

The Advantages of Winter Sowing

A) WHY WINTER SOW?

🔑 It is simple to do.

🔑 It's efficient and cost effective.

You do not have to run grow lights for weeks at a time when starting seeds indoors or invest in a lot of expensive equipment. It doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg.

🔑 Winter sown seedlings are hardier!

Don't need to worry about having leggy seedlings because they are planted and grown outdoors.

🔑 No need to harden off the seedlings as they are already acclimated to outdoor conditions.

They are ready to plant whenever the outside temperature has sufficiently warmed and they are the right size (2-3" or 2 sets of real leaves)

🔑 No grow lights

Allows someone who doesn't have the room, a grow light setup, nor the window space available indoors to start seeds successfully.

🔑 Prevents seeds from being washed away or eaten.

🔑 It gives you something to do gardening-wise during winter/early spring.

B) WHAT CAN YOU WINTERSOW?

Seeds - Annuals, perennials, herbs, veggies, shrubs, anything except tropics!

Timeline: Generally, start after the winter solstice (December 21-March 21)

C) SEED PLANTING/GERMINATION NEEDS – NATURE TAKES OVER

Cold stratification - 4-6 weeks of cold exposure

Scarification needs – Exposure to snow/rain

Seed planting depth requirements

Light or dark germination requirements

Ignore seed packet instructions/info - when to sow, seed spacing, germination rates etc

D) MATERIALS

a) **Record Book – Numbering/Labeling system for each container**, other details as desired

b) **Cutting Materials** for containers and drainage holes, holes for rain
Scissors, drill + 1/4" or 1/2" drill bit, soldering iron etc

c) **Duct Tape (1-2")**, **plastic plant labels**, **paint marker pens**, **graphite pencils**
No to ball-point pens, Sharpies – very disappear during the winter

d) **Potting Soil**

Use the brand that you love and use larger bag of soil costs less per quart or pound.

Black and Gold All Purpose, reported good success w/ Miracle Grow Potting Soil

Did not have good luck w/ Promix (why ??)

Avoid cheap dollar store soils, they are inconsistent with success.

- *No to potting soils with high NPK fertilizer, hydrating additives*
 - Miracle Gro potting soil: NPK 0.21-0.11-0.16
 - *Read the label to determine the fertilizer strength in the potting soil i*
- *Avoid seeding soil and no to adding vermiculite and/or perlite to soil*
- *Avoid potting soil that say they are 'Weed Free'*
 - *Contain chemicals mixed into soil to prevent any weed seeds in that potting soil from germinating.*
 - *Prevents the germination of the seeds you sow in that same soil.*

e) **Chick Grit (Starter Chicken Grit)** – inert fine marble chips

Helps w/ moisture retention, helps prevent fungal/bacterial growth and Damping Off

- No to Medicated Chick Grit Chick Grit w/ probiotics
 - Risk ofn cause mold or fungal growth
- Avoid oyster shell chips – not the same.

Use play sand or horticultural sand sparingly – risk of fungal or mold growth

f) **Pots and Containers** – Not confined to using Milk/Water Jugs!

- *Milk-jugs (½ or 1 gallon), aluminum roasting tin/lid, 6 inch disposable garden pots, 1 or 2 liter clear or green soda bottles), seed starter trays (minus 6-pk inserts), plastic cat litter container, juice containers, English toffee jar, rotisserie chicken container, salad container, yoghurt pots, etc etc.*
- Cover for garden pots - “greenhouse”
 - Ziploc bags, plastic bags, clear/brown disposable garden pots, aluminum foil etc
- **How big?**
 - “Bottom” Need to hold 3-4" of potting soil
 - “Top” - Ventilation with headroom for seedlings to sprout and grow
- **Making Holes and with what?**
 - Holes for drainage in the bottom
 - Holes for rain/snow to get in the top
 - Soldering iron (\$6 Amazon), drill with ¼” drill bit, kitchen scissors

