

# Californian poppy

*Eschscholzia californica*

## Family

Papaveraceae (poppy)

## Where is it originally from?

Western USA

## What does it look like?

Annual or perennial herb growing as a small tufted rosette, or an erect branched plant (30-60 cm) with ribbed stems and grey or blue-green, much divided leaves (<10 cm x 10 cm). Produces individual yellow to orange flowers (spring and summer) with four overlapping petals (2-6 cm long) that only open in sunlight and that are followed by ribbed seed capsules (3-9 cm) that split in two to release numerous small black or dark brown seeds.

## Are there any similar species?

*E. californica* can be distinguished from other poppies by its leaves which are divided into linear segments, its watery sap, and its seed capsule that splits into two parts.

## Why is it weedy?

Tolerates hot, dry conditions and thrives in poor soils.

## How does it spread?

Seed is spread when the capsule splits.

## What damage does it do?

Outcompetes small native grasses and herbs on poor soils.

## Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Bare, sandy or gravelly, dry or well-drained soils with high light levels, such as degraded or disturbed tussock grassland, braided rivers, dunes, coastal cliffs, degraded pasture, roadsides, scree slopes, and subalpine herbfields.

## What can I do to get rid of it?

Pull out small patches (spring-summer).

## What can I do to stop it coming back?

Where appropriate plant local native plants to shade out seedlings.



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