



GUILDFORD SEED BANK

Local Seed Saving – Maintaining Biodiversity



ABOUT US

Established in 2021, we are a community project dedicated to saving and swapping seeds in the Guildford, Godalming and Farnham areas, and running the annual Seed Swap in Guildford.

Our mission is to preserve a wide diversity of plants, by growing, saving and sharing seeds – especially heritage and local varieties. We also want to help teach and encourage others to grow their own and save seeds.




2026



DORKING ECO HUB



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WHAT IS A
COMMUNITY SEED
BANK?

LIVING SEED BANK

Rare or local varieties are grown on each year for preservation and sharing at seed swaps

SEED SWAP LOCATIONS

Permanent set of drawers in Guildford and Godalming Libraries, seasonal in Haslemere Library – anyone can take and drop off seeds.

Dorking - tbc

ACCESS TO HEIRLOOM TYPES

Maintain a selection of varieties that are either hard to find or rare – not commercially grown



WHY SAVE SEEDS?



PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY

Each seed carries unique traits that help plants adapt to their environment and evolve over time.

UNIQUE VARIETIES

Preserve heirloom and rare plant varieties -many of which are no longer commercially available.

COST EFFECTIVE

Reduce the expense of buying expensive seed year on year.











FOOD SECURITY

We believe everyone should have access to seed to grow their own food, even if it is just a few herbs in a window box.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Promotes self-sufficiency, and fosters a connection with our land, soil and community.

GSB SEED DATABASE

 <p>Montezuma's Red Dwarf Bean (Shelling)</p> <p>Plant Type Dwarf Bean (Shelling)</p> <p>Description Productive semi-dwarf variety that will need supports to climb up (up to 3ft). An old variety - introduced in the 1850's that tolerates a wide range of soils and ...</p> <p>Picture </p> <p>Cultivation As other beans these are frost tender so advisable to wait until late April-May for planting out. The pods are left to dry before harvesting and can be easily sav...</p> <p>Location Grown Farncombe</p> <p>Seed available Yes</p> <p>Latin Name Phaseolus vulgaris</p> <p>Seed Saving Notes None</p>	 <p>Jersey Devil Tomato (cordon)</p> <p>Plant Type Tomato (cordon)</p> <p>Description A late season heirloom variety originally from Metuchen in New Jersey. Produces large bright red, pointy ended fruits that are very meaty and are ideally suited to ...</p> <p>Picture </p> <p>Cultivation Sow in March/April indoors and plant out in May. It will need staking as the fruits can get quite heavy. There always seems to be quite a variation in size of the fruit...</p> <p>Location Grown Farncombe Stoughton</p> <p>Seed available Limited</p> <p>Latin Name Solanum lycopersicum</p> <p>Seed Saving Notes Very few seeds per fruit, so worth selecting the biggest and best specimens to keep the seed from.</p>	 <p>Rosakrone Pea</p> <p>Plant Type Pea</p> <p>Description Heirloom variety originally from Sweden that produces a 'crown' of pink-white flowers at the top of 3-4ft high stems, followed by a cluster of pea pods that a...</p> <p>Picture </p> <p>Cultivation As with most peas, they can be direct sown but if mice or pigeons are a problem the sow in deep modules/root trainers and plant out when a decent siz...</p> <p>Location Grown Farncombe</p> <p>Seed available No</p> <p>Latin Name Pisum sativum</p> <p>Seed Saving Notes These fared badly during the very hot and dry spells in summer 2023, which severely hampered pollination. Do better in cooler, damper summers.</p>	 <p>Black From Tula Tomato (cordon)</p> <p>Plant Type Tomato (cordon)</p> <p>Description Heirloom variety from Eastern Europe which is now hard to find in the UK. Large dark red-brown fruits which have an exceptional smoky rich flavour. Seed ...</p> <p>Picture </p> <p>Cultivation Sow from late February/March through to April. They are sturdy plants but will need staking as the fruits can get very large and heavy. Once they start ripening che...</p> <p>Location Grown Farncombe Stoughton</p> <p>Seed available Yes</p> <p>Latin Name Solanum lycopersicum</p> <p>Seed Saving Notes As for other tomatoes, scoop out the seeds from the best specimens and put into a jar of water for three days. Rinse off through a sieve and spread to dry o...</p>	 <p>Maras Biber Chilli</p> <p>Plant Type Chilli</p> <p>Description A fairly hot Turkish chilli that is frequently dried and used as a spice. It has a slightly fruity, sweet taste and does best in a greenhouse, but was grown direct in th...</p> <p>Picture </p> <p>Cultivation Sow seed early in the year (February) and they will need heat to germinate so a heated propagator is ideal. Germination can be very good in pure vermiculite. ...</p> <p>Location Grown Farncombe</p> <p>Seed available Limited</p> <p>Latin Name Capsicum anuum</p> <p>Seed Saving Notes To keep the strains pure then the plants will need to be isolated or hand pollinated (which can give very good yields).</p>
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Searchable index of key varieties being grown and maintained along with cultivation and seed saving details



