



32nd Annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention

Native Plant Seed Collecting: Tricks and Tips from a Plant Enthusiast

Patrick Goggin –
UW-Extension Lakes,
College of Natural Resources
UW-Stevens Point
Wisconsin Lakes Partnership
pgoggin@uwsp.edu
(715)-295-8903



The Wisconsin **Lakes** Partnership



- **Google** UWEX lakes
- <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/>
- <http://www.wisconsinlakes.org/>
- <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/>

- **Lake Tides... The Lake Connection**
- **Lake List**
- **CBCW**
- **CLMN**

Seed collecting > topics

- Why seed collect?
- When to seed collect?
- Types of seed/fruit
- How to seed collect?
- Example seeds from lots of species: mesic forest, prairie, & shoreland plants and shrubs
- Materials/supplies needed for collecting
- Where to seed collect?
- Some time cleaning five example species
- References/handouts



WARNING!

- This can become an addiction!
- This will test your marriage.
- You have been warned-you can leave the room now, it's your last chance...



Why seed collect?

- Learn more about a certain plant
- Cheaper than buying live plugs
- Fun hobby
- Seed swap with fellow gardeners





Where to seed collect?

- R&R right-of-ways
- Remnant prairies
- Power line right-of-ways
- Friends land
- Rural roads



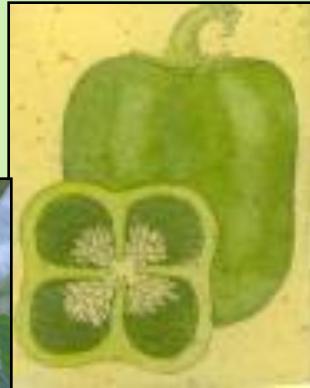
Where not to seed collect?



- Scientific natural areas
- Arboretums
- Private lands without permission
- Near Pat's house



Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- **Berry** > flesh of fruit is uniform; no tough rind present
- **Examples:** tomato; green pepper; blueberry

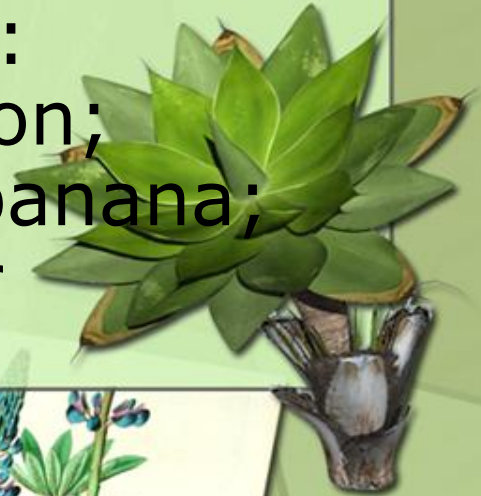


Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- **Pepo** > hard or leathery rind present, but rind lacks oil glands; no partitions in fruit

- **Examples:** watermelon; squash; banana; cucumber



Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- **Hesperidium** > leathery rind present with oil glands embedded in it; thin partitions in interior
- **Examples:** orange; lemon; grapefruit



Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- **Pome** > papery or cartilaginous ovary walls surround seeds, forming a "core"
- **Examples:** apple; pear; chokeberry



Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- **Follicle** > a single carpel splitting open on one line
- **Examples:** milkweed; magnolia



Types of seed: multi-seeded fruits



- Capsule > of two or more carpels, developing one longitudinal split for each carpel
- Examples: evening primrose; lilac



Types of seed: single-seeded fruits



- **Nut** > fruit coat thick, with stored food
- **Examples**: acorn; hazelnut



Types of seed: single-seeded fruits



- **Nutlet** > a small nut, slightly thicker than an achene
- **Examples:** mints; borage



Types of seed: single-seeded fruits



- **Samara** > fruit coat expanded into a wing which increases buoyancy
- **Examples:** maple; ash; elm





Types of seed: false fruit



- **Aggregate** > many small drupes from many pistils fused together
- **Examples:** raspberry; blackberry



Types of seed: false fruit



- **Accessory** > cone-shaped receptacle becomes fleshy
- **Examples:** strawberry



