

Trecanna's Choice



Trecanna Nursery is a family-run plant nursery owned by Mark & Karen Wash and set on Cornish slopes of the Tamar Valley, specialising in unusual bulbs & perennials, Crocosmias and other South African plants, and Sempervivums. Each month Mark will write a feature on some of his very favourite plants.

***NEW OPENING HOURS** - Trecanna Nursery is now open from Wednesday to Saturday, plus Bank Holidays throughout the year, from 10am to 5pm, (or phone to arrange a visit at other times). There are currently over 160 varieties of potted less-usual bulbs plus over 80 varieties of Crocosmia ready for sale – this is the best time to pick up the rarer varieties. Trecanna Nursery is located approx. 2 miles north of Gunnislake. Follow the Brown signs from opposite the Donkey Park on the A390, Callington to Gunnislake road. Tel: 01822 834680. Email: mark@trecanna.com*

‘Bring On The Anemones’

I would guess that somewhere or other, all of us have at least one form of Anemone tucked away in our garden, whether we know it or not. In all, there are around 120 species and they vary enormously from tiny rock-garden plants to the tall herbaceous perennials and can flower as early as February or as late as October.

In the wild they come from a wide range of habitats mainly in the Northern Hemisphere but a few also come from further South. There is some doubt as to where the name “Anemone” originally comes from. Some believe that is derived from the Greek word “Anemos”, meaning Wind – this eludes to the way that the flowers tend to shake in the gentlest of breezes. Indeed, one of the common names used for Anemones to this day is “Windflower”. Another school of thought credits the naming to the god “Adonis” - whose scattered blood produced the blood-red *Anemone coronaria*.

The flowers themselves are mainly of the daisy type, produced on individual stems, either with many narrow petals or fewer but wider ones. The colour range tends to run from pure white, to tones of blue and pink. A few woodland species have primrose or yellow flowers.

This month, I’m going to concentrate on some of the Spring flowering varieties that add so much charm at this time of year – you’ll see many of them in gardens as the first real carpet of flowers to get the Spring off to a start.

In the main, the Spring flowering Anemones listed here originate from under trees in woodland or at the edges of clearings. They mostly grow from knobbly dry tubers or from rhizomes (swollen roots that creep just beneath the surface). These can be planted in the Autumn and some varieties in the Spring. All can also be planted as growing clumps in the Spring, even after flowering, and this can often be the best way get them to establish.

The woodland Anemones take advantage of the shelter provided by the branches of deciduous trees, flowering before the trees come into leaf. After this, they struggle to gain enough light so hide beneath the ground for the rest of the year, kept moist by a layer of leaf mould.

OUR FAVOURITE SPRING ANEMONES & HOW TO GROW THEM

Here are a few of our favourites:

Anemone blanda

Anemone blanda is a reliable, spreading, daisy-like Anemone with dry, knobbly tubers that quickly form large clumps bearing many flowers. The individual flowers have 12-15 slender petals and last really well. It prefers well-drained soil and will grow in both full sun and part-shade, tolerating quite a degree of wind. I find them at their best scattered under a deciduous tree or shrub that you might pass as you walk to or from your house on early Spring days. They also make a great early carpet for patio containers that often look quite boring at this time of year.

Flowers Mch-Apr Ht. 3-5" (9-12cm)

A. blanda 'Blue Shades' - has dusky leaves, and flowers in differing tones of blue.

A. blanda 'White Splendour' AGM - has green leaves and pure white flowers up to 2" across.

Anemone nemerosa (Wood Anemone)

The delightful native Wood Anemone, that adorns the floor of many woods before the trees wake up. It forms a carpet of deeply lobed leaves topped by a profusion of delicate pure-white open flowers, 1" across, with 6-8 wider petals. As well as spreading via creeping roots, it self seeds, often forming variations in tones of soft blue or pink. Whilst the roots spread rapidly in the right conditions, I wouldn't class this as an invasive plant as it fairly well disappears a month or so after flowering and it is very easy to plant clumps of other woodland plants amongst the brittle roots. Grow Anemone nemerosa in moist but well drained soil, with plenty of humus, and in partial shade. It will tolerate drier conditions over the summer when the plant is dormant.

Flowers Mch-Apr Ht. 4-6" (10-15cm)

A. nemerosa **AGM** is the pure white form.

A. nemerosa '*Robinsoniana*' **AGM** is a beautiful form with larger pale lavender-blue flowers.

A. nemerosa '*Vestal*' **AGM** bears double white flowers.

Anemone coronaria (De Caen)

Anemone De Caen is the name for a group of *Anemone coronaria* that bear perfectly formed single flowers on stout stems making them perfect for both borders and superb cut flowers. A few clumps of these in the garden can produce a ready supply of cut stems without destroying the garden. Most garden books will loosely describe them as Spring flowering however I have also found them flowering in Summer and Autumn. Would you believe that we even have some flowering outside at the nursery now! They prefer full sun, light sandy soil and like to dry out over the Summer. A well drained sunny border is perfect or a patio container – a Winter mulch helps them through.

Flowers Spring - Summer Ht. 10-12" (25-30cm)

A. coronaria '*Mr Fokker*' – is a superb variety which produces rich violet-blue flowers.

A. coronaria '*The Governer*' – bears intense scarlet-red flowers.

Anemone ranunculoides **AGM**

Yellow is a reasonably unusual colour for Anemones and the beautiful little woodland form shows up well the shadier places where it like to grow. Follow the same growing hints as for *Anemone nemerosa* but bear in mind that this is a slightly smaller plant. The flower colour varies from soft to deep buttercup yellow. A paler yellow form is *Anemone x lipsiensis* (which is a cross between *A. nemerosa* & *A. ranunculoides*)

Flowers Mch-Apl. Ht 2-4" (5-10cm)

Happy Gardening!

ENDS
