

Growing Native Plants from Seed

The Seed Sitter project is an inexpensive and simple way to grow native plants for personal use and to share in your community.

Listed below are the steps required to grow native wildflowers and grasses in your yard or on your balcony. You can modify these steps to suit your location, available time and space, and the species you are trying to grow.

Late fall to end of January:

- Collect your supplies: small pots with holes in the bottom, potting soil, native seed, labels, dry leaves, chicken wire (or plastic netting) and a spray bottle.
- Add moist potting soil to your pots and pat it down lightly.
- Sprinkle seeds on top of the soil and press them down gently. Add only one species of seed to each pot so seedlings come up at about the same time and you can keep track of species.
- Cover the seeds with no more than two millimeters of soil and gently mist using a spray bottle. You may want to refer to the websites listed below for germination guidance for specific species.
- Label each pot with the species name, the seed source and the seeding date.
- Place dry leaves and wire on top of your pots. It might be easiest to place your pots in a shallow tray or bin with holes first.
- Place your pots outside where they will receive rain and snow and will be safe from foot traffic.

Spring to early summer:

- Place your pots in a partially sunny location and remove the leaves.
- Keep the wire in place until seedlings grow to cover the bare soil, and their roots are strong, or until squirrels are leaving the seedlings alone.
- Spritz the soil regularly to keep it moist, but do not over-water.
- Monitor the soil for sprouts. Sprouts will appear at different times depending on species and location.

Summer to fall:

- Gently water your pots, always keeping the soil moist.
- If your seedlings become too crowded, carefully separate their roots and transplant some of them into additional pots.
- When your seedlings appear large and strong enough for the real world, plant them in your garden and water them regularly for the first year.

Note: We encourage Seed Sitters to use local seeds. You can collect some in your own native plant garden or acquire some from local native plant societies and nurseries, and folks on related social media channels.

Additional native seed-starting information can be found at [Cliffcrest Butterflyway](#) and [The Wild Seed Project](#).