

“Deeply Rooted in Native Seed Collecting” - Know Your Seed Types

Time Sensitive	
<p>Eliasomes: Twinleaf, <i>Jeffersonia diphylla</i> Wild Ginger, <i>Asarum canadense</i> Bleeding heart, <i>Dicentra eximia</i> Bloodroot, <i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i> Spring beauty, <i>Claytonia virginica</i> Dutchman’s Breeches, <i>Dicentra cucullaria</i> White Trout Lily, <i>Erythronium albidum</i></p>	<p>Description: Fleshy structures that are attached to the seeds, nutrient-rich in lipids and proteins, sometimes referred to as “Ant candy” Dispersal: Ants are strong and motivated, able to quickly carry the candy back to their home to feed their larvae and tossing the heavy “candy wrapper” (seeds) into their compost piles. To harvest: Check these species frequently; ants will rapidly collect all of the seeds. To clean/store: These seeds have higher germination rates when sown within a day or two.</p>
<p>Ballistic capsules Orange Jewelweed, <i>Impatiens capensis</i> Wild Geranium, <i>Geranium maculatum</i> Wild violet, <i>Viola sororia</i> Partridge Pea, <i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i> Woodland Phlox, <i>Phlox divaricata</i> Wild petunia, <i>Ruellia humilis</i> New Jersey Tea, <i>Ceanothus americanus</i></p>	<p>Description: Catapult their babies away, up to several feet Dispersal: The seed is forcefully ejected by flinging the seeds from the parent plant (explosive dehiscence). Just one drop of water can explode a ripe Jewelweed capsule. The elongated valves split or burst open (dehisce), tightly coiling inwards, ejecting the seeds up to six feet away, hence another of its common names: touch-me-not. To harvest: Learn the ripening sequence & harvest just before explosion; cover with a *sealed* paper bag or mesh bag for a day or two to allow seeds to eject into the bag. OR Snip the entire stem when the seeds have ripened, place in a paper bag, and seal bag. To clean/store: After the seeds have popped in the bags either on the plant or indoors, carefully open the bag and collect the seeds.</p>
<p>Fluffy seeds Pussytoes, <i>Antennaria plantaginifolia</i> Golden Ragwort, <i>Packera aurea</i> Asters: <i>Doellingeria</i>, <i>Eurybia</i>, <i>Symphotrichum</i> Goldenrods: <i>Oligoneuron</i>, <i>Euthamia</i>, <i>Solidago</i> Joe Pye weed, <i>Eutrochium spp</i> Late Boneset, <i>Eupatorium serotinum</i> New York ironweed, <i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i> Marsh Blazing Star, <i>Liatris spicata</i> Annual Fleabane, <i>Erigeron annuus</i> White Snakeroot, <i>Ageratina altissima</i></p>	<p>Description: Fluffy seeds are quite common to plants in the aster family, with their “feather-duster” or “puff ball” seed heads (which is the pappus). Pappus structures can look different from genus to genus with the aster family, but appear the same among species within a genus. Dispersal: Fluff (pappus) allows for wind to efficiently move seeds over long distances or to be carried on the outside of animals (usually mammals) by attaching themselves to the hair or fur of animals, or the clothing of people. Spring fluffy seeds are typically more sensitive to strong weather. To harvest: Collect when fluffy. It is ok to collect these seeds *slightly* early, by collecting entire stems with seeds that are either fully poofed or have dropped their ray florets (the colorful “petals”); snip the stems and let them poof in a paper or mesh bag. To clean/store: Seeds can be stored with fluff once completely dry.</p>
<p>Milkweed and dogbane seeds Butterfly weed, <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> Common milkweed, <i>Asclepias syriaca</i> Swamp milkweed, <i>Asclepias incarnata</i> Smooth Dogbane, <i>Apocynum cannabinum var. glaberrimum</i></p>	<p>Description: Seeds structures known as follicles that split open along one seam when ripe, revealing brown seeds on white, silky, filament-link hairs, referred to as milkweed floss, or seed fiber. Although we typically refer to the seed structures of milkweed or dogbane as pods, pods are technically legumes, which split along two seams from top to bottom. Dispersal: Seeds become wind born when left on plant, carried away by its filaments that provide buoyancy in the air. To harvest: Ignore the pod color; may still be green. Place rubber band around the unripe pods (or cover with an organza bag) to prevent seeds from flying away. To clean/store: Remove seeds from filaments; save filaments and put outside in spring for hummingbirds use as nesting material</p>
