



**NATIVE SEED**  
communities



# *Native Seed Sowing Workshop*

Speaker:

**Bill Daniels, Native Seed Coordinator, Master Gardener**  
**Gillian Field, MC-IRIS Community Organizer**

**December 04, 2021**

**Bryan Park, Bloomington, IN**

**Presented jointly by Indiana Native Plant Society**  
**Native Seed Communities and MCI-IRIS.**



PURDUE EXTENSION  
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM



Indiana Native  
Plant Society

# Agenda

- *Native Seed Communities introduction – Bill*
- *Growing natives from seed process – Bill*
- *Sowing the seed – Bill and Gillian*
- *Information and resources about growing native plants from seed and Native Seed Communities*
- *MC-IRIS overview, Callery Pear Challenge 2022 and tool kit loan.*





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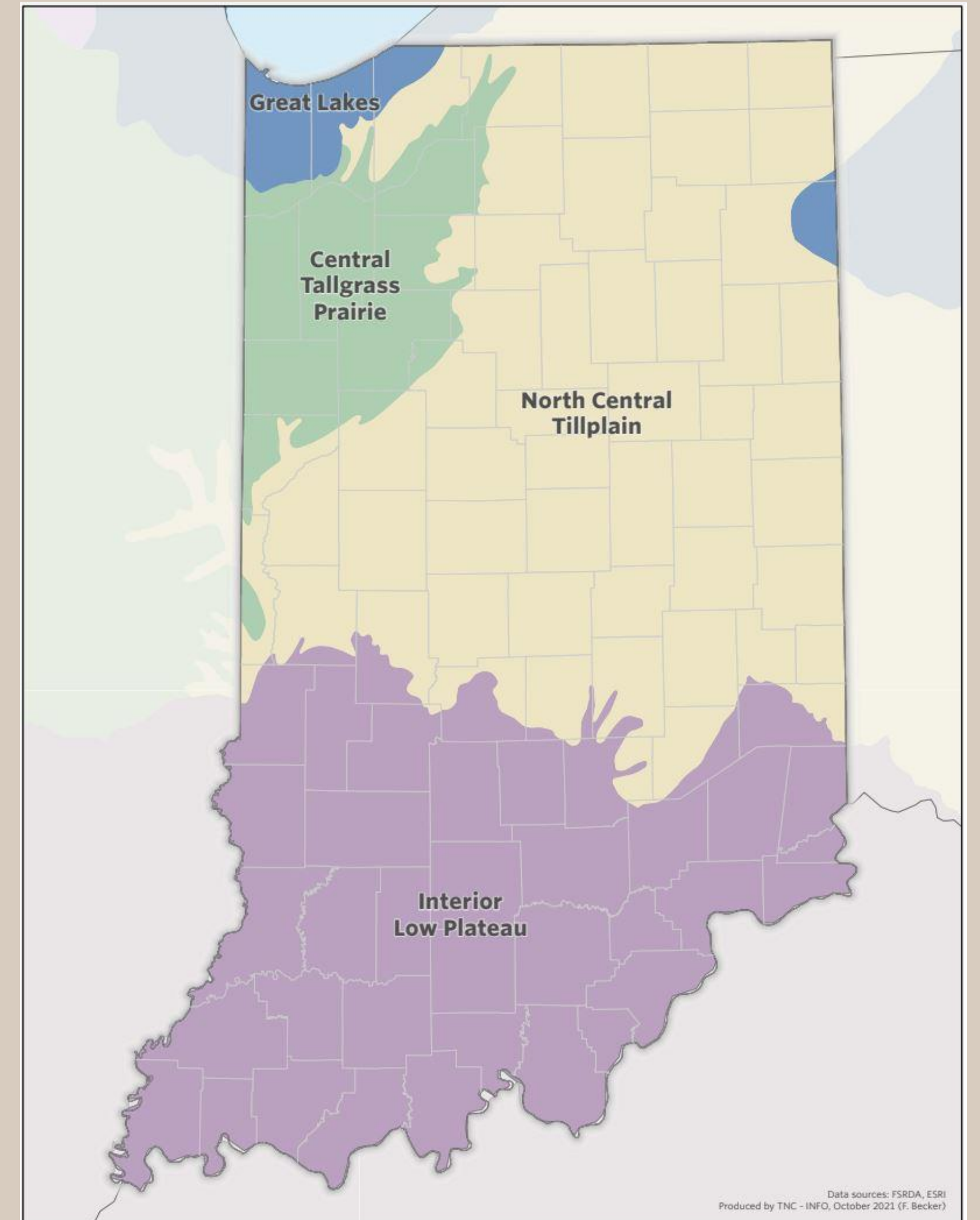
# *Native Seed Communities*



