

MISSION INVERTEBRATE

THE ROYAL PARKS

HOW TO MAKE SEED BALLS

Pollinating insects including bees, butterflies, moths, flies and beetles need nectar to drink. Wildflowers are a wonderful source of nectar, but unfortunately, there are far fewer wildflower meadows in the UK than there used to be. To help give pollinators a boost, The Royal Parks plant new areas of meadow where possible, and leave many areas of the parks unmown so that wildflowers can grow through the grass and provide the vital food source for these important invertebrates. You can sow your own little meadow, by making some simple seed balls. Have a go!



WHAT YOU NEED

- Air drying clay. Make sure it is organic, with no nylon fibres.



- Soil or compost.



- Wildflower seed.



- 1 Roll a ball of clay about the size of a bouncy ball. Use your thumb to make a hole in the middle to create a bowl. Don't go all the way through, like a doughnut.



- 2 Take a pinch of wildflower seed and place it into the hole you made in the clay.



- 3 Take a bigger pinch of soil or compost and place it into the hole on top of the seed. Close the clay over the hole with your thumb and index finger.

TOP TIP

If you don't have a suitable place at home to sow your seed ball, they make great gifts!



- 4 Mix the clay, compost and seeds together thoroughly by squeezing the seed ball (this is the really fun, messy bit!). Form back into a ball.

- 5 Store your seed balls in a cool, dark and dry place for about two days to harden.



- 6 Choose a sunny spot in the garden to sow your seed ball. Place them onto your chosen area, or plant in a pot of compost on a bright windowsill or balcony.

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Water the seeds regularly if the weather is dry. Your seeds should germinate (sprout) within a couple of weeks, depending on the weather - look for the tiny green shoots of life. They should flower in spring / summer.

i Seed balls are an easy way to garden for pollinators. Once sown, the clay and soil protects the seeds from being blown away by the wind and after a few weeks the seeds work their way into the ground below and take root.