<p>Berries and Drupes Coral honeysuckle, <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i> (berry) Eastern Prickly Pear, <i>Opuntia cespitosa</i> (berry) Paw paw, <i>Asimina triloba</i> (berry) Persimmon, <i>Diospyros virginiana</i> (berry) Pokeweed, <i>Phytolacca Americana</i> (berry) Partridgeberry, <i>Mitchella repens</i> (berry) Beautyberry, <i>Callicarpa Americana</i> (berry) Jack-in-the-pulpit, <i>Arisaema triphyllum</i> (berry) Fringe tree, <i>Chionanthus virginicus</i> (drupe) Dogwood, <i>Cornus florida</i> (drupe)</p>	<p>Description: Berries and drupes are often confused. A berry is a simple, fleshy fruit with seeds stored in a juicy flesh (the pericarp). The berry turns a vibrant color and mushy when ripe, as an advertisement to the wildlife to EAT ME and disperse the seeds. Examples are coral honeysuckle and beauty berries. On the other hand, a drupe is a simple fruit made up of a thin outer skin (exocarp); the middle flesh (mesocarp); and the inner hard stone (endocarp) that contains the seed. Examples are dogwood and fringe tree. Dispersal: Wildlife disperse the seeds through chewing, digestion, and dispersal in a pile of “fertilizer” distances from the parent plant. To harvest: Collect when ripe before wildlife devour. Cover with mesh bags while ripening to protect from wildlife. To clean/store: The seeds within berries and drupes are not accustomed to drying out and need to be sown fresh in damp soil OR cleaned & stored in plastic in the refrigerator (which maintains a higher level of humidity). Seeds encased in fleshy fruit are best not air-dried before removing the flesh.</p>

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Mama’s Boys	
<p>Shakers Eastern beebalm, <i>Monarda bradburnia</i> Wild Bergamot, <i>Monarda fistulosa</i> Virginia mountain mint, <i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i> Short-toothed mountain mint, <i>P. muticum</i> Obedient Plant, <i>Physostegia virginiana</i> Blue Vervain, <i>Verbena hastata</i> Purple Giant Hyssop, <i>Agastache scrophulariifolia</i> Indian tobacco, <i>Lobelia inflata</i> Hoary vervain, <i>Verbena stricta</i> Common self heal, <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> Hoary skullcap, <i>Scutellaria incana</i></p>	<p>Description: “Petals” (florets) fall off, leaving tube-shaped calyx behind. Seeds are inside these tubes. Seeds drop very close to the mother plant and can remain for weeks unless strong weather occurs. Dispersal: Naturally shaken loose by the wind or wildlife To harvest: The seed heads, a conglomerate of calyx tubes, turn from green to brown when ripe. Tip the seed head into your hand or container and tap. Tiny seeds fall out when ripe. Or collect the entire seed head for further processing. To clean/store: When harvesting the entire seed heads, allow them to dry. Then either tip the seed head over and tap the seeds out, or mash them over a screen or strainer to free the seeds located at the base of the tubes.</p>
<p>Beaks Wild columbine, <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i> Virginia spiderwort, <i>Tradescantia virginiana</i> Foxglove beardtongue, <i>Penstemon digitalis</i> Turtlehead, <i>Chelone glabra</i> Spring beauty, <i>Claytonia virginica</i> Jacob’s ladder, <i>Polemonium reptans</i> Wild pink, <i>Silene caroliniana</i> Nodding Wild Onion, <i>Allium cernuum</i> Sundrops, <i>Oenothera fruticosa</i> Shooting star, <i>Dodecatheon meadia</i> Blue flag iris, <i>Iris versicolor</i> Swamp rose mallow, <i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i> Wild Senna, <i>Senna hebecarpa</i> Maryland Senna, <i>Senna marilandica</i></p>	<p>Description: A subset of the shaker group, with seed capsules that split open like a beak when the seeds are ripe. Dispersal: Naturally shaken loose by the wind or wildlife. To harvest: Collect when the upright capsules, or beaks, have dried and are open. Tap the seed head into your hand or container. Tiny seeds fall out when ripe. To clean/store: Store dry seeds. More examples: Cardinal Flower, <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i> Monkey Flower, <i>Mimulus ringens</i> Bottle Gentian, <i>Gentiana clausa</i> Shrubby St. John’s Wort, <i>Hypericum prolificum</i> American alumroot, <i>Heuchera americana</i> Blue-eyed grass, <i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i> Culver’s root, <i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i></p>
