

## How I played with Seed Paper: A Playful Foray of Discovery

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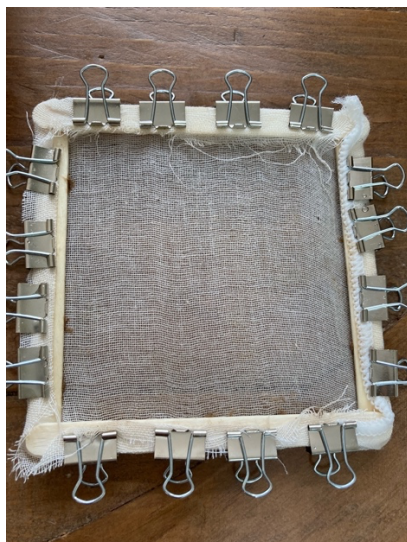
OK, so to begin with, I need must share my inspiration. Whilst on a recent trip through northern England, I was given a sweet gift by a new friend of seed paper cards. I was awestruck and instantly entranced. What a gift!! For many years I engaged my students in hand-made papermaking using petals, seeds, the odd this or that. But I never thought of planting the paper with seeds embedded!! Wow! Life is like that. You never know where your inspiration will come from!!

So, of course, I was intent upon experimenting with the process...and, better yet, as a participant in the [www.VerdancyProject.com](http://www.VerdancyProject.com) seed project, why not attempt to create seed paper as my submission?

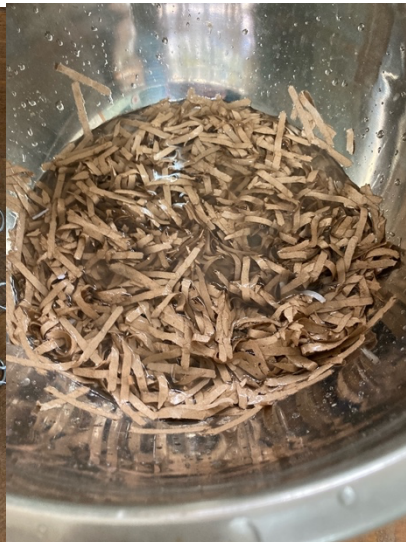
First, I found a great YouTube video about Seed Paper Making, and there is a plethora of videos you can google on the topic. You can use cheesecloth or fine screen without a frame. A frame helps but actually you can do without one. I made a small frame using popsicle sticks that worked for a while but fell apart. So, the small piece of cheesecloth was fine because when I set the piece of paper on the towel, I could roll it off easier that way.

I was a stickler, though it made it less aesthetically pleasing, to use only unbleached paper bags to shred and use for my pulp. Because everything from the pulp to the finished product needed to be (my intention) completely compostable, earth-friendly and recyclable. The seed paper will go into the ground, and I didn't want anything harmful going into the soil. I used regular paper bags but didn't like the dark color, so I switched to organic, compostable sandwich bags that contained the seeds I'd collected from our yard. That way, I felt good about repurposing them!

Here's photos that will help show the process:



Cloth screen



shredded paper soaking



water and paper in blender



Blending fun!

Pouring pulp to drain

Pressing out water



Seeds in pulp

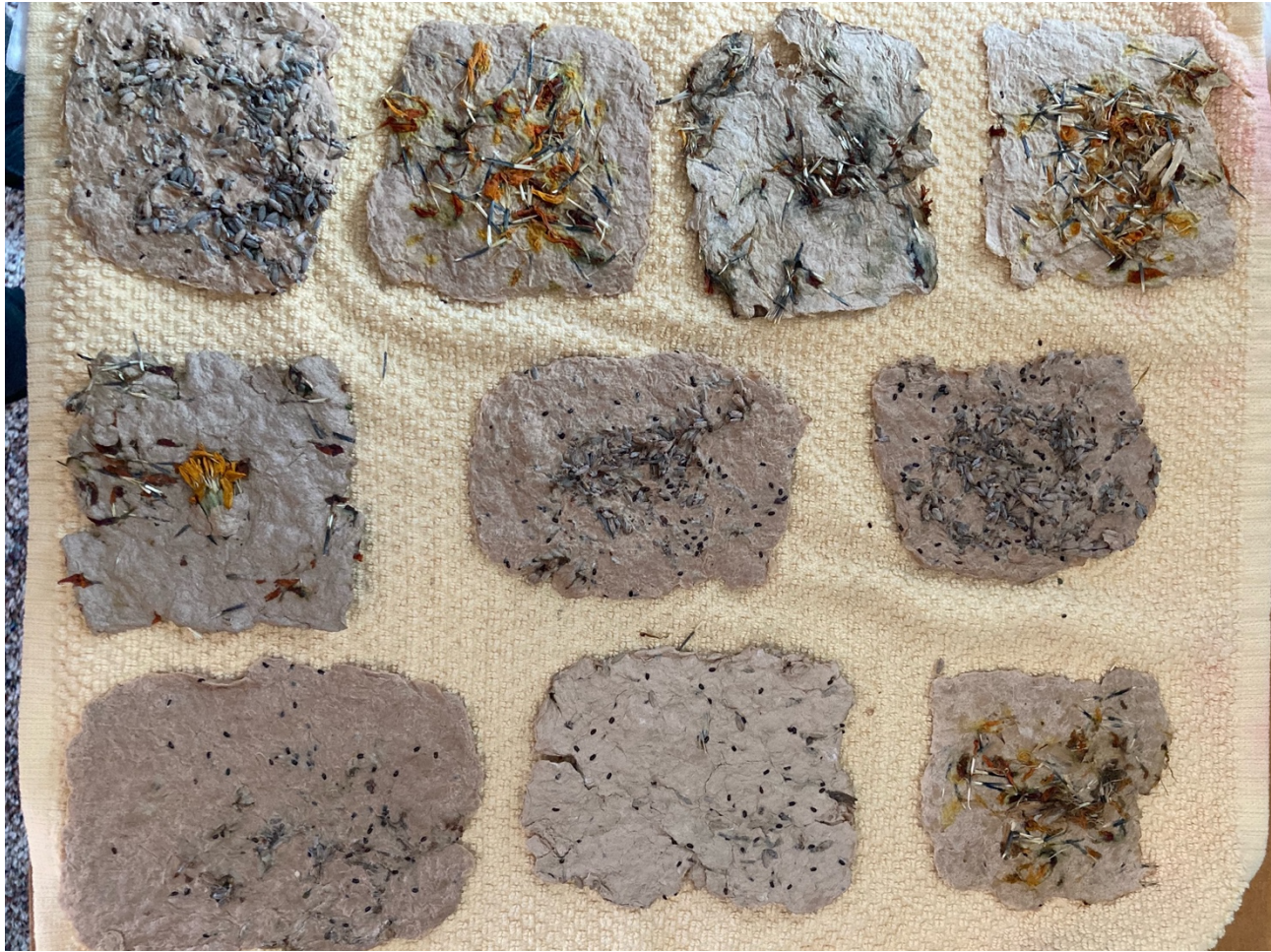
Transfer and press out water in frame or on cloth/screen

