

## How to Make Seed Balls and Help Spread Pollinator Habitat

The insects, birds, and bats that pollinate the world's plants are crucial to the health of Earth's various ecosystems. Without them, much of the farmed and wild flora that humans and other animals depend on for food, air, and shelter would die off, and that, suffice it to say, would not be good for anyone. Unfortunately, many of these important species—collectively known as pollinators—are under threat, in large part due to habitat loss.

The good news is you can help by creating more of the habitat they need to survive! All you have to do is plant more of the wildflowers and other native plants that pollinators love to pollinate. One of the easiest and most fun ways to do this is by making and distributing seed balls—little balls of clay, soil, and seeds that can be tossed anywhere flowers are likely to grow.

Here's SCA's step-by-step guide for making and planting seed balls.

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- **Natural clay** – you can find this at most stores that carry art supplies
- **Top soil** – pick this up at any gardening shop
- **Regionally appropriate seeds** – see step one below for advice on how to find these
- **A bowl of water** – you probably have a pretty good idea of where to find this
- **A work surface** that you don't mind getting a little dirty

### 1 Choosing the Right Seeds

It's important to choose seeds from plants and wildflowers that are native to your region. The wrong plants—plants from other regions—could cause problems for your local ecosystem, whereas the right plants—those that grow naturally in your area—will strengthen the local ecosystem and provide healthier and more attractive habitat for the pollinators you're trying to help. Check [this region-by-region list](#) of native plants to find some that will work, then either order seeds online or acquire them at your friendly neighborhood gardening store. Pay special attention to native milkweeds, as those will attract monarchs and other butterflies.

## 2 Gather Your Supplies

Once you have your native plant seeds, gather them and your other supplies—Natural clay, top soil, and a bowl of water—on a surface that you don't mind covering with dirt. You should probably also go ahead and throw on some clothes that you're not worried about getting dirty.

## 3 Forming the Ball

Take a small lump of clay and combine it with some soil in whatever ratio is necessary for everything to stick together and form a quarter-sized ball. If it's too dry, add a little bit of water. The mixture should be damp, but not dripping wet.

## 4 Adding the Right Number of Seeds

Add just a few seeds and use your fingers to thoroughly work them into the clay and soil mixture. Really stick with only 3 to 5 seeds per ball, because if you add too many they won't have enough soil and clay to grow. If you're working with large seeds it's OK for them to end up near the ball's core. If you're working with smaller seeds, try to keep them nearer to the surface.

## 5 The Finishing Touch

Roll the ball between your palms until it forms a nice, smooth, quarter-sized sphere and... Voila! You have yourself a seed ball. Time to set it aside and repeat these steps until you have enough seed balls to share with all your conservation-minded friends and family members.

## 6 Planting Your Seed Ball

When you're distributing your seed balls, try to toss them onto well-lit patches of soft dirt where there aren't already a lot of other plants, as that's where they really tend to thrive. If you want to plant them in a grassy part of your yard, scratch up the dirt a bit before you set them down.

That's it! You now know everything you need to know to make and distribute native plant seed balls, so why not grab some friends or family members and get started? The resulting native plants and wildflowers will strengthen the local ecosystem and provide habitat for important pollinators, so the more you make the better!