

The Seed Collection

Our [seed collection](#), which is managed by Chantal Guiraud who lives in Montpellier, is open to members of organisations belonging to Mediterranean Gardening International, and to members of the Mediterranean Garden Society. The list is updated twice each year with seeds provided by Chantal and contributed by members.

Chantal writes:

Although we don't ask you to send in seed when you make an order, it's obvious that this free service will only work well if members contribute fresh seed each year. It isn't necessary to send in large quantities of each type of seed and there are no date limits for contributing or for ordering seeds. When sending or ordering seeds, please indicate in your email or letter, the name of the MG gardening association to which you belong.

Here is a list of the new seeds added in July 2020:

<i>Acanthus mollis</i>
<i>Achillea sp.</i>
<i>Adenium obesum</i>
<i>Adiantum hispidulum</i>
<i>Albuca namaquensis</i>
<i>Allium roseum</i>
<i>Allium triquetrum</i>
<i>Alyogyne huegelii</i>
<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>
<i>Asclepias sp.</i>
<i>Asparagus aethiopicus (syn. Asparagus sprengeri)</i>
<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>
<i>Aurinia saxatilis</i>
<i>Baptisia australis</i>
<i>Begonia dregei</i>
<i>Cedrus libani</i>
<i>Citrus medica</i>
<i>Cordyline australis</i>
<i>Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora</i>
<i>Crocus goulimyi</i>
<i>Crupina crupinastrum</i>
<i>Cyclamen persicum</i>
<i>Dasyilirion leiophyllum</i>
<i>Dianthus giganteus</i>
<i>Digitalis lanata</i>
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i>
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>
<i>Eriogonum grande var. rubescens</i>
<i>Freesia laxa (red form)</i>

<i>Freesia laxa</i> (salmon with red spots)
<i>Fuchsia boliviana</i>
<i>Gasteria baylissiana</i>
<i>Gasteria obliqua</i>
<i>Gladiolus tristis</i>
<i>Habranthus robustus</i>
<i>Habranthus tubispathus</i>
<i>Hakonechloa macra</i>
<i>Kirengeshoma palmata</i>
<i>Muscari armeniacum</i>
<i>Muscari latifolium</i>
<i>Nigella ciliaris</i>
<i>Onosma graeca</i>
<i>Ornithogalum candicans</i>
<i>Phlomis lychnitis</i>
<i>Ranunculus gramineus</i>
<i>Ruellia makoyana</i>
<i>Sabal minor</i>
<i>Sabal palmetto</i>
<i>Salvia africana-caerulea</i>
<i>Salvia farinacea</i> 'Blue Bedder'
<i>Salvia lyrata</i> 'Purple Knockout'
<i>Salvia patens</i>
<i>Salvia pinnata</i>
<i>Salvia scabra</i>
<i>Salvia splendens</i> 'Yvonne's Giant'
<i>Senna occidentalis</i>
<i>Styrax hemsleyanus</i>
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>
<i>Tecoma capensis</i>
<i>Tellima grandiflora</i>
<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>
<i>Trifolium rubens</i>

This list of new types of seed includes significant contributions from the Château Pérouse in the Gard, from David Tivol, president of the Californian Horticultural Society and from Sally Razelou who manages the MGS garden at Sparoza.

The list includes 626 taxa, so to assist you in making a selection I've highlighted some true biennials which you can sow straight away:

- Campanulas, and in particular *Campanula pyramidalis* which tolerates alkaline soils and our Mediterranean climate.
- *Digitalis lanata*

- *Lunaria annua* (honesty) which, despite its name is a biennial. There is a choice of several cultivars. Note that plants produced from these cultivars will be true to the mother plant.
- *Onosma graeca*
- *Salvia sclarea*, which I cannot recommend more highly. A superb plant which will seed itself throughout the garden!
- *Scaligeria napiformis*, an attractive umbellifer from Crete.
- *Smyrniium perfoliatum*, edible, but needs to be planted in a cool situation.
- *Tragopogon porrifolius*, or wild salsify, has a beautiful deep pink flower with yellow stamens. Re-seeds abundantly.
- *Verbascum blattaria* f. *albiflora*

Then around the end of September or in early October you can sow seeds of plants from throughout the Mediterranean-climate world, for example:

- Achilleas
- *Alcea rosea* and *A. rugosa*, can be either sown directly into the garden in autumn or into seed trays in spring.
- *Ballota hirsuta* and *B. pseudodictamnus*
- *Caesalpinia gilliesii*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*
- Callistemons
- *Catananche caerulea*
- *Centranthus ruber*
- Seeds of all cistus varieties germinate better if they are scarified before sowing. Rub them between two pieces of sandpaper for a couple of minutes which will help break down the hard seed coat. Dormancy can also be broken by simulating the effect of fire – put the seeds in the oven at 150°C for 10 minutes.
- *Coronilla valentina* subsp. *glauca*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*
- *Dianthus* spp.
- *Dorycnium hirsutum* : sow the seeds after hot water treatment*
- *Echinops ritro*
- *Erigeron karvinskianus*
- *Eryngium yuccifolium*
- *Euphorbia bivonae*
- *Ferula communis*
- *Gaura lindheimeri*
- *Hesperaloe parviflora*
- *Iberis sempervirens*
- *Kniphofia* spp.
- *Lavandula* spp.
- *Dolichandra unguis-cati*
- *Marrubium supinum*
- *Medicago arborea*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*
- *Oenothera odorata* and *O. tetragona*
- *Phlomis* spp. These hybridise very easily so new plants may not be true to the mother plant.

- *Retama monosperma* and *R. sphaerocarp*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*. The germination rate of *Retama* quite is quite low, so improve your chances of success by scarifying the plant with a grinder to attack the hard, waterproof seed coat.
- *Ruta odorata*
- *Salvia interrupta*, *S. palaestina*, and *S. pomifera* are amongst the easiest of salvias to propagate.
- *Scabious* spp.
- *Sesbania punicea*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*.
- *Spartium junceum*: sow the seeds after hot water treatment*.
- *Stachys germanica*
- *Stipa* spp.
- *Teucrium* spp.
- *Tulbaghia violacea*
- *Verbena bonariensis* and *V. rigida*
- *Yucca brevifolia*

* Pour boiling water over the seeds and leave them overnight to swell up.

I've tried to provide a taster of some of the seeds you could try. Think about it during the summer, best done when relaxing on a chaise-longue. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you'd like some advice and I'll try my best to guide you.

There is a mine of technical information about propagating from seeds in Olivier Filippi's exceptional book, *The Dry Gardening Handbook*.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all our seed donors, without whose generosity we would not have such a varied and high-quality seed list. I don't need large quantities of seed, but please collect them on a dry day, when the seeds are mature, and clean them of any vegetable debris before sending.

To conclude, don't be discouraged if all your seeds don't germinate. Even some established nurserymen only get a 30 to 40 % germination rate for roses, for example. It's a good idea to sow seeds in two batches, half the packet in July or September and the other half in March. This will double your chances of success. And even if only one sturdy young plant emerges from a tray of seedlings it will be all the more precious in your eyes.

You may order up to 10 packets of seeds each year or 15 packets if you have contributed seed yourself. It is a good idea to add 3 or 4 alternatives to your order in case the ones you want are out of stock. Send your order either by post or [email](#) and don't forget to include your name and address.

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When ordering or donating seeds, you must ensure that:

- you are complying with your local regulations, international and national legislation regarding the distribution of plants and seeds.
- your choice of seeds does not include plants that are considered invasive* in your region. Consult your group for further information.

*Invasive plants are ones that are not native and usually introduced by man into places out of their natural range of distribution, where they become established and disperse, generating a negative impact on the local ecosystem and species.