

Southborough Open Space Preservation Commission

Winter Sow Program

As part of our Native Plant-Native Pollinator Initiative the Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC) has partnered with both the Southborough Library and the Southborough Open Land Foundation (SOLF). We have installed Pollination Preservation Gardens at SOLF's Beals Preserve and on the Library grounds. We also provide activities and programming about the importance of preserving pollination systems. This Winter Sow activity is one such program. Many of the seeds being offered were grown in the gardens at the Library and on the Beals Preserve.

WHAT IS WINTER SOW?

You can have beautiful flowers while helping our most at risk pollinators. Our native plants have co-evolved with New England weather patterns with most native plants requiring a period of repeated freezing and thawing for their seeds to break dormancy and germinate.

The OSPC Winter Sow Program allows you to order free seeds, and then provides programming and resources to show you how to plant in milk jugs so that you will have wonderful native plants next summer.

Using this simple method of planting in milk jugs that are then placed outside over the winter, you will be amazed with the bounty of native plants even the most inexperienced gardener can grow for their gardens with extras to share with friends. No gardening experience necessary.

50 varieties of seeds are offered this year. Go to the OSPC webpage and use the Seed List to select which plants you want seeds from. Then go to the Eventbrite link to place your seed order.

Seed pick-up will be drive-through on February 5th at Southborough's Cordaville Hall. Details provided when you register on Eventbrite.

There will be an optional in-person Winter Sow Workshop on Sunday January 5th where you will make and plant your milk jug. Registration is required and link is on the OSPC Web page.

You should start collecting milk jugs now – 1 or 2 for each species you order.

This program is part of the Southborough Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC) Native Plant /- Native Pollinator Initiative. The OSPC has been working with Dr. Robert Gegear, Assistant Professor of Biology UMass Dartmouth, since 2015 when he adopted Breakneck Hill Conservation Land as his first research. Dr. Gegear had discovered one of Massachusetts most at risk species of bumblebees while on a site visit at the invitation of the OSPC.

Dr. Gegear's research has resulted in a plant list for at-risk pollinators. All of the seeds being offered for the Winter Sow Program are on his plant list and the plants will help preserve our biodiversity and our local ecosystem.