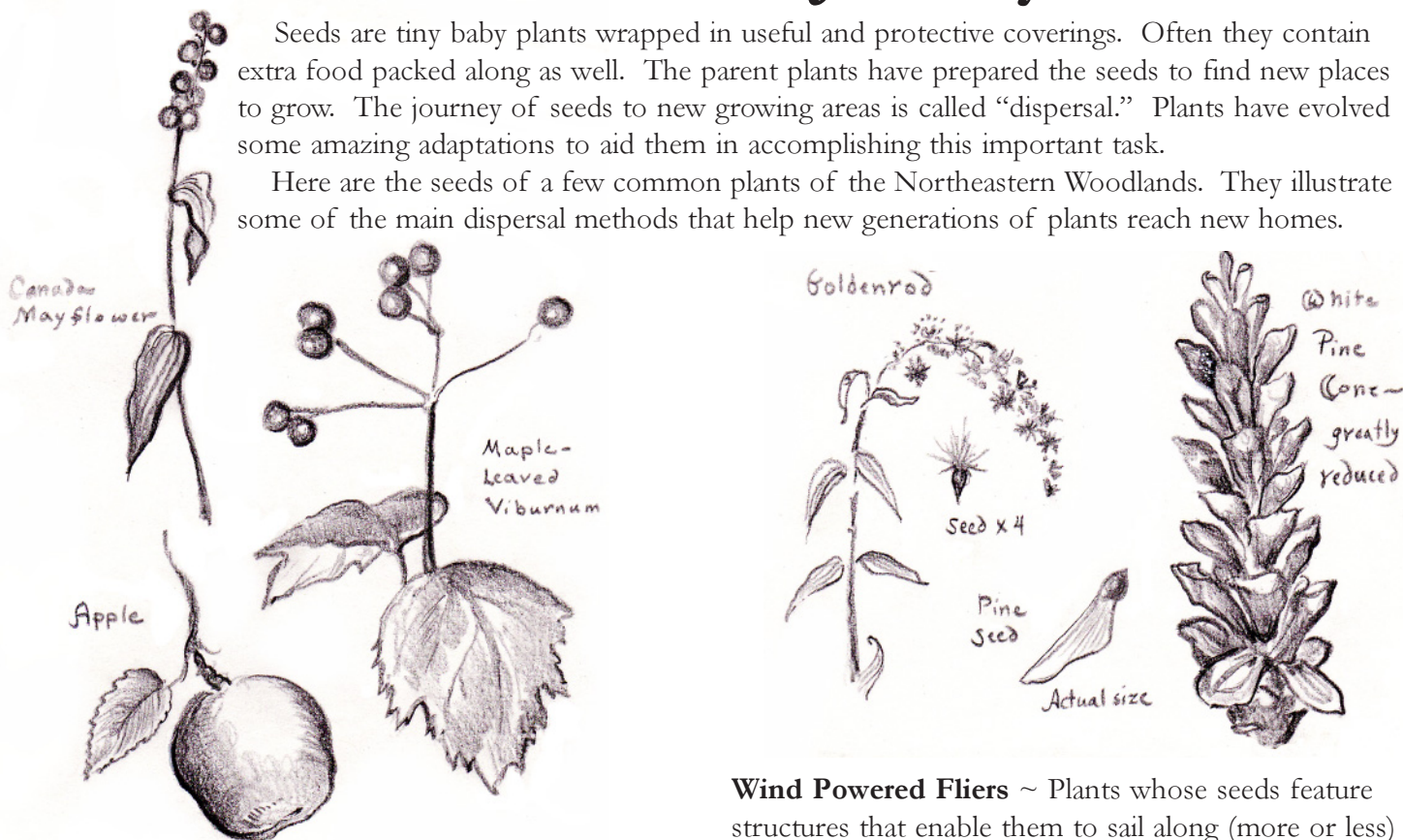


# Seeds on a Journey

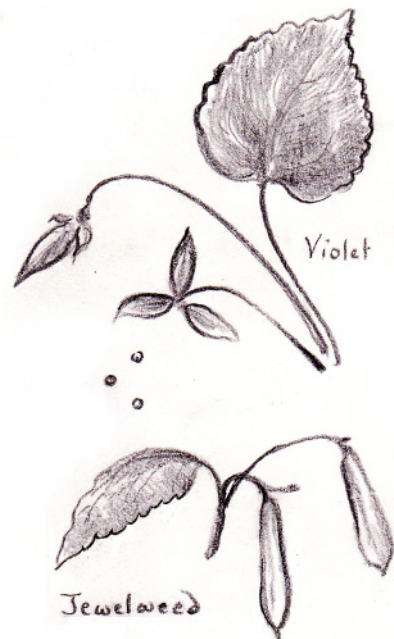
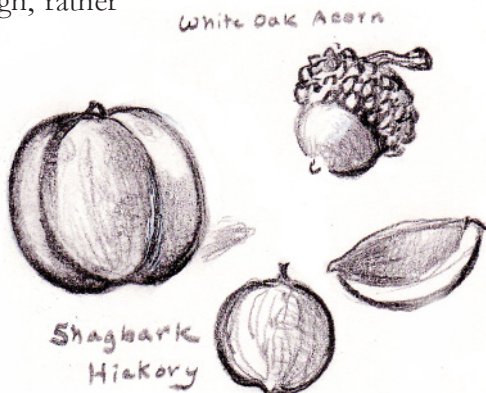
Seeds are tiny baby plants wrapped in useful and protective coverings. Often they contain extra food packed along as well. The parent plants have prepared the seeds to find new places to grow. The journey of seeds to new growing areas is called “dispersal.” Plants have evolved some amazing adaptations to aid them in accomplishing this important task.

Here are the seeds of a few common plants of the Northeastern Woodlands. They illustrate some of the main dispersal methods that help new generations of plants reach new homes.



**Tasty Travelers** ~ Plants with edible fruits. Inside the fruits are seeds! These plants rely upon mobile, hungry animals (including birds and humans) for transportation and deposition (or actual planting) of the tough, rather indigestible seeds.

**Wind Powered Fliers** ~ Plants whose seeds feature structures that enable them to sail along (more or less) on currents of air.



**Armored Seeds** ~ Plants with protective coverings that ward off small seed predators. These can roll with gravity or be carried away by co-evolved animals such as squirrels or blue jays who tend to store food and be rather forgetful...

**Jack-in-the-Box Seeds** ~ Plants with self-propelled seed scattering structures. These pop or explode and send the seeds flying.

**Hitchhikers** ~ Plants whose seeds have hooks or barbs, etc., that catch on animals' fur or feathers and are carried to new places in this way.

Edith Pucci Couchman © 2011

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