

Seed to sapling

Newsletter



WELCOME

Hello! Welcome to the fifth edition of the Seed to Sapling Newsletter.

The number of species around to collect seeds and cuttings from drops over the Winter to just a few. So, the newsletter will be taking a short break until Spring, when we will be back with more helpful info, events and news for you. But don't worry, there's still plenty to do as tree planting season commences! And in the meantime, details of new events will be distributed via the newsletter mailing list. Sign up via our Tree Community page [here](#) if you haven't already.



Last months 'Growing Willows from Cuttings' session recording is now available on our Tree Community page, and on YouTube, click [here](#) to watch.

We still have plenty of drawstring bags for tree seed gathering, and germination box making kits for sowing seeds. If you are interested in collecting either of these, send me an [email](#).

As always, if you have any suggestions, questions or feedback please do get in touch and let me know. Happy reading!

Eva,

Community Conservation Officer

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



Last week we held three days of hedge laying training at Low Row, with community volunteers involved with [Sustainable Swaledale](#) and local landowners. A huge thankyou to Stephen and John for their expert knowledge, to Martin for letting us practice on your hedges, and to everyone that came along! It will be great to see these skills put into practice over the winter by the volunteers across Swaledale.

We held a seed stratification and sowing workshop in Clapham a few weeks ago. Thanks to everyone that came along and brought seeds with them! We filled 10 germination boxes with a huge range of species including Dog rose, Hawthorn, Guelder rose, Purging buckthorn, Elder, and Wild Privet. Some boxes have been taken home by volunteers to care for and the remainder have been taken to the nursery site in Clapham.



We are looking for volunteers to help look after these boxes at the nursery, if you are interested in helping please get in [touch](#)!

The tree nursery site in Clapham is now nearing completion as the tree tables have been built. Members of Sustainable Swaledale popped along for a visit to check out the progress and inspire future community nursery sites in Swaledale.





UPCOMING EVENTS

17th December, 1pm-2:30pm

'Leaving Home – moving your trees to their forever home'

Online webinar hosted by *The Tree Council*

Sign up for free, by clicking [here](#):

14th January, 6pm-7pm

'Growing together - learning from other Community Tree Nurseries'

Online webinar hosted by the *Fellowship of the Trees*

Sign up for free, by clicking [here](#):

TBC date and time

Hedgerow Planting Day, Kirkby Malham

TBC March

Tree Planting Day, Wild Share Wood - Settle

All events are open to all residents from the local communities. If you are not able to make one of the events closer to you or are interested in any of the other events, get in touch to book a place or ask any questions!



SEEDS TO COLLECT

- **Aspen** (from February)
- **Holly**
- **Juniper** (until early January)

You can also have a go at growing **holly**, **willows** and **poplar** from cuttings at this time of year.

How to Collect Seeds

- Only collect seeds if you have landowner permission to do so.
- For smaller fruits, pick seeds when they are ripe directly from the trees (where you can comfortably reach!)
- Larger fruits and nuts can be collected from the ground, but avoid any that have started to decay or look like they've been nibbled!
- The first seeds to drop often have limited success, so wait a few days for more to drop.
- Don't take too many seeds, they are an important food source for many animals.
- Take care not to disturb any wildlife, such as nesting birds.
- Collect different species in individual bags and label them with the location you have found them (what3words is useful for this), the date, and the species.
- Tree diseases and pests are now a serious threat to our woodlands, please ensure that you are aware of the risks and are thoroughly washing your footwear between different sites.
- Stratify your seeds as soon as you can.
- There are many different methods of seed stratification, so have a play around and see which method works for you! I have included some species-specific guidance below to help.

Aspen

- Generally a very hardy species, prefers poor, dry soils and harsh conditions
 - Seed pods will start to open when they are ready to collect.
1. Collect the seed pods as they start to open and place them in a paper bag. Leave the bag in a warm dry place for a few days until the pods rupture and the seeds drop out.
 2. Once extracted the seeds will deteriorate quickly, so sow them as soon as possible.
 3. Fill your germination tray 1/3 with equal quantities of compost and a coarse material such as coarse sand or fine gravel. Spread the seeds over the soil and cover with another 2-4cm of soil.
 4. Water the tray well and leave in a shady spot until the second spring!
- Aspen can have quite a poor success rate, but successful seeds will germinate very quickly! They might even be ready to plant out the following year.
 - Seedlings can be potted on once two sets of adult leaves have grown and the root has begun to appear.

Holly: Seeds

- Generally a very hardy species, prefers neutral to acidic, peaty soils.
- Berries will turn red when they are ready to collect.
- There are several methods for stratifying Holly seeds, here are a couple you can try:

Method 1:

Quicker and simpler but your seeds might take longer to grow and have lower germination success.