<p>Coneheads Purple Coneflower, <i>Echinacea purpurea</i> <i>Rudbeckia</i> species Woodland Sunflower, <i>Helianthus divaricatus</i> Oxeye sunflower, <i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i> False Aster, <i>Boltonia asteroides</i> Jerusalem Artichoke, <i>Helianthus tuberosus</i> Tall tickseed, <i>Coreopsis tripteris</i></p>	<p>Description: Flowers with a cone-shaped center. Imagine these flowers without their colorful parts, and you know exactly what they look like when seeds are ripe. Seeds are attached to the hard cone among spikes. Dispersal: Wildlife eat the seeds and disperse them in their waste. To harvest: Collect entire cone when the “petals” have fallen off and the stem is brown where the cone attaches. To clean/store: When completely dry, seeds and spikes are easily separated from the cone. Then separate the seeds from the spikes.</p>
<p>Crumbly coneheads Sneezeweed, <i>Helenium autumnale</i> Buttonbush, <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> Yellow crownsbeard, <i>Verbesina occidentalis</i> Eastern tall thimbleweed, <i>Anemone virginiana</i></p>	<p>Description: Cone-shaped or thimble-shaped. Softer than standard coneheads, they crumble when ripe. The tiny disk florets are eventually replaced by seeds. Dispersal: Seeds are often dispersed by water. To harvest: Easily stripped by hand. To clean/store: Store dry seeds.</p>
<p>Shatterers Golden Alexanders, <i>Zizia aurea</i> Sharp-lobed Hepatica, <i>Hepatica acutiloba</i> Wood Anemone, <i>Anemone quinquefolia</i> False Nettle, <i>Boehmeria cylindrical</i> Pickerelweed, <i>Pontederia cordata</i> Indigo Bush, <i>Amorpha fruticosa</i> Virgin’s Bower, <i>Clematis virginiana</i> Grasses and Sedges</p>	<p>Description: Seeds are attached to stem. Some of these species drop quickly & are not Mama’s Boys. Dispersal: Often found in colonies, these seeds do not travel far on their own. To harvest: Some shatterers can be tough to visually judge for ripeness. Use a *gentle* touch test to see if the seeds easily loosen. Spring seeds remain green (perhaps for camouflage) and swell slightly. Fall seeds typically turn brown or beige when ripe. The large round seed capsules of <i>Zizia</i> ripen slowly in flattened heads or umbels. They are green for much of the summer, and then gradually darken to burgundy and then brown, at which time they can be harvested. To clean/store: Crush the capsules to release the dark brown seeds. Store dry.</p>
<p>Hitchhikers Panicked Ticktrefoil, <i>Desmodium paniculatum</i> Showy Ticktrefoil, <i>Desmodium canadense</i> White Avens, <i>Geum canadense</i> Black Snakeroot, <i>Sanicula marilandica</i></p>	<p>Description: In general, sticky, bristly, or barbed structures or burs that contain the seeds. In this example of the panicked ticktrefoil, the flat loments (a type of seedpod) that are about ½–1½" long. Each loment consists of 2-6 rounded segments, a short stipe, and sometimes a short beak. Each segment of a loment is more rounded along the bottom than along the top; it contains a single round seed, or “tick”. Dispersal: Seeds are thought to be dispersed by translocation on animal fur or feathers. Fruit coats are covered with sticky trichomes that allow the seeds to stick to passing organisms and be carried off until they eventually fall off. Seeds stuck to clothing, fur or feathers, can be carried to new habitat. To harvest: Easy to tell when ripe – they hitch a ride on your pants! Color can be an indicator, but not always. Gather seeds in the fall and dry them in paper bags for 1 – 2 weeks. To clean/store: Use gloves to remove seeds from pods. Store seeds dry.</p>

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