

Propagation of the Franklinia is a Tricky Matter

“The seed of Franklinia are ripe when the spherical pods crack open. Around Philadelphia this is usually in late November or early December. The pods crack in a zig-zag fashion and the seeds are then loose and fall out fairly fast.

You can store the seeds dry under refrigeration for planting in the spring. They are more likely to sprout and grow into healthy seedlings in the spring. The seeds benefit from stratification, which is usually done by mixing them with peat moss or a peaty soil mix, very slightly moist and refrigerating them for a month to 6 weeks before sowing them. This imitates a cool winter dormant period.

Our Franklinia here stopped blooming in early September, largely as a result of drought. But some years ours will keep blooming into October, even as the leaves change color.”

Joel T. Fry

Curator, Bartrams Garden, Philadelphia

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