

Bibliography for Books on How to Propagate Native Plants, esp. by seed – compiled by Russ Cohen 2/1/20

[N.B.: the info below is gleaned in part from the [Maryland Native Plant Society](http://www.marylandnativeplantsociety.org). This link <https://mdflora.org/publications/booklist.html> also includes very useful info on books for plant ID, Native Gardens, Invasive plants, ecology, ethnobotany, etc. See also <https://grownativemass.org/Great-Resources/best-books>].

(1) *The New England Wild Flower Society Guide to Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada*; William Cullina; 2000; Houghton Mifflin Co.; 322 pgs.; ISBN: 0-39596-6094. [See also Cullina's related books: *Native Trees, Shrubs and Vines A guide to using, growing and propagating North American woody plants*. Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, MA, 2002, and *Native Ferns, Moss and Grasses*. Houghton Mifflin Company: Boston, MA, 2008.]

Recommended - This book is useful for the gardener but it also has a very good section on propagation. There is an excellent introduction that covers most of the issues faced in propagation from seed. These include seed cleaning and storage, pre-treatment of seeds, choice of containers and propagation mix, sowing, and the care of seedlings. It also covers propagation by cutting and division. It then gives suggested strategies for hundreds of specific genus/species. While helpful this second section is not as thorough as the first with some species getting a much more in-depth treatment. It can, however, be trusted because it is based on the direct experience gained at the New England Wild Flower Society's "Garden in the Woods." The issue of hydrophilic germinators (seeds that need a warm moist period before a cold moist one) is explained better here than in any other source.

(2) *Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers*; Harry R. Phillips; 1985; University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill; 325 pgs.; ISBN: 0-8078-4131-5.

Recommended - This book, based on the accumulated experience at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, covers general gardening topics and the cultivation of numerous species but it's focus is on seed and vegetative propagation. It gives a careful description of seed collection, seed cleaning and storage, pre-germination treatment, and seedling care for more than 150 species of plants appropriate to gardens. It has a section on carnivorous plants (such as the sundews and pitcher plants) as well as one on the propagation of ferns. It points out the alien origin of the few non-native plants that are discussed.

(3) *Woody Plant Seed Manual*. 2008. USDA Forest Service Agriculture Handbook 727. 2008. [an update of Seeds of Woody Plants of the United States] http://www.nsl.fs.fed.us/nsl_wpsm.html

Recommended - This is essentially a revised edition of the USDA publication "Seeds of Woody Plants in the United States", USDA - Handbook 450. As with the original it contains practical advice for the forester and gardener but it has been expanded to cover over 385 genera. For each genus covered there is a brief discussion of its general growth habit, distribution and uses (by humans and, to a very limited extent, wildlife) followed by more detailed information on flowering and fruiting phenology, seed collection and storage methods, germination and field/nursery techniques for sowing. Most entries also include very good drawings of seeds and seedlings. There is a passable glossary and a large bibliography. One **warning** is that this book was written before the dangers of invasive exotics were generally accepted. It contains, for instance, careful instructions on propagating *Multiflora rosa*.

(4) *Collecting Processing and Germinating Seeds of Wildland Plants*; James A. Young, Cheryl G. Young; 1986; Timber Press; 236 pgs.; ISBN: 0-881920-576.

Even though the information given about propagation for each genus is much shorter this is not simply a dumbed down version of the book "Seeds of Woody Plants in North America" by the same authors. This book has

chapters which provide a general introduction to the handling of seeds, which is something their other book lacks. Topics such as seed physiology, seed collection, cleaning, storage, and pre-planting treatment are discussed in depth starting from a layman's understanding. This book also includes many herbaceous species. Specific propagation instructions are generally given at the genus level and are basically a collection of untested, but footnoted, personal observations. The book has an overall agri-forestry slant but contains information useful for any propagator. [See also *Seeds of Woody Plants in North America*; James A. Young, and Cheryl G. Young; 1992; Dioscorides Press: Portland, Oregon; 407 pgs.; ISBN: 0-931146-21-6.]

(5) *Seeds: Ecology, Biogeography, and Evolution of Dormancy and Germination*; Carol C. Baskin, Jerry M. Baskin; 1998; Academic Press; 666 pgs.; ISBN: 0-120802-600.

This is basically a textbook, suitable for ecologists, plant scientists, horticulturists, and foresters. It stands out from the other books on propagation because the Baskins handle seed germination from an ecological rather than a strictly horticultural perspective. Topics covered include types of dormancy, theories of the relationship between dormancy and germination, the timing of germination, the various factors that control germination, and the general aspects of germination in different sorts of habitats. There are tables listing the specifics of germination for hundreds of species.

(6) *The Reference Manual of Woody Plant Propagation: From Seed to Tissue Culture: A Practical Working Guide to the Propagation of over 1100 Species*; Michael A. Dirr, and Charles W. Heuser; 1987; Varsity Press Inc.; 1100 pgs.; ISBN: 0-942-37500-9.

One of the most widely used reference manuals in the landscape/nursery trade. It focuses on cultivars and non-native trees, shrubs, groundcovers and vines but can be helpful with natives as well. Over 1100 pages, many entries with line drawings. Details about morphology, culture, disease/insect pests, landscape value, propagation practices, and the habitat of native species are covered for each entry. This book includes horticultural varieties and cultivars.

(7) *Growing Trees from Seed: A practical guide to growing native trees, vines and shrubs*. Henry Kock. Firefly Books: Buffalo, NY, 2008 ISBN 978-1-55407-363-4

Recommended - Heather McCargo of the Wild Seed Project heartily recommends this book: "An excellent book by a highly experienced woody plant propagator from the University of Guelph's Arboretum in Ontario with detailed drawings and information on many species native to Maine."

(8) *Growing Woodland Plants*. Clarence and Eleanor G. Birdseye. New York: Dover Publications © 1951 223 pp. Paperback.

This is indeed the same Clarence Birdseye of frozen foods fame. This book, which he co-wrote with his wife Eleanor, resulted in part from Clarence taking his doctor's advice to take on more sedentary pursuits after he was diagnosed with a heart condition. The book documents the Birdseyes' experience with propagating and planting native plants, much of which took place at their home on Eastern Point in Gloucester.

(9) *Pioneering with Wildflowers*. George D. Aiken. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. © 1968. 208pp. Hardcover.

Before (and during) Aiken's long-term career in politics (he served a Republican Governor of, and, for over 30 years, was a U.S. Senator from, Vermont), his interests in plants and nature led him to learn how to propagate native plants and add them to landscapes, operate a (mostly) native plant nursery, and to share his knowledge in book form.