

Remembering with Plants

by Noni Young

The remembrance poppy, *Papaver rhoeas*, is commonly known as the Flanders or Gallipoli Poppy. It was inspired by the WWI poem "In Flanders Field" and has been used since 1921 to commemorate soldiers who have died in war. This month marks 100 years since the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli and the distinctive red poppy has become the symbol to recognise this day and remember those who served during this time.

There are around 50 different species of annual (live for one year) and biennial (live for two years) poppies. They can be grown from seed or seedlings which are readily available from your local plant nursery. Poppies prefer a sunny position that is protected from the wind and grow best in a moist, well-drained (slightly dry) soil. Autumn is the time to plant in preparation for flowering in Spring. The Gallipoli Poppy is a biennial species and can take two years to flower. After flowering, it self-seeds liberally and new plants can pop up for many years to come.

The delicate, silk-like blooms of the poppy add a beautiful layer to any garden. The wide variety of colours look stunning as a mass planting or as a highlight in a mixed border planting. The scarlet red flower of the Gallipoli Poppy is striking in its simplicity and colour and would be a welcome addition to any garden.

Another plant that is synonymous with remembrance is Rosemary. It is of particular significance to the ANZACs as it grows wild on the Gallipoli peninsula.

Most of us know rosemary as that perfect herb that goes so well with roast lamb. It is a

fantastic, hardy and versatile plant that has high ornamental and sensory value in the garden. The common shrub form looks equally great in a pot or in the garden. It responds well to pruning and can make a fantastic hedge from 30cm to 1m in height. The prostrate form is often used to cascade beautifully over a wall or as an effective ground cover. The highly aromatic foliage emits its beautiful fragrance when touched or pruned, thus adding to the sensory elements of the garden. Rosemary grows best in a hot, dry position. It will not do well in overly wet soil, so in heavy clay soils it is best in a raised bed or pot.

As we remember those who have fought for our country, it is a great opportunity to take the time with the kids to plant some poppies and rosemary in the garden.



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