

# **GARDEN FLOWER SEEDS**

## **A Pictorial Field Guide**

**Terry A. Woodger**



Universal-Publishers  
Boca Raton

*Garden Flower Seeds:  
A Pictorial Field Guide*

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Universal-Publishers  
Boca Raton, Florida  
USA • 2011

ISBN-10: 1-61233-041-X  
ISBN-13: 978-1-61233-041-9

[www.universal-publishers.com](http://www.universal-publishers.com)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Woodger, Terry A.

Garden flower seeds : a pictorial field guide / Terry A. Woodger.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-61233-041-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 1-61233-041-X (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Flowers--Seeds--Harvesting. 2. Seeds--Cleaning. 3. Flowers--Seeds--Storage. 4. Flowers--Seeds--Pictorial works. 5. Flower gardening. I. Title.

SB118.3.W66 2011

631.5'21--dc23

2011032344

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A book of this nature can not be written without the assistance of family and friends. I would like to acknowledge the following people who assisted in many ways to help make this book a reality.

First, I'd like to thank my wife and children for their support and encouragement, without which this book would never have been completed.

I'd also like to thank the following people for their assistance:

Andrew Leighton  
Clive and Cathy Grimshaw  
Colin and Shirly Cattle  
Eddy and Marion Pettifor  
Graham and Kathy Evans  
Jacqueline Weight  
Ron and Lynda Roundhill  
Tim and David Evans

**Disclaimer:**

Plants have many ways in which they protect themselves from damaging organisms. This protection is found in thorns, sap, toxins, etc. Although the collection, cleaning, and storage of seed can be a rewarding experience, the author takes no responsibility for injury or illness that results from these activities.



## CONTENTS

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Chapter 4: The Storage of Seed .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The Collection of Seed .....</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>References .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Garden Flowers.....</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Index.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Chapter 3: How to Thresh and Clean Seed ..</b>	<b>30</b>		



## INTRODUCTION

Seeds are an exciting and beautiful component of flower gardening. The vast gardens that can be created from just a handful of these treasures can give a great sense of achievement to a gardener.

Although some of these plants can propagate by other means, such as bulbs or division, seeds are the principal way in which garden flowers reproduce.

This book covers the basics involved in the collection, cleaning and storage of seeds. Although bulbs, corms, and other plant parts can be collected and stored, they are not covered here, so as to not detract from the focus of this volume.

As the number of plants grown in flower gardens is truly staggering, it is impossible to cover them all. In this field guide, we discuss the most common plant families, including examples of the types of seeds that may be encountered. Where possible, several genera within each family are discussed.

This book uses a system whereby plant family names are all written in capitals (AGAVACEAE), the common names that are not written within the text are in bold (**Agave**), and the

botanical names are written in italics (*Agave attenuata*).

In botany, it is the characteristics of the flowers that determine the genera and family to which a plant belongs. This can become extremely complicated, so this field guide makes no mention of the flower types or their individual differences.

Also discussed are a number of methods that can be utilized in the collection of seeds. No one method can be used to collect them all, so different techniques have been developed over time to successfully gather all of the species that are encountered, both in the home garden as well as in the field.

The same development of techniques applies to the cleaning of seeds. There are a number of ways in which common household items can be used effectively to clean seeds. Several of these items are explained in Chapter 3: How to Thresh and Clean Seed.

Storing seeds for use next season can be fraught with hidden problems, such as molds and seed-borers. Chapter 4: The Storage of Seed explains some appropriate methods and procedures that should be followed to avoid disappointment and loss of seed.

Most seeds collected from the garden are suitable for storage from one year to the next, and many of these can be successfully stored at home for many years.

Some elements to consider when collecting seeds are the quantity and the number of plants from which the seeds are collected.

Collecting seed from only one fruit on one plant over several seasons can have unforeseen consequences, such as only ending up with seeds from small fruit. This can produce smaller plants with smaller fruit.