<http://guildfordseedbank.org.uk/seedlist2026.html>



OPEN POLLINATED SEEDS

ADAPTABLE

Genetically variable and therefore able to adapt to climate change and environmental conditions, evolving with them.

FOOD PLANT BIODIVERSITY

80% loss in Europe in the past century. Balances monoculture.

CAN BE SAVED

Everyone from farmers to allotment holders to gardeners can save and maintain

NON-GM OR HYBRID

Seed saved will be true to type and can be used to develop local varieties



LOSS OF DIVERSITY

[1814] A catalogue of the most superb and largest collection, of fruit trees ever formed, now on view at the exhibition of above five thousand sorts of hardy fruit trees, which are from nine to upwards of twenty-two years old, and in a full bearing state; and of the experimental, agricultural and horticultural grounds. Situated in the Portsmouth Road, about a quarter of a mile beyond Vauxhall Turnpike.

Source : RHS Digital Collections

2026

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No.	No.
1351 Apple, Casimir	1391 Apple, Mary Herbert
1362 Apple, George Graham	1392 Gooseberries, various
1353 Apple, Koenig	1393 Apple, Calius
1354 Apple, Benjamin Robins	1394 Apple, Sir Robert Filmer
1355 Apple, Timoleon	1395 Pear, Stephen Duck
1356 Apple, Puffendor	1396 Pear, Nero
1357 Apple, Maimonides	1397 Pear, Dr. James Lind
1358 Apple, Thomas Gainsborough	1398 Pear, Lafitou
1359 Apple, Elichman	1399 Pear, Thomas Parr
1360 Apple, William Prynne	1400 Pear, Simon Ockley
1361 Apple, Stephen Chauvin	1401 Pear, John Ogiloy
1362 Plum, Kircher, fine for sauce and preserving	1402 Pear, Thomas Hardine
1363 Plum, Rymer	1403 Apples, Pears, Plums, Cherries, &c. planted thus closely, that their qualities may be ascertained before larger space is allotted them
1364 Pear, Massilon	1404 Various sorts
1365 Plum, Henry Treton	1405 Apples, numerous varieties
1366 Plum, Cluberina	1406 Pear, Dr. Francis Hare
1367 Pear, Cimarosa	1407 Apple, Patrick Forbes
1368 Cherry, Desaguliers	1408 Pear, William Brouncker
1369 Pear, Graaf	1409 Apple, a tree much injured by the Coccus
1370 Pear, Gibelin	1410 Pear, John Aylmer
1371 Pear, Dr. James Forster	1411 Pear, Porsenna
1372 Cherry, Fienus	1412 Apple, Palæologus, an Autumn table one
1373 Pear, Baronius	1413 Apple, John Hardouin
1374 Pear, Nani	1414 Apple, Dr. Andrew Gifford
1375 Pear, Reginald Pole	1415 Apple, Camerarius
1376 Pear, Theocritus	
1377 Pear, Hemelar	
1378 Apple, Thomas Harmer	

CLIMBING PEA : CHAMPION OF ENGLAND

Bred by William Fairbeard
in Teynham, Kent around
1843.

Grows to 8-10ft and very
productive.