Seeds available to Sow at Workshop

1. **Foxglove Gloxinaflora:** (Perennial)
Needs light to germinate. Planting depth 1/16" – barely cover – sow on top of grit, tap
2. **Lupine Russell's Prize Mix** (Perennial)
Needs scarification to germinate Planting depth ¼"
3. **Larkspur Giant Imperial** (Hardy Annual; 3-5')
Needs dark to germinate: Planting depth ¼", after flowering leave stems to drop seeds
4. **Hollyhock Perennial Mixture** (Perennial; 6-8'; blooms next yr)
Light to germinate. Planting depth (1/8") barely press into soil
5. **Gaillardia Grandiflora Mixed** (Perennial; 2.5')
Light to germinate. Planting depth (1/8"), barely press into soil
6. **Poppy Oriental Red** (Perennial)
Needs cold and light to germinate. Do not cover - sow on top of grit, care when transplanting
7. **Malva Sylvestris Zebrina** (French Hollyhock) (Perennial; 3-4')
Light to germinate. Planting depth (1/16") barely press into soil
8. **Pyrethrum Dalmatian Colored Daisy** (Perennial; 18-24")
Planting depth ¼"
9. **Shasta Daisy Alaska** (Perennial; 30")
Planting depth 1/8"
10. **Shasta Daisy Little Princess** (Perennial; 12")
Planting depth 1/8"
11. **Thunbergia African Sunset** (Black-eyed susan vein) (Annual vein)
Needs shade to germinate Planting depth ¼"
12. **Phacelia Tanacetifolia** (Fiddlehead Flower) (Annual; 1-2')
Planting depth ¼", care when transplanting
13. **Monardia fistulosa, Native Bergamot/Beebalm** (Perennial; 24-48")
Needs light to germinate. Do not cover - sow on top of grit
14. **Columbine – Granny's Nightcap Mixed (Perennial 2.5')**
Needs light to germinate. Do not cover - sow on top of grit
15. **Spotted Bee Balm** (Monardia punctata) (Tender Perennial; 12-38")
Needs light to germinate. Planting depth (1/16") barely press into soil
16. **Milkweed Hello Yellow** Asclepias tuberosa (Perennial; 20-24")
Needs light to germinate. Planting depth (1/16") barely press into soil
17. **Monardia fistulosa, Native Bergamot/Beebalm** (Perennial; 24-48")
Needs light to germinate. Do not cover - sow on top of grit

Winter Sowing Instructions Planting Guide

Winter Project – takes advantage of cold winter weather, seeds germinate in spring as nature intended- grow annuals, perennials, veggies, shrubs, trees - natives, heirloom varieties, new and/or rare varieties



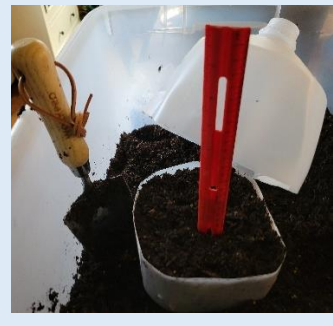
If possible, plan ahead **create a Seed Library** –use seed over multiple years. Store seed packets in refrigerator, control exposure to moisture – use sealed container and dessicant



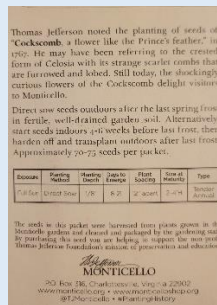
Gather Supplies and “Make Pots” – Make drainage holes and ventilation holes. *Bottles need a hinge to help reform and seal container*



Potting Soil: Add to depth of 3-4 Inches, lightly tap soil to settle, add extra soil if needed
Do not use seed starting soil not enough nutrients to sustain seedling growth



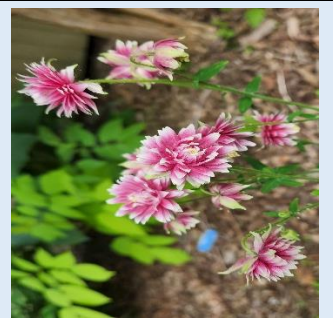
Sow seeds: *Info on seed packet– attn to planting depth/light requirement. Ignore when to sow*



a) Cover soil lightly with Chick Grit (1-3 “grains” deep). b) tap soil to make contact seed
 c) add label (use paint pen or graphite pencil) d) spray with water to dampen soil, seeds, chick grit e) Seal container with duct tape f) label outside of container



Place outside in shade (avoid direct sunlight) to minimize water evaporation. Container should have access to the elements (rain, snow, cold etc). Move to sunnier spot once seedling emerge



Winter Sowing – It Worked !!! May 21, 2022



Larkspur Smokey Eyes 4/04

Larkspur Smokey Eyes 5/02

Shasta Daisies



Lupine

Danish Flag Poppy

Spotted Bee Balm 5/02

