

Common Name: **Corn Poppy**

Genus: *Papaver*

Species: *rhoëas*

Family: Papaveraceae

AKA: Red Poppy, Corn Rose, Wilde Poppy, Headache



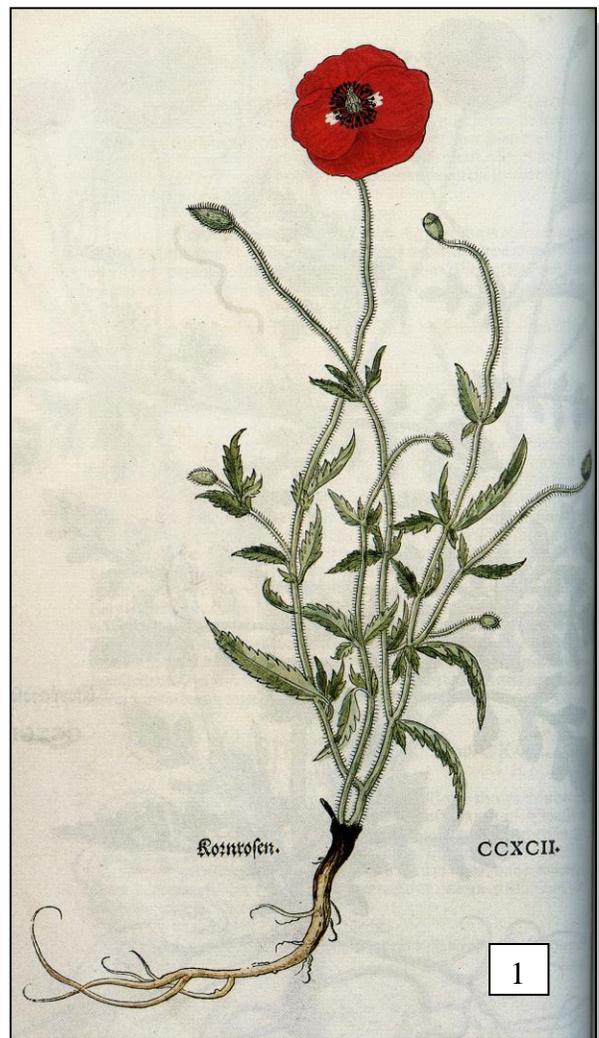
## Historical Uses:

### Medical:

“Having sod five or six little heads of this with three Cyathi of wine, to bring it as to two, give it to drink to such as you would make sleep. As much as an acetabulum of ye seed being drank with Melicrate, doth soften the belly gently. It is mixed also with honeyed confections and cakes for ye same purpose. But ye leaves being laid on together with ye heads doe heal inflammations. But ye decoction of them being fomented, or sprinkled on, is soporiferous.” (1)

“Most men being led rather by false experiments than reason, commend the floures against the Pleurisie, giving to drinke as soone as the paine commeth, either distilled water, or syrup made bu often infusing the leaves. And yet many times it happeneth that the paine ceaseth by that meanes, though hardly sometimes, by reason that the spittle commeth up hardly, and with more difficultie, especially in those that are weake, and have not a strong constitution of body. *Baptista Sardus* might be counted the Author of this error; who hath written, that most men have given the floures of this poppy against the paine of the sides, and that it is good against the spitting of bloud.”(2)

“The flowers made an expectorant syrup, whereas the seeds were used to concoct sleeping draughts for infants and children, and to ease teething, coughs, and colic. Together with the leaves, the seeds also made an application for erysipelas.” (3)





**Folklore/Astrology:** “Considered to be cold and dry and ruled by the Moon.”(4)

**Other:** “It was widely distributed across Europe during Roman campaigns of conquest, when grain fields were planted for the feeding of the cavalry’s horses.”(5)  
Symbol of blood and new life since ancient Egyptian times. (6)

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### Contemporary Uses:

**Parts Used:** Flower, seeds

**Medicinal:** “Internally for irritating coughs, asthma, insomnia, poor digestion, nervous digestive disorders, and minor painful conditions.” (7)

**Culinary:** “Seeds are used, whole or ground, and sweetened as a filling, in breads, cookies, pastries; also in spiced meat dishes, curries, salad dressings, and as a garnish.” (8)

**Economic:** “Petals of the red-flowered plants are used to color medicines and wine.”(9)

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**Area of Origin:** Mediterranean region, southern Europe, temperate Asia

**Description:** “A sweet astringent, sedative herb that relieves pain, relaxes spasms, is an expectorant and improves digestion.” (10)

**Plant type:** Annual

**Form:** Upright flower stems, lanceolately divided leaves

**Height:** 12”-36”

**Flower color:** Red

**Flowering period:** Summer

**Soil type/requirements:** Well-drained soil

**Sun requirements:** Full or near-full sun



Close-up of the seed pod

**Propagation:** By seed in spring or autumn

**Cautions:** “All parts of *Papaver* species, except the seeds, are toxic if eaten.”(11)

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**Sources:**

1. Dioscorides, Book 4, 64.
2. Gerard, pg. 371-372
3. Anderson, pg. 224-225
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Bown, pg. 301-302
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

**Illustrations/Images:**

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| 1. Fuch’s Herbal | 1543 |
| 2. PSUMG         | 2013 |
| 3. PSUMG         | 2013 |