Cultivated by Charles
Darwin and recognized in
the Journal of Horticulture,
1876 as the *best pea*.

Almost became extinct
when mechanized
harvesting came in.

2026



DORKING ECO HUB

A close-up photograph of a honeybee on a white raspberry flower. The bee is positioned on the right side of the flower, facing left, with its head buried in the center. The flower has five white petals and numerous stamens. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting other leaves and flowers. The lighting is bright, highlighting the textures of the bee and the flower.

75% OF GLOBAL
FOOD CROPS
DEPEND ON INSECT
POLLINATION

GROWING DIVERSE FLOWERS FOR POLLINATORS

ANNUAL FLOWERS

Cornflowers, Cosmos, Larkspur, Calendula, *Verbena bonariensis*, Ox-eye daisies, Scabious

HERBS

Dill/Fennel, Chives, Parsley, Marjoram, Oregano, Hyssop, Winter Savory

FRUIT

Raspberries, Blackberries, Strawberries





INSECT BIODIVERSITY

CREATE YOUR OWN FLOWER MIX

Save seed from a mix of flowers that will provide food over a longer period.

RECORD WHAT YOU FIND

UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS)

BeeWalk – national bumblebee recording scheme

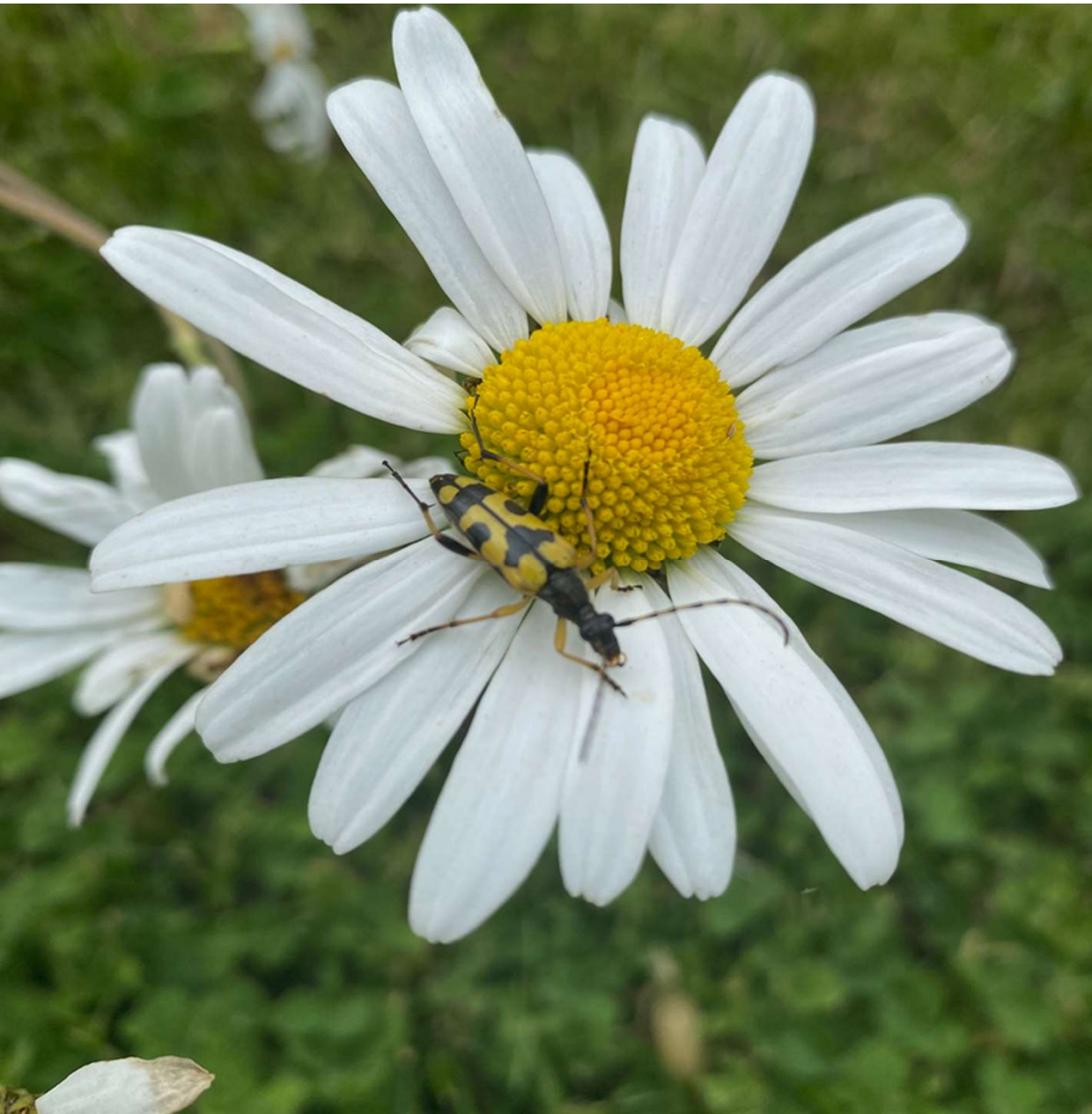
iRecord – more casual observations

LEFT

Thick thighed flower beetle (*Oedemera nobilis*)

RIGHT

Mason Bee (*Osmia bicornis*)



PLANT FLOWERS TO ATTRACT BENEFICIAL INSECTS

Umbellifer family : dill, fennel, coriander - *good for hoverflies and parasitic wasps*

Daisy family: e.g. marigolds, calendula – ladybirds and hoverflies

AVOID PESTICIDES

Do not spray chemicals as these will kill the beneficial insects

PLANT NEAR CROPS

Interplant near vegetable crops to encourage immediate control of pests such as aphids

LEFT

Long Horn Beetle (*Rutpela maculata*)



SIMPLE FLOWERS

Right: Foxgloves
seed freely,
flowering in the
second year.
Red-tailed bumblebee
(*Bombus lapidarius*)

Left: Larkspurs,
both pink and blue
forms will self seed
and grow well under
most conditions.

*White tailed bumble
