How to sow native seeds

For single species: Perfect for gardeners that would like to start many species separately, with the goal of transplanting seedlings into the garden or sharing with friends.

You will need:
A container or garden bed with soil
Optional: milk jug
Work gloves
Your seed mix
Popsicle stick and permanent marker for labeling

1. **Prepare a several pot with good drainage.** Fill it with moist potting mix. Optional: try planting your seeds using the “milk jug method” -- a quick google search turns up many how-tos.

2. **After Dec 1st, sprinkle the seeds of a single species on top of the soil in your pot.** Do not cover with soil. Place a thin layer of leaves on top.

3. **Label each pot with the species and date of planting.**

4. **Leave the pots outside during the winter.** Your pots should be outside at least as many days as indicated on the stratification requirements on the label. Bringing them in sooner may lead to poor germination; leaving them out longer is not a problem.

5. **Your seeds will naturally germinate in spring** (be sure to remove the leaves in late-March). Let your seedlings establish in the pot for a month or so. Transplant them into a bigger growing area when they get crowded.

**TPI Tip:** Many seeds have certain environmental requirements in order to germinate. They must be “stratified” according to their particular needs. Stratification requirements:
0 days = plant in fall or spring
30 days = plant in fall; must receive 30 days of cold (40F) moist conditions
60 days = plant in fall; must receive 30 days of cold (40F) moist conditions

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For seed mix: Perfect for first time gardeners: this option is best if you’d like to germinate many species together, and create a “meadow of wildflowers” in a container or garden bed

You will need:
A container or garden bed with soil
Work gloves
Your seed mix
Popsicle stick and permanent marker for labeling

1. Prepare your planting area in Fall 2022. This can either be bare soil in the ground, or a container filled with potting mix. Ensure that the area is free of weeds and roots. If you are not sure, we recommend starting your seeds in a container with fresh potting mix.

2. Wait to plant your seeds until after Dec 1st. Your seeds will germinate prematurely if the temperature is too warm.

3. Sprinkle your seeds on top of the moistened soil. You do not need to bury your seeds below the surface (and many seeds require light to germinate). You can cover your bed with a thin layer of leaves to prevent the seeds from blowing away or being eaten by birds.

4. Wait until spring. Remove the leaves in late-March. Your seeds will germinate in mid/late April.

5. Water them well, 2-3 times per week. Your plants may not bloom in the first

TPI Tip: starting a pollinator garden from seeds is more challenging than starting a pollinator garden from mature plants. For the greatest success, we recommend that you plan to supplement your seed mix with already established plants that you can pick up at a nursery or our summer plant sale!

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