# Who We Are

*Indiana Native Seed Communities* is a network of native plant enthusiasts working together to acquire, prepare, and propagate Indiana provenance seeds to increase the presence of ecologically appropriate native plants in all our landscapes.

An individual *Community* within this network is a group of individuals within, at a minimum, one of the ecoregions as seen in the map developed by The Nature Conservancy.



# Key Objective

## Expand access to seed-grown Indiana native plants!

- **Demystify growing native plants from seed**, thus encouraging more people to sow Indiana native seeds.
- Develop **groups of trained volunteers working together** to acquire and prepare Indiana provenance native seeds and plants.
- **Support projects such as Pollinator Partnership's Project Wingspan, Brown County Pollinators and Indiana Plant Conservation Alliance's Growers & Gardens Committee.**
- **Facilitate members' collected seed and seed-grown plants to be shared** with friends, sold for fundraisers, or donated to public gardens, preservation projects, etc.
- **Assist growers** by making available responsibly sourced, wild-collected native seed.



**Doug Tallamy**

***“It is not the presence of non-native plants that destroys food webs; it is the absence of native plants!”***

*Restoring Nature's Relationships at Home*  
OSU's *The Living Landscape Speaker Series*  
February 25, 2021



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# *The Process*

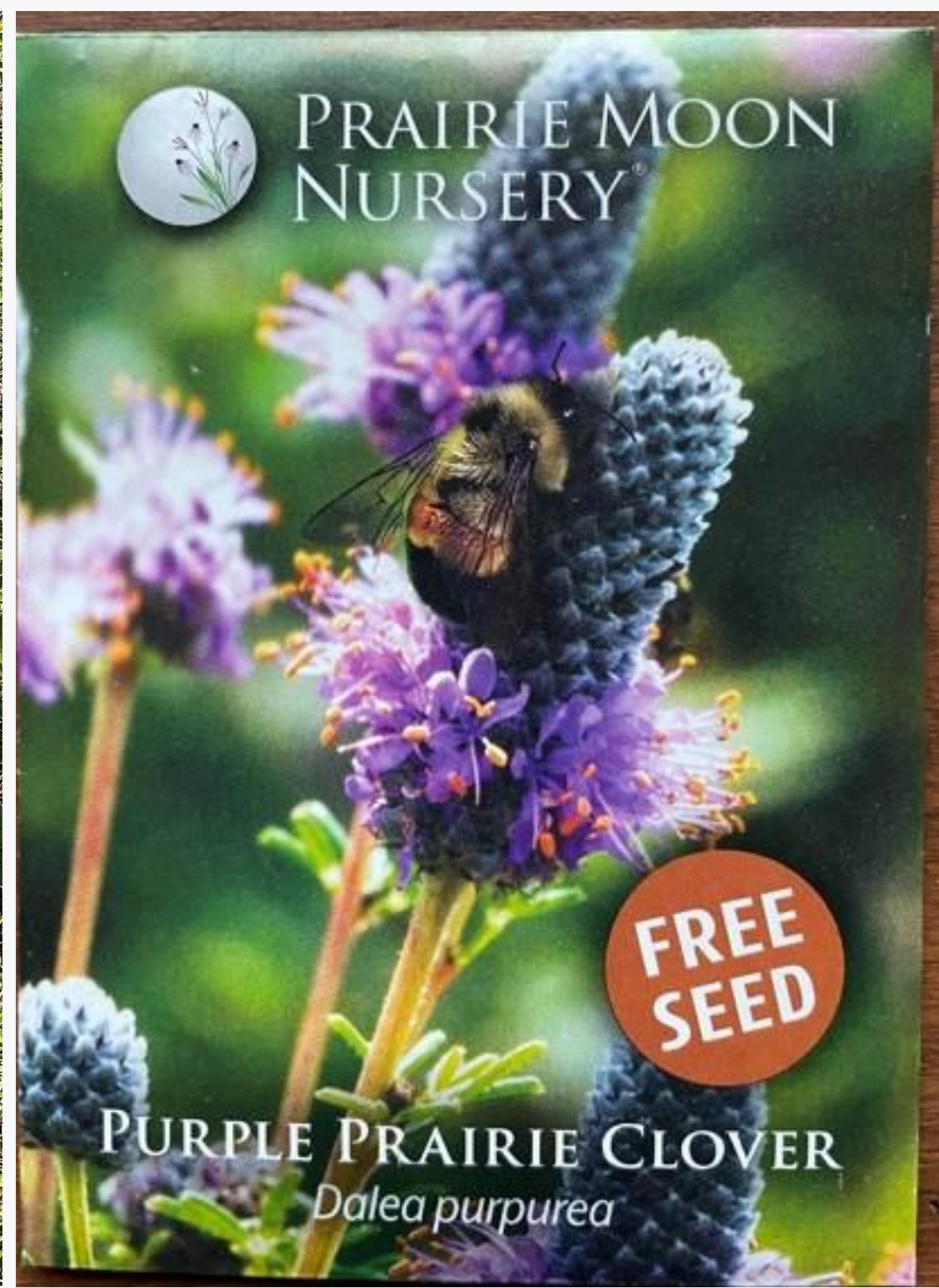


**Heather McCargo, MA**  
Founder and Seed-Program Manager

# The Process – Acquire & Prepare



Acquire Seed



Prepare Seed

# The Process – Sowing



**Materials**



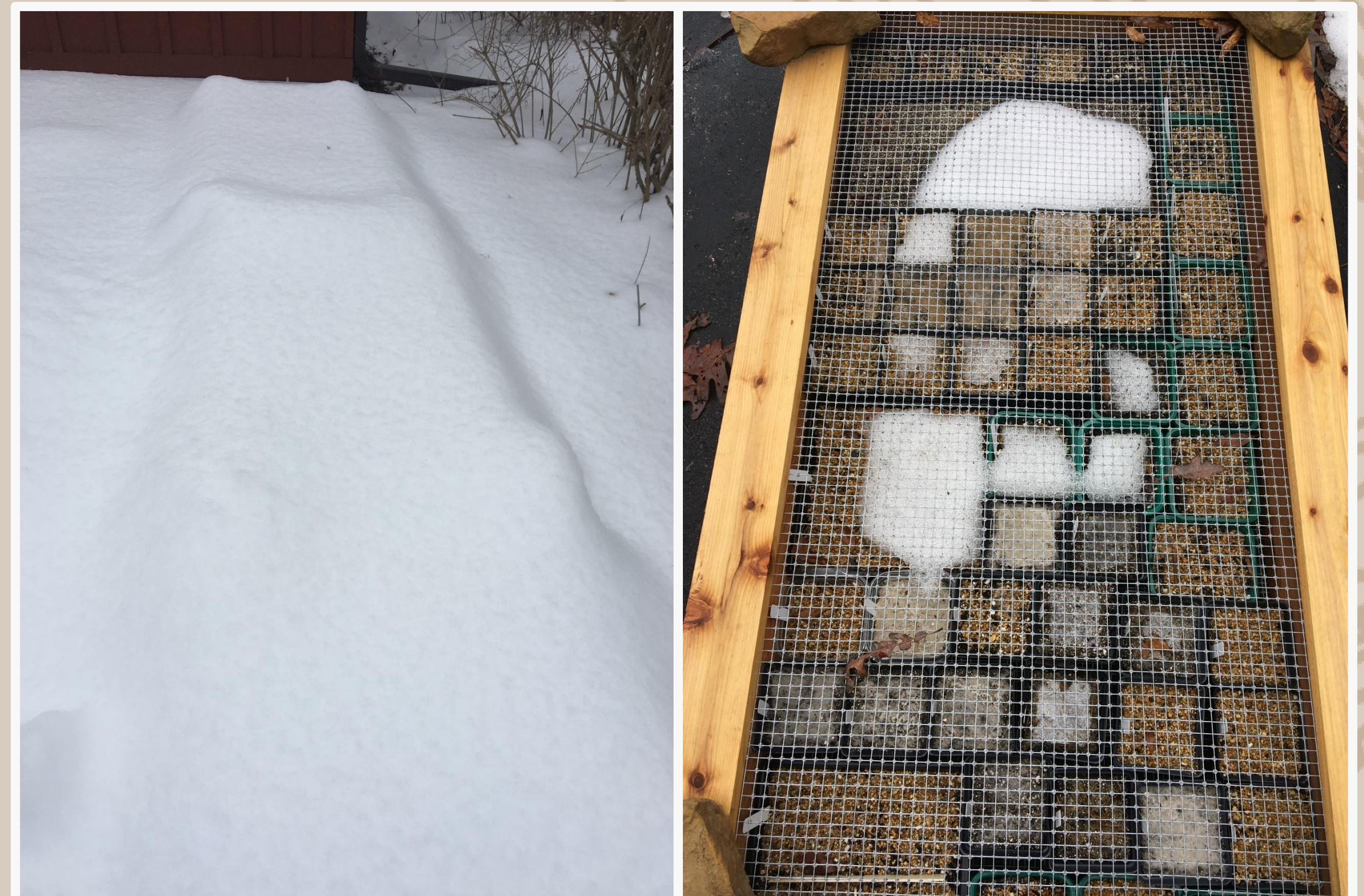
**Sow Seed**



# The Process – Outside & Protect



**Place Outside & Protect**



**Let Nature . . .**

# Process – Seedlings



April



May



Late June



Seedling Care



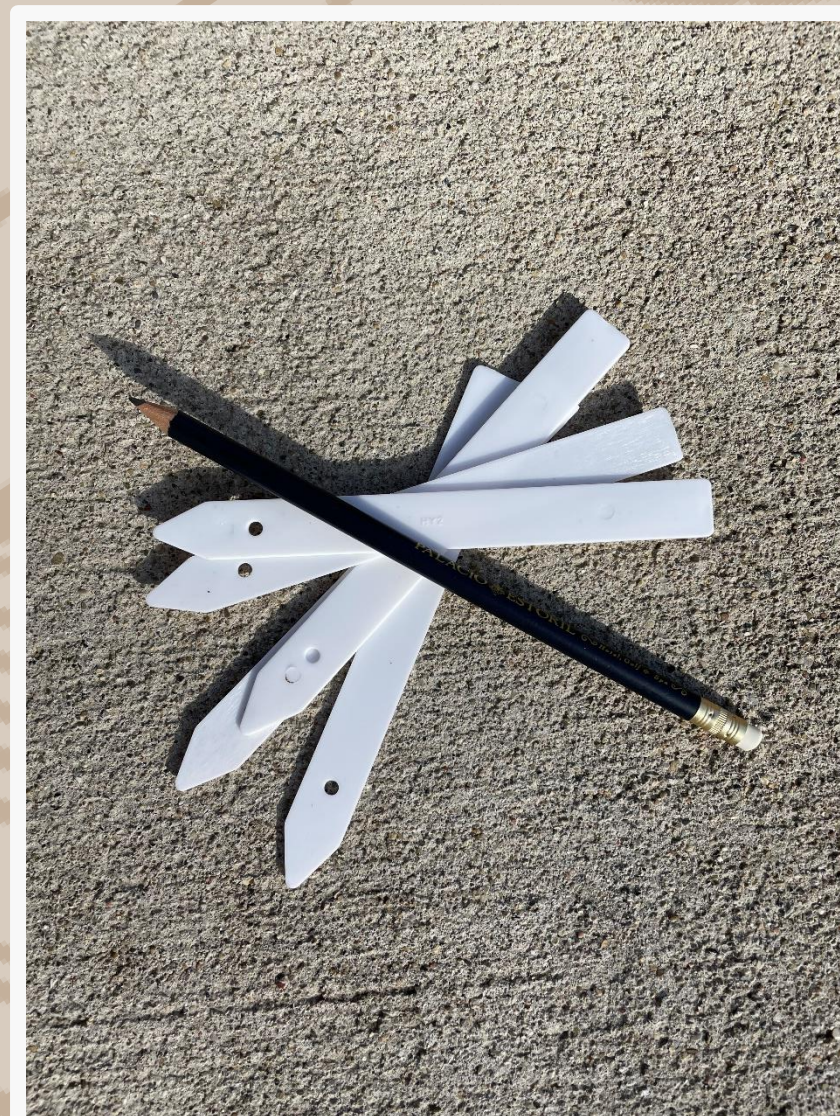
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Wild Seed  
Project