Types of seed: false fruit



- **Hip** > flask-shaped receptacle becomes fleshy
- **Examples:**
rose



Types of seed: false fruit

- **Multiple** > fusion of many fleshy parts
- **Examples:** pineapple; osage-orange; mulberry



Materials

- Paper bags
- Permanent pen to mark down species, location, date
- Scissors and clippers



Procedure for collecting



- Collect on a dry day when seeds are not wet with dew or rain
- 10 to 1 rule: for every ten plants of a species, you can collect seed from one plant
- Never take more than 50% of the seeds from an area—leave some on the land
- Label your seed bags with: date; location; name of plant; type of site (dry, mesic, wet, sandy, etc.)
- If seeds are excessively fleshy or moist, spread them out on newspaper to dry—it helps prevent molding during storage (usually 2 weeks at least)



Storage

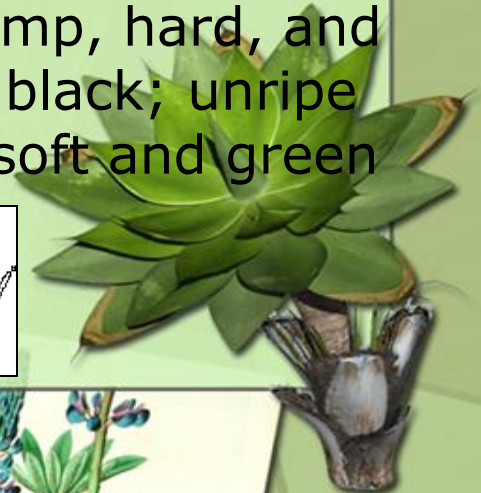


- Cool, dark and dry location
- Species specific storage
- Plastic bags not the best—use paper or glass
- Rodent proof
- Not too hot or dry



How to know when seeds are ripe?

- Seed falls easily from plant
- Pods lose their green color and turn brown
- Stem holding the seed is brown, dry, and brittle
- Seed capsules are busting open
- Most seeds are ripe 4-6 weeks after blooming
- Ripe seeds are plump, hard, and typically brown or black; unripe seeds are usually soft and green























Prairie plants > seed cornucopia



Prairie plants > seed



Rudbeckia hirta
(Black-eyed Susan)



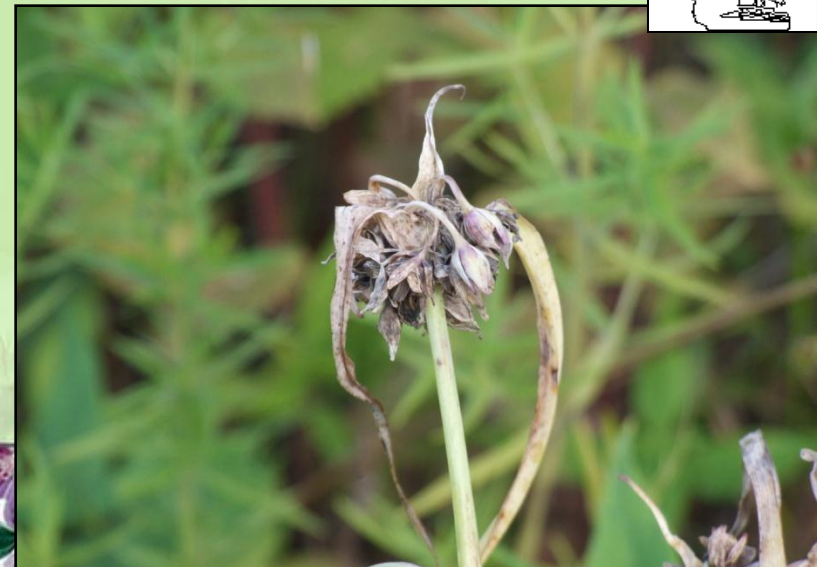
Photo by: Merel Black



Prairie plants > seed



Tradescantia ohiensis
(Spiderwort)



Prairie plants > seed



Coreopsis lanceolata

(Lance-leaved
coreopsis)



Prairie plants > seed



Monarda fistulosa
(Bergamot)



Prairie plants > seed

Baptisia alba
(Wild indigo)

Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim



Prairie plants > seed



Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim

Elymus canadensis
(Canada wild rye)



