

Seed Balls

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Wildflowers are beautiful to behold and play an important role in the natural ecosystems. They provide a valuable food source for many pollinator insects, help with soil erosion by their roots growing deep keeping the nutrients in the soil and out of our waterways. Creating and throwing seed balls can be a fun way to help our native wildflowers spread their seeds.

There are a few things to keep in mind to make sure your seed balls have the best chance of taking root. Please choose native wildflowers as they are the best way to support our pollinators. You can even consider collecting seeds from plants growing in your areas instead of buying seeds. Pick the right spot to throw your bomb by considering the growing needs of the plants, does it need full sun or shade, does it like to have a drier soil or does it like it a little wet. Try to find areas where there are few other plants growing so there is less competition for space and nutrients. The seeds will have their best chance to survive if you bomb from fall to early spring. Seed balls need to stay moist to germinate and late spring and summer will offer little natural watering.

Here are some native seeds options for the northeast categorized by habitat requirements from WildseedProject.net:

Sunny and moist

New England aster *Symphytotrichum novae-angliae*
Tall white aster *Doellingeria umbellata*
Swamp milkweed *Asclepias incarnata*
Common milkweed *Asclepias syriaca*
Blue Vervain *Verbena hastata*
Rosy meadowsweet *Spirea tomentosa*
Boneset *Eupatorium perfoliatum*
Joe-pye weed *Eutrichium spp.*
Wild clematis *Clematis virginiana*
Switch grass *Panicum virgatum*

Sunny and dry soils

Black eyed coneflower *Rudbeckia hirta*
Beardtongue *Penstemon digitalis* and *P. hirsutus*
Wild Rose *Rosa virginiana*
Meadowsweet *Spirea alba*
Little Bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium*
Butterfly milkweed *Asclepias tuberosa*
Smooth blue aster *Symphytotrichum laevis*
Downy goldenrod *Solidago puberula*
Wild Strawberry *Fragaria virginiana*

Shady Soils with medium moisture

Blue wood aster *Symphytotrichum cordifolium*
Large-leaved wood aster *Eurybia macrophylla*
White snakeroot *Ageratina altissima*
Woodland goldenrod *Solidago caesia, S. flexicaulis*
Crane's-bill *Geranium maculatum*
Golden grousel *Packera aurea*



Instructions:

- 4 parts pottery clay (or you can use the air dry clay and then you don't add the water)
- 1 part compost or gardeners soil
- 1 part seed
- 1 part water

In a big bin mix together the compost, pottery clay and water (or air-dry clay). After the mix is the consistency of playdoh add in your native seeds. Roll 1-inch balls from the mixture and allow the seed balls to dry for 24 to 48 hours on a tray. Seed balls can be stored up to 6 months in a sealed container but make sure the seed balls are fully dry before storing them.