# *Sowing the Seed*



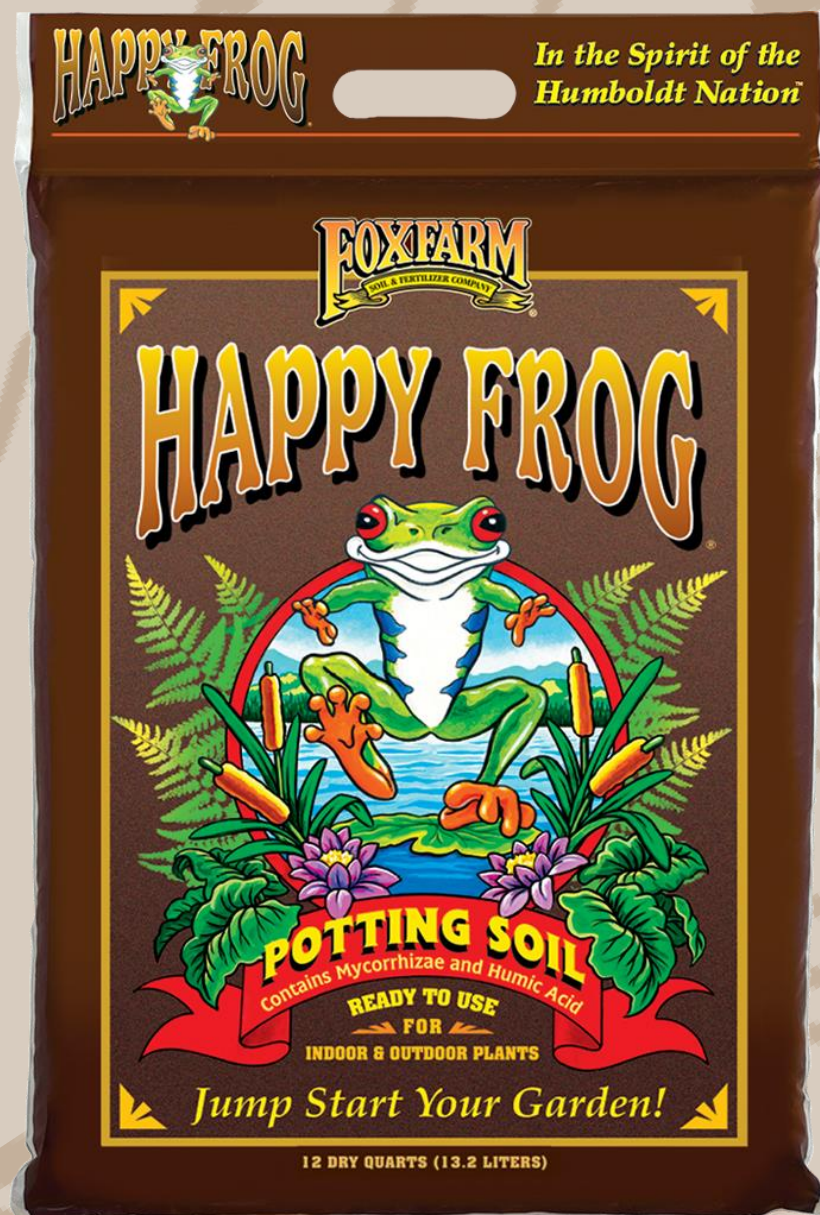
# Sowing – Materials



# Materials – “Organic” Soil Mixtures

## Recommend:

- OMRI Certified (<https://www.omri.org/>) or make your own.
- Avoid synthetic fertilizer, such as polycoated urea.
- Avoid added synthetic wetting agents, such as polyacrylamides.
- Compost should be hot composted or sterile to avoid weed seeds.
- Added mycorrhizae may be helpful.



Bloomington Hardware  
13.2 liters (~1/2 cu. Ft.), \$12.99



May's Greenhouse  
1 cu. Ft., \$9.99



Menards  
1 cu. Ft., \$7.99

# Seeds



Barb Martin



Barb Martin



Barb Martin



Barb Martin



Barb Martin

New England Aster (\*C60)  
*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

Mist Flower (\*C60 D)  
*Conoclinium coelestinum*

Wild Senna (\*C10 H I)  
*Senna hebecarpa*

Cup Plant (\*C60)  
*Silphium perfoliatum*

Bottlebrush Grass (\*A)  
*Elymus hystrix*

**\*Code per Prairie Moon Nursery. See <https://www.prairiemoon.com/blog/How-to-Germinate-Native-Seeds>**

# Materials – Coarse Sand



Lowes  
\$3.58

## *Why Cover with sand?*

- Helps keep seeds moist
- Protects from hard rains
- Allows a little light in
- Grittiness of sand avoids surface caking



## *How to use sand?*

- Not all seeds will need covering, some need light to germinate, e.g., Cardinal Flower. Follow germination code guidance.
- Cover seeds to the depth of the thickness of the seed.

# Materials – Gillian's Make Your Own Mix

- Commercial potting soil (she uses FoxFarm's Happy Frog)
- Perlite
- Compost
- Decomposed leaf litter/wood chips
- Sphagnum moss (For the moss, she has used the moss left over from bare root trees and shrubs that have been shipped to her.)
- Mix all ingredients together and adjust the friability and particle size according to whether she's doing seedlings, shrubs, trees, etc.



Notes: Adjust quantities in relation to your needs. Soft and hardwood cuttings need moisture and oxygen. This mixture of elements helps you to achieve the right balance. Mix is suitable for up-potting perennials. For seed starting she uses a larger ratio of commercial soil to the other elements. Very small seeds start off best in a commercial mix.



