize the new seedlings in May. Don't mulch if you want these to self-sow...they need light to germinate. Remove old plants in late-July. Save seeds before pulling and scatter them in fall.

Botanical interest Edible Beauties Mix. Sow these directly in the garden or in a large container in mid to late May. Keep the soil moist while they are germinating.