Wetland plants > seed



Wetland plants > seed

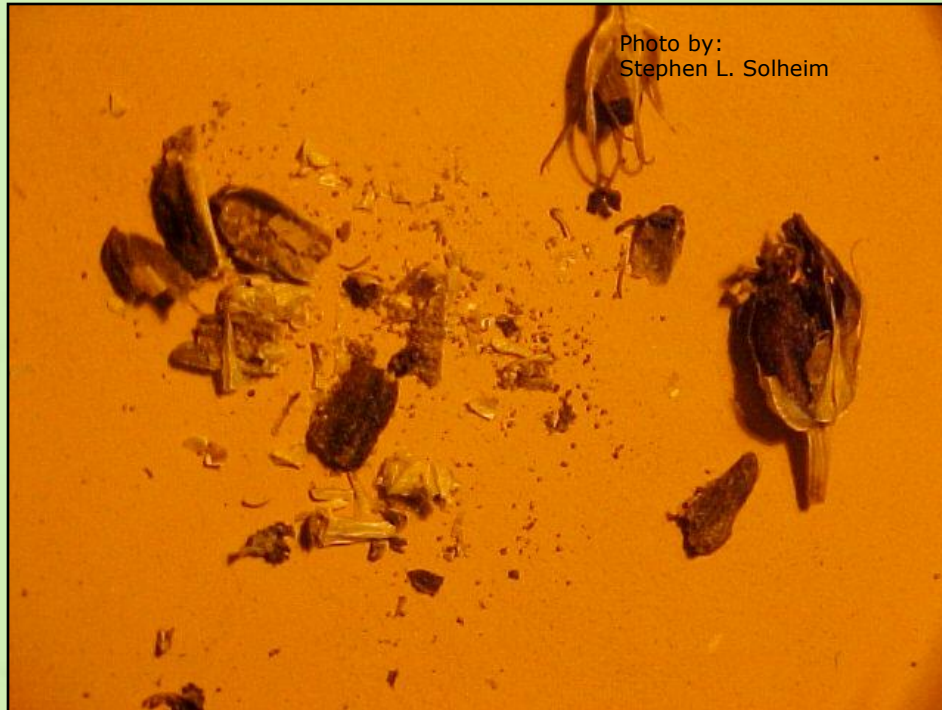


Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim

Gentiana andrewsii
(Bottle gentian)



Wetland plants > seed



Eupatorium maculatum
(Joe-pye weed)



Wetland plants > seed

Chelone glabra (Turtlehead)



Wetland plants > seed

Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim



Eupatorium perfoliatum
(Boneset)



Wetland plants > seed



Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim

Calla palustris
(Calla lily)



Wetland plants > seed



Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim

Lobelia cardinalis
(Cardinal flower)



Mesic to dry forest plants

Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim



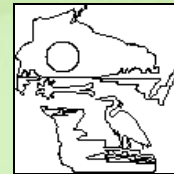
Cornus stolonifera
(Red-osier dogwood)



Mesic to dry forest plants



Cornus canadensis
(Bunchberry)



Mesic to dry forest plants



Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim

Caulophyllum thalictroides
(Blue cohosh)



Mesic to dry forest plants

Aquilegia canadensis
(Columbine)



Mesic to dry forest plants



Photo by:
Robert W. Freckmann



Viburnum opulus
(Cranberry viburnum;
European cranberry-bush)



Photo by:
Matthew L. Wagner



Mesic to dry forest plants

Photo by:
Keir Morse



Arisaema triphyllum
(Jack-in-the-pulpit)



Photo by:
Kenneth J. Sytsma



Mesic to dry forest plants

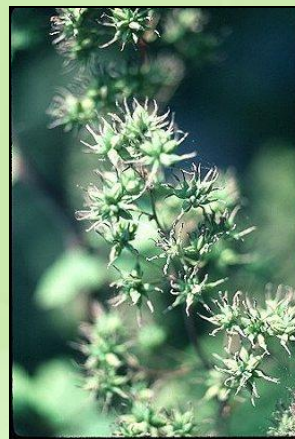


Photo by:
Stephen L. Solheim



Thalictrum dasycarpum
(Meadow rue)

Photo by:
Hugh H. Iltis



Mesic to dry forest plants



Photo by: Matthew L. Wagner



Rosa palustris
(Swamp rose)



Handouts / Questions

Beer anyone?