# The Process – Sowing



Fill pot to rim and press the soil down so it is firm



Sprinkle seed on top of soil



Cover with coarse sand to the depth of thickness of seed



Label, push deep into pot, and water



Provide protection



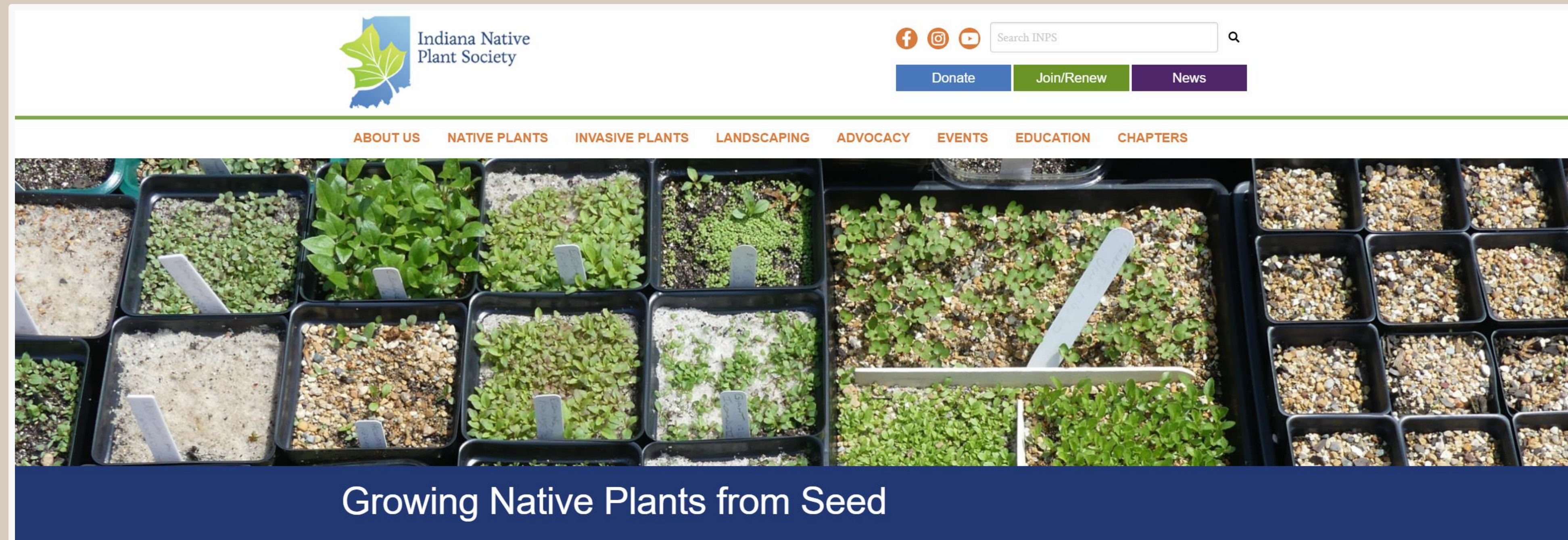
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# *Resources*



# Native Seed Resources

We have an abundance of resources covering all aspects of collecting, preparing and growing native seed.