When you transfer the pulp from the strainer to the (I used two nontreated wooden planks) surface/towel, you can use a spatula, but either way (by hand or using a tool) it will get mashed. So, just gently spread the pulp however you want it. I had the thought to make shapes, but, because this was for the seed swap and was supposed to be seed packets, I decided the square/rectangular shapes were the best for this project. You can have all kinds of fun shaping your paper at this point!

Also, some sites say to add color to the pulp, but, again, my pledge was for this to be non-toxic, and I didn't feel my natural paints were necessarily good to just put in the soil. So, I left the color as it was, the dull brown color. Admittedly, I could have added petals or other embellishments. But I didn't have fresh lavender nor Marigolds on hand.

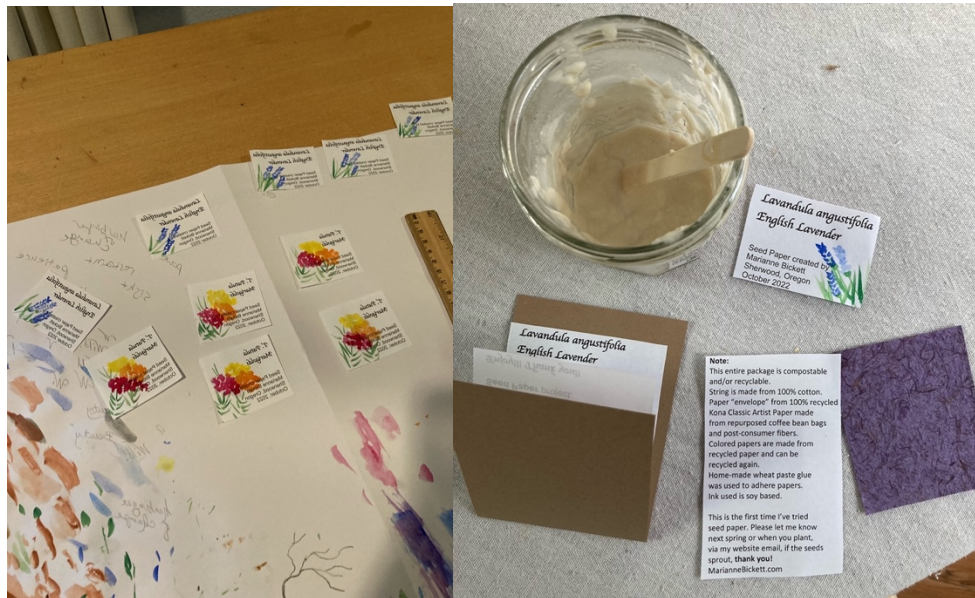


Transferred and pressed then flipped to remove cloth/frame. Drying on cloth, can use spatula.



Almost completely dry seed papers (Marigolds and Lavender).

The Finishing Process: “envelopes” for the Seed Paper with Information:



Painting on Cover Information and assembling and gluing (wheat paste).



Waiting for glue to dry.



Seed Paper inside and tied with cotton string!

I chose to go with the two plants, lavender, and marigold flowers to keep this simple because it was my first try. I did use poppy seeds in my batch that I decided not to use. I collected many different seeds from our yard that I'll use to plant next spring.

**Try it and contact me and send pictures!! Thanks!!**