Help spread flowers that are native to the North Eastern United States! Whether you plant them in your garden or in a field, along the road or in a pot on your balcony, you will be doing Mother Nature a favor. Late blooming **Echinacea** is very attractive to many species of bees and butterflies that are native to our area and feed on the nectar. Birds love the seeds!

If you choose to sow these seeds in the wild, try to follow the instructions to some degree to enhance the chances that the seeds will take.

Contents: Echinacea Seeds
(Echinacea Purpurea)

Sow outdoors in the fall, or in spring when light frost is still possible.
(Needs cold stratification)
Sow 1/2” deep, space plants at least 18 inches apart.
Well drained soil of any kind.
Full sun to partial shade.
Seeds germinate in 10-20 days.

Echinacea

Echinacea (Purple Coneflower) grows in the wild in open rocky prairies and plains. It is beloved by bees and butterflies, among them: Monarchs, Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, Silver-spotted Skippers, Red Admirals, Pear Crescents and Black Swallowtails. Birds, especially finches, feed on the seed in fall.

Echinacea also has a long history of being used as medicine to increase immunity, especially against cold and flu viruses and pathogenic bacteria. Its antimicrobial activity promotes wound healing and its anti-inflammatory property makes it useful in the treatment of upper respiratory inflammations, skin rashes, and swellings due to insect bites.

The medicinal properties of this common wildflower were widely known to the Native Americans, who used the roots in many of their herbal preparations. Prepare a healing tea at home to improve your immunity against diseases and to combat bacterial and viral infections.

Echinacea is easy to grow from nursery stock, seed or division. Sow outdoors 1/2 inch deep when a light frost is still possible. Seeds will germinate in 10-20 days. Flowers reliably bloom the first year from seed if sown early.

Echinacea is not very particular about soil, but it needs good drainage. It is tolerant of partial shade, but happiest in a sunny location.

To grow echinacea from seeds, cold stratification is required. One way to do this is sowing the seeds out in the garden or in containers in late fall, and allowing winter to provide the dormancy the seeds require before germination. The seedlings will emerge in spring. But if you want to get large flowering plants in the very first season, give them a head start by starting the seeds indoors. Place the seeds in a wet tissue paper or a wad of sphagnum moss and store them in a box in the refrigerator for 6-8 weeks. Sow them in seed cups afterward and transplant the seedlings in spring. Leave the plants standing after they have dried out in fall, so the birds can eat the seeds.