

Seeds from Wild Plants

Most wild plants are very prolific and their seeds can last a long time in the soil before they germinate. They produce two kinds of seeds; some that will germinate the following year, and others that will remain dormant in the soil until the conditions are such that the presence of the plant is needed for healing the soil. Keep this in mind as you plant them, they will keep coming over the years even if you don't let them go to seeds or harvest the seed promptly.

| Name | Longevity (years) | Number of Seeds |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mullein | 100 | 22,300 |
| Curled or Yellow Duck | 80 | 29,500 |
| Purslane | 40 | 52,300 |
| Pigweed | 40 | 117,400 |
| Lamb's Quarter | 40 | 72,500 |
| Chickweed/Mustards | 10 | |
| Dandelion | 6 | 15,000 |

(Source: www.ediblewildfood)

As a general rule when planting wild plant seeds (specially the tiny ones), just scatter the seeds around and do not cover them.

Tips for producing good quality seeds of wild plants:

- Plant with extra spacing so that the plants can express themselves fully when they bloom.
- Collect seeds from the plants that show the good characteristics of the species, if possible, discard the plants that look weak before they bloom, to prevent crosspollination.
- Do not collect seeds from weak or sick plants.
- Collect seeds from as many plants as possible to maintain genetic diversity. The number of plants needed for genetic diversity depends upon that particular plant species, as well as the use of the seed (community or commercial). Minimum population of plants required for seed production is well known for grains and vegetable crops. However, little information is available for wild plants. When possible, if the seed is for personal and community purposes, try to collect seeds from 12-20 plants.
- Collect the seeds when the pods are mature and dry, and if possible, on a dry day. If you are not able to collect ripe seeds as the weather turns, harvest the entire plant and allow the seeds to dry on the plant.
- Dry the seeds properly before storing them.
- Store them in sealed containers in a dry, cool and dark place.

For more information on how to save your own seeds, check Seeds of Diversity (www.seeds.ca)