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JEFFERSON'S VIRGINIA

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