

PLANTING A MAGNOLIA FROM SEED

Walter Reeves, The Georgia Gardener

Planting a magnolia from seed is relatively simple... but remember that the offspring of the beautiful tree in your front yard may not always resemble the parent. Although magnolia flowers usually pollinate themselves, there is always the chance that pollen from a mongrel magnolia will be introduced by the beetles which help transfer pollen from flower to flower.

First, collect the magnolia cones in September - October, when the red seeds are swollen and fleshy. Rub the cone gently to dislodge several seed. Soak the seed overnight in water.

Rub the seeds with your hand against a rough surface, like a brick or cinderblock. The black true seeds will separate from the red seed coats.

Plant immediately one inch deep in a sunny bed. Cover the bed with a piece of chicken wire to prevent squirrels from digging up the seedlings in spring.

When seedlings are twelve inches tall, the wire can be removed and the seedlings transplanted to their permanent growing spot.