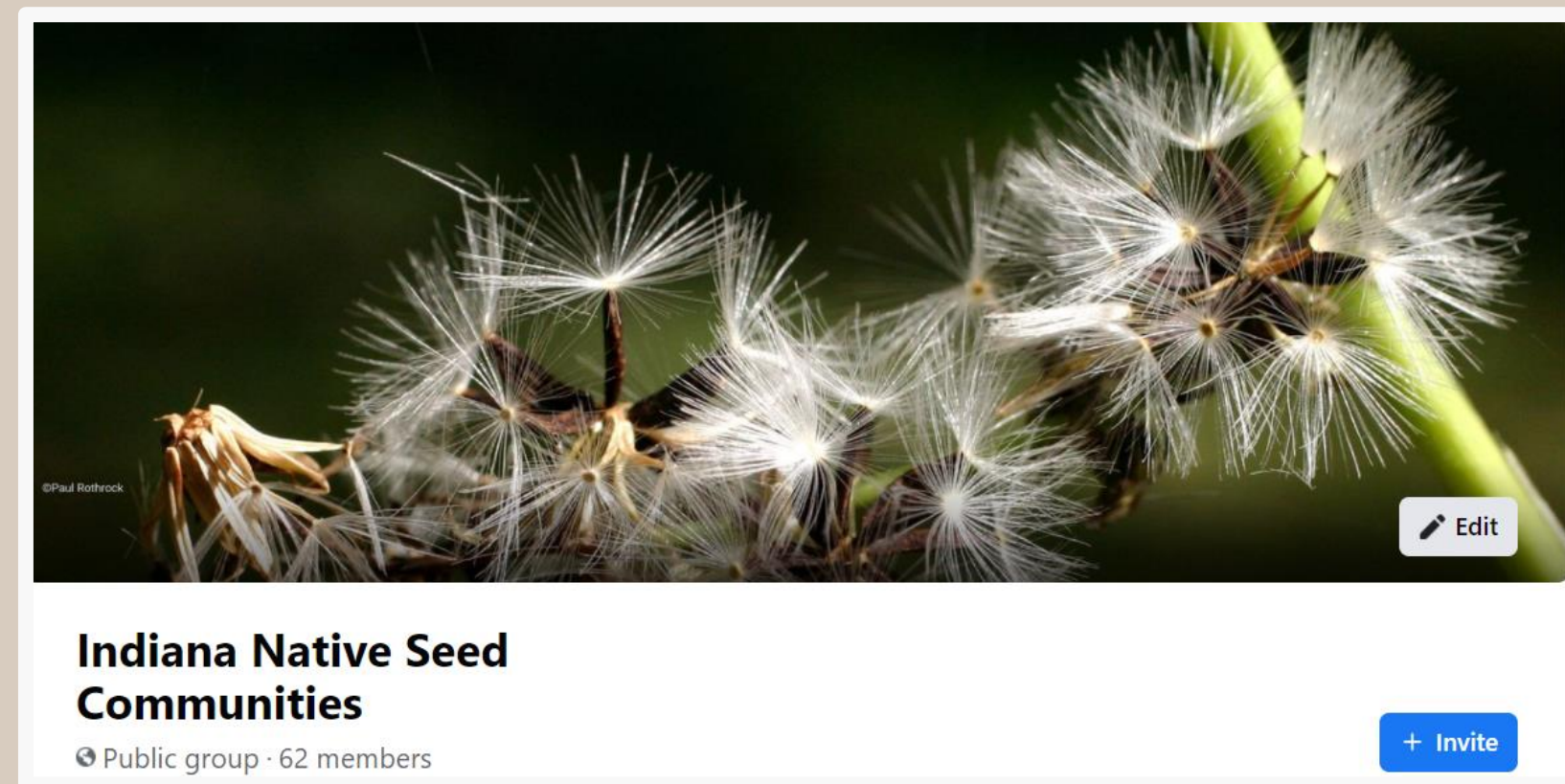


For those who would like to learn more about *Native Seed Communities*, check out our information on Indiana Native Plant Society's website <https://indiananativeplants.org/a-pilot-project-indiana-native-seed-communities/>.

# GET INVOLVED

Join in on the discussion at our new Facebook group,  
*Indiana Native Seed Communities*

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/525266728469540>



**No *Native Seed Community* in your area?**

**Why not start one!**

**Contact Bill [seed@indiananativeplants.org](mailto:seed@indiananativeplants.org)**

**if you want to help “grow” the program**

**In your region.**



# Get Involved – MC-IRIS



*MC-IRIS works with landowners, educators, researchers, and agencies all over the county to protect our diverse natural areas from Invasive species. Check out our website <https://mc-iris.org/contact-us.html>!*

*Contact Gillian [gfield104@gmail.com](mailto:gfield104@gmail.com) if you would like to join us at our meetings, workdays or educational events to be part of the solution!*

