

**Aims:**

Help reseed and restore riverbanks with native flowers and grasses after alien species have been removed with your home-made native seed paper.

**You will need:**

- Used paper / egg cartons
- 2 Buckets / washing up bowls
- Blender
- Cookie cutters
- Tray (to work on)
- Paper towels (or cloths/rags)
- Sponges (washing up sponges are perfect)
- Native wildflower seeds

**Introduce:** Ask the group what can be done to help riverbanks recover after alien plants have died back in winter or have been removed.

**Explain:** One of the biggest problems with invasive alien plants are the bare riverbanks they leave behind when they die back over winter or have been removed. Bare riverbanks are vulnerable to erosion and provide great growing spaces for invasive plants and their seeds the following year - allowing them to spread further.

Reseeding bare soil on riverbanks helps restore native plant diversity and can help suppress invasive plant seedlings coming through next spring.

**Instructions:**

1. Tear the paper and / or egg cartons into small pieces (ideally around 3cm<sup>2</sup>). Place in the bucket, add water and leave to soak for a few hours (or overnight)
2. Put 1-2 handfuls of the soggy paper at a time into the hand blender and, if needed add a splash of water, and whiz to form paper pulp – fill another bucket with the pulp. It should be the consistency of a thick soup.
3. On the tray, place a cookie cutter onto a folded paper towel/cloth and spoon a little paper pulp into it.
4. Use a sponge to gently blot and press the pulp to remove as much water as possible.
5. Add a sprinkle of native wildflower seeds to the pulp.
6. Remove the cookie cutter and cover with another paper towel and press flat (so around 0.5 cm deep), squeezing more water out.
7. Put the seed paper somewhere warm to dry completely.
8. Once the seed paper is dry you can plant them into bare soil. Either just push them into the soil or use a hand trowel to loosen the soil if necessary.
9. Water where you plant to help germination – and wait!!

**Do more:**

At the end of summer collect your own wildflower seed for use next spring. [Advice for collecting seeds.](#) Ensure you collect only native seeds for planting out in the countryside.

**Handy notes:**

You can make these little seed paper parcels in groups or individually and plant them in bare areas of ground by the river, in your own garden or in school grounds.

Often groups will be happy to distribute free packs of seeds for use.

**Sources of wildflower seeds**

[Grow Wild](#) – give out free seed kits each spring.

[Just Bee Drinks](#) – sign up for free native seed pack.