TRIALS REPORT

2005

*Papaver nudicaule* hort.
(Iceland poppy)

Trials Office
The Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB
**Papaver nudicaule** hort.
(Iceland poppy)
2005

Entries receiving
The Award of Garden Merit (H4)

1. Garden Gnome Series  2. 'Matador'  3. 'Solar Fire Orange'  4.'Summer Breeze Orange'

**P. nudicaule** hort. **Gartenzwerg Group (Garden Gnome Series)**
**AGM (H4) 2005.** Sent by Ernst Benary Samenzucht GmbH.
Flowering from 29 April. Plants that were deadheaded continued to flower and still had buds to come when the trial was cleared on 26 July.
Single flowers, up to 7cm diameter in a bright mixture of red (closest to N30A), yellow (9A), orange (30A), cream (19D) and white. Held on stiff stems 45cm long that do not flop over. Blue-green foliage makes compact mounds 25cm high, 30cm wide.


Available in retail catalogues and as plants from garden centres.

**P. nudicaule** hort. **'Matador'** **AGM (H4) 2005.** Sent by Ernst Benary Samenzucht GmbH.
Flowering from 9 May. Plants that were deadheaded continued to flower and still had buds to come when the trial was cleared on 26 July.
Single, glowing orange-red (N30A) flower with green-yellow eye are up to 10cm in diameter, held on stiff stems 55cm long. Green (closest to 146B) foliage forms compact mounds 20cm high, 40cm wide.

*Vibrant flowers held on upright stems that do not flop. Very compact, attractive foliage.*

Available in retail catalogues as seed and as young plants.
**P. nudicaule hort. 'Solar Fire Orange' AGM subject to verification.**
Sent by Kieft Seeds Holland.

Very similar to **P. nudicaule** ‘Matador’ awaiting confirmation from sender for description of distinguishing characteristics.

Available in retail catalogues as seed and as young plants.

(Summer Breeze Series) 'Summer Breeze Orange' AGM (H4) 2005.
Sent by Floranova Ltd.
Flowering from 9 May. Plants that were deadheaded continued to flower and still had buds to come when the trial was cleared on 26 July. Single, bright orange (30A) flowers are 5 to 6cm in diameter, held on stiff stems 45cm long. Grey-green foliage makes a compact mound 20cm high, 35cm wide.

**Compact, sturdy plants with small, neat foliage. Good impact from bright orange flowers. Attractive dark buds. Responds well to deadheading. Very long flowering period.**

Available in retail catalogues

**Trial Notes**

**Objective:** The objectives of the trial were to assess a range of currently available *Papaver nudicaule* hort. cultivars that, although perceived as having a short flowering period, provide a spectacular and colourful display; to demonstrate their cultivation and to recommend the Award of Garden Merit [AGM] to outstanding cultivars for garden decoration.

**Entries:** There were 14 entries in the trial, submitted by various seed companies in the UK, Germany and The Netherlands.

**Cultivation:** Seed of the entries to be grown as biennials was sown on 2 September 2004. Those grown as an annual were sown on 4 February 2005. Both were surface sown onto half seed trays and germinated under mist at 15°C. The seedlings were pricked out into P84 modules as soon as they were big enough to handle and grown on in a cool greenhouse. They were then potted on into 9cm pots, grown on in cool conditions and moved out into cold frames in February. Care was taken to ensure that the plants did not get too wet. The trials bed was spaded and prepared in autumn 2004. No organic matter was added. The biennials were planted on 16 March 2005 with 30cm between plants each way and the annuals were planted on 27 April 2005 with 25cm between plants each way. 25 plants of each single colour entry and 50 plants of each mixed colour entry were planted.

**Findings:** Iceland poppies is the common name for sturdy, brightly-coloured poppies derived from a range of *Papaver* species (including *P. radicatum* and *P. nudicaule*) crossed to produce hybrids and generally listed as *P. nudicaule* hort.. Although generally grown as a biennial, they are hardy, short-lived perennials. The Summer Breeze Series has been bred for use as an annual bedding plant.

Members of the committee noted that *P. nudicaule* hort. Constance Finnis Group, which is known for its pastel colours and thicker stems, was developed from Australian stock. First grown in Britain in the 1960s by the father of plantswoman
Valerie Finnis VMH, it had been named for her mother. In the trial this Group started flowering on 5 April and was still flowering on 29 June but, whilst quite well maintained for such an old selection, the entry included too many reds and whites. The entry of _P. nudicaule_ 'Flamenco' was incorrect, as the plants did not produce flowers with the characteristic white picotee edging. _Papaver nudicaule_ hort. are reported to be good as cut flowers, if picked as soon as the buds begin to open. However, there was no suitable space at Wisley to test the different cultivars as cut flowers. Pollen beetles can disfigure blooms, especially if flowers are cut for the house. The trial was not affected, but it was suggested that cut flowers can be cleaned of this pest by standing the stems in water in a dark shed or garage for a short time, with the door left open. The beetles then leave the flowers for the light. It was found that deadheaded plants flowered more freely and for longer.

**Judging:** The Floral Trials Subcommittee assessed entries in the trial for the Award of Garden Merit on 3 May, 17 May, 17 June, 29 June and 13 July using the following criteria:

- vigour
- impact
- floriferousness
- colour (balance – for mixtures, uniformity – for single colours)
- length of flowering season
- length of stem and lack of floppiness

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<tr>
<th>Award</th>
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<td><strong>ANNUAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>AGM (H4) 2005</td>
<td>(Summer Breeze Series) 'Summer Breeze Orange'</td>
<td>Floranova</td>
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<td>(Summer Breeze Series) 'Summer Breeze Yellow'</td>
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<td>'Wonderland Mix'</td>
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<td><em>P. nudicaule</em> hort. 'Solar Fire Orange'</td>
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<td><em>P. nudicaule</em> hort. Ballerina, mixed</td>
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<td><em>P. nudicaule</em> hort. Partyfun, mixed</td>
<td>Chiltern Seeds</td>
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_H4 = plants hardy outside throughout the British Isles_

**Names and Addresses of Senders**

Chiltern Seeds, Bortree Stile, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7PB
Ernst Benary Samenzucht GmbH, Petersweg 72, 34346 Hann, Münden, Germany
Floranova Ltd, Norwich Road, Foxley, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4SS
Johnson Seeds, Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7QB
Kieft Seeds Holland, P O Box 63, 1606 ZH, Venhuizen, The Netherlands
Monksilver Nursery, Oakington Rd, Cottenham, Cambridge, Cambs CB4 8TW
Mr Fothergill's Seeds Ltd, Gazely Road, Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 7QB
Sakata Ornamentals UK Ltd, The Wilgro Nursey, York Road, Thirsk, NYorkshire YO3 7AA

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