

Nasturtium

Tropaeolum majus

A hardy, low maintenance, edible plant providing both useful and attractive qualities at the same time. Thrives in poor, dry soil, requiring little water.

The semi-double flowers are sweetly scented and come in vivid colours of yellow, orange, salmon and deep red. The plants bloom for a long period and the edible leaves are bright green and shaped like a lily-pad. The flowers attract beneficial insects such as hoverflies and bees. They have a wide range of uses including as a natural insect repellent, ornamental in hanging baskets or as a hardy groundcover under fruit trees. All parts of the nasturtiums are edible. They can be used as a salad leaf with a peppery, watercress-like flavour with an edible flower as a garnish, or as an edible seed used as a 'caper' substitute. A true 'all-rounder'.

Recommendations:

- To easily identify your seedlings, label your stake.
- All parts are edible, including the flower! Try preserving your un-ripe seeds in vinegar and use as a 'caper' substitute.
- Plant under your fruit trees to act as a deterrent to pests.

To save your seed:

Nasturtium seeds are edible and when unripe seeds are preserved they are colloquially known as 'poor man's capers'. Dried seeds can be used as a pepper. Simply collect the seed from a withered flower or wait until the seed has fallen to the ground. Be sure to let them dry before storing them. Store in a sealed container in a cool and dry place.

Remember to label your seeds with the name and date of when they were collected.