

## Flowers that Plant Themselves

*Sure, they're called annuals, but buy their seeds once, and you'll have blooms year after year*

For continuous color, you can't beat annuals. But some people can't bear to spend money on plants that die with the first autumn freeze. However, if you will choose reseeding annuals, they will come back everywhere.

You need only look at the flower selections presented in this section to understand. Each one derives much of its seasonal color from flower seeds you buy and sow only once—plant such as poppies, larkspurs, coreopsis, and cosmos. After they finish flowering, their seeds drop to the ground, and then new plants magically appear the following year.

Self-sown seedlings, often called “volunteers,” sometimes show up in unexpected places—gravel paths, cracks between rocks, or right in the middle of a clump of something else. This randomness gives a cottage garden its charm and surprise. And if you don't like where something sprouts, it's okay to yank it up.

### Tricks for Planting

Seeding flowers in the garden does require a little bit of know-how. For example, if you want the seeds to sprout, you had better not mulch or apply a pre-emergence herbicide.

The procedure for seeding by hand goes like this:

- Select an empty spot
- Prepare the soil by adding any necessary amendments, such as compost, peat, or ground bark
- Rake the soil surface smooth, removing rocks and sticks
- Sow seeds evenly over the soil, using a rake to barely cover them; then water gently



When should you sow them? Spring or fall is fine for most flowers. However, for those that bloom during the cool weather of spring, such as poppies, larkspurs, mists, fall is the only option.

### **After the Blooming**

Once flowers set seed, you can let the plants drop them on the soil and wait to see what comes up here and there. Or you can collect the seeds and sow them at the proper time according to the above procedure. Either way, a small investment of money and time will bring you many happy returns.

### **Blooms that Come Back**

- Bachelor's button
- Claspig coneflower
- Coleus
- Coreopsis
- Cosmos
- Crested cockscomb
- Forget-me-not
- Impatiens
- Indian blanket
- Larkspur
- Money plant
- Poppies
- Queen Anne's Lace
- Spider Wort
- Sweet William
- Zinnia