



# How Do Seeds Travel?

Producing seeds is a plant's reason for being. It is the reason for sprouting, growing and flowering. Most plants produce a large number of seeds, but only a few survive to sprout and grow.

Seeds travel from the parent plant in many different ways. If you have ever blown the seeds off a dandelion, shot a watermelon seed out of your mouth, or thrown a maple seed into the air to watch it helicopter to the ground, you have participated in seed dispersal. If seeds weren't carried away from their parent plant, they would fall directly under the parent plant, and would compete for the same sunlight, soil, water and nutrients. Seed dispersal also helps spread the plant into new areas.

Some fruits, like apples, are eaten by animals, and the seeds are eliminated far from the parent plant. Other fruits, such as the burdock, have hooks on them and hitch a ride on passing animals. Others have tufts or wings, allowing them to fly with the wind; maples are a good example. Still others, like the touch-me-not, project their seeds from their fruits like catapults. Finally, some fruits just float in the water (coco-nut).

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Airborne = AE

Windblown = WB

Hitchhiker = H

Other = O