bee (*Bombus lucorum*)*

DORKING ECO HUB





DAHLIAS

GROW SINGLE FLOWERED VARIETIES

Choose varieties with large open simple flowers – e.g. *Bishop* series

LONG FLOWERING SEASON

Bloom from midsummer to the first frosts. Flowers are a magnet for bees

EASY TO GROW FROM SEED

Allow seed heads to dry completely before harvesting and separating out the seed.



BAD FOR
POLLINATORS

FLOWER STRUCTURE

Flowers are inaccessible to bees due to large double flowers and little nectar.

BRED FOR AESTHETIC PROPERTIES

Grow a mix of ornamental and insect friendly dahlias or interplant with other species.

PROPAGATION VIA CUTTINGS

Few if any seeds produced.

Dahlia 'Café au lait'

FLOWER SEED SAVING



WHAT SHOULD I SAVE SEED FROM?



DISTINCTIVE

Does it have traits you want to preserve for the next growing season? Is it in danger of being lost?



OPEN POLLINATED

Insect or wind pollinated – not enforced pollination or in-breeding. (Not an F1 hybrid)



TASTE

Does it taste nice, and do you/others enjoy eating it?



RELIABLE

Has it coped with local conditions/ extreme weather conditions?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MORE ABOUT SEEDS

[Welcome - Open Pollinated Seeds \(open-pollinated-seeds.org.uk\)](https://open-pollinated-seeds.org.uk)

[Seed Sovereignty – A biodiverse and ecologically sustainable seed system \(seedsovereignty.info\)](https://seedsovereignty.info)

[LONDON FREEDOM SEED BANK – A network of food growers and gardeners in London dedicated to saving, storing and sharing open-pollinated seed](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Quality Vegetable Seeds from The Real Seed Catalogue UK. \(realseeds.co.uk\)](https://realseeds.co.uk)

[Garden Organic | The Heritage Seed Library](#)

[Bumblebee surveying and monitoring - Bumblebee Conservation Trust](#)

THANK YOU

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Register for the GSB newsletter



HEIRLOOM VARIETIES



2025



DORKING ECO HUB



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