1. Prepare your germination tray by filling it 1/3 with equal quantities of compost and a coarse material such as coarse sand or fine gravel.
2. Scatter the berries over the soil and cover with another 2-4cm of soil.

Method 2:

Fiddly and will take a bit longer, but generally seeds will have higher germination success.

1. Mash the berries and then pass through a sieve to separate the seeds from the pulp. You can soak the seeds first to soften them, but be careful not to let them ferment.
 2. Holly seeds need to be sown straight away, so fill your germination tray 1/3 with equal quantities of compost and a coarse material such as coarse sand or fine gravel. Spread the seeds over the soil and cover with another 2-4cm of soil.
 3. Water the tray well and leave in a shady spot until the second spring!
- It will take two years to germinate, so be patient.
 - Seedlings can be potted on once two sets of adult leaves have grown and the root has begun to appear.

Holly: Cuttings

Two different kinds of cuttings can be used to grow trees from; hardwood and softwood.

- Softwood cuttings are taken from the trees recent growth. They are the greener, bendy ends of stems and branches.
- Hardwood cuttings are taken from the previous years' growth and are harder and more woody.

During the Autumn, you can grow holly from hardwood cuttings.

1. Measure a hardwood section of the stem, approximately 20cm in length.
2. At the bottom of the segment cut horizontally, 0.5cm below a leaf node.
At the top of the segment cut 0.5cm above a leaf node diagonally, so that any water runs away from the node and doesn't pool
3. Remove any leaves from the cutting.
4. Fill a tall pot e.g. a plant pot or large yogurt container with equal quantities of compost and a coarse material such as coarse sand or fine gravel.
5. Push the cutting into the soil at least halfway.
6. Water them well and leave in a shady spot until spring!

Juniper

Please note that juniper is susceptible to several diseases so be extra vigilant and ensure you have clean footwear, only collect from healthy plants and accurately record and monitor any seeds you grow.

- Likes dry, chalky and sandy soils, and they're unusual in their ability to tolerate both acid and alkaline conditions.
 - The berries (which are actually cones) turn blue when ready to be collected. Avoid picking when they are green. Cones are not always produced every year as they may take two seasons to ripen completely.
 - It can be difficult to grow juniper from seed so for more detailed information visit: [Growing Juniper](#)
1. The cones, holding one to three seeds, are very resinous and extraction of the seeds can be very difficult.
 2. One method is to use a blender with plenty of warm water to break up the cones but be careful not to damage the seeds.
 3. Leave the mixture to stand for a few minutes and the debris should float and any good seeds sink to the bottom.
 4. Then wash the seeds with detergent and take off any further debris and then leave the seed to dry before storing in paper bags.
 5. Before sowing, the seed should be soaked for two days and mixed with equal parts of sand and compost, one part seed to two parts compost mix. Add a layer of stones to your germination tray, followed by a layer of sand, then the seed-compost mix, then a layer of sand 2-3cm thick.
 6. Leave in a shady spot outdoors, keep moist and protect from wildlife until spring!
- It can take one-two years to germinate, so be patient.
 - Seedlings can be potted on once two sets of adult leaves have grown and the root has begun to appear.

Poplar

During the winter when the tree is dormant, cuttings can be taken from poplars.

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During the Autumn, you can grow poplar from hardwood cuttings.

1. Measure a hardwood section of the stem, approximately 20cm in length.
2. At the bottom of the segment cut horizontally, 0.5cm below a leaf node.
At the top of the segment cut 0.5cm above a leaf node diagonally, so that any water runs away from the node and doesn't pool.
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Willows

Willows grow very readily from cuttings, in fact some rooting hormones are made from willows.

There are lots of varieties of willow that grow in the Yorkshire Dales. If you are going to grow willows, focus on the native and rare species, for example:

- Bay willow
- Purple willow
- Eared willow
- Creeping willow
- Dark leaved willow
- Tea leaved willow

For more information about willows in the Dales, and how to grow them from cuttings, watch the video from our recent event on our webpage, [here](#).

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WITH THANKS

This project is supported by donations from our supporters and funding from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Sustainable Development Fund and the Defra Trees Call to Action Fund.

This fund was developed by Defra in partnership with the Forestry Commission and is being delivered by the Heritage Fund.

The Seed to Sapling project is also kindly supported by Beyondly's [Fund for Change](#).



Visit the [Tree Growing Community webpage](#) on our website for more information about the Seed to Sapling project, growing trees and previous editions of this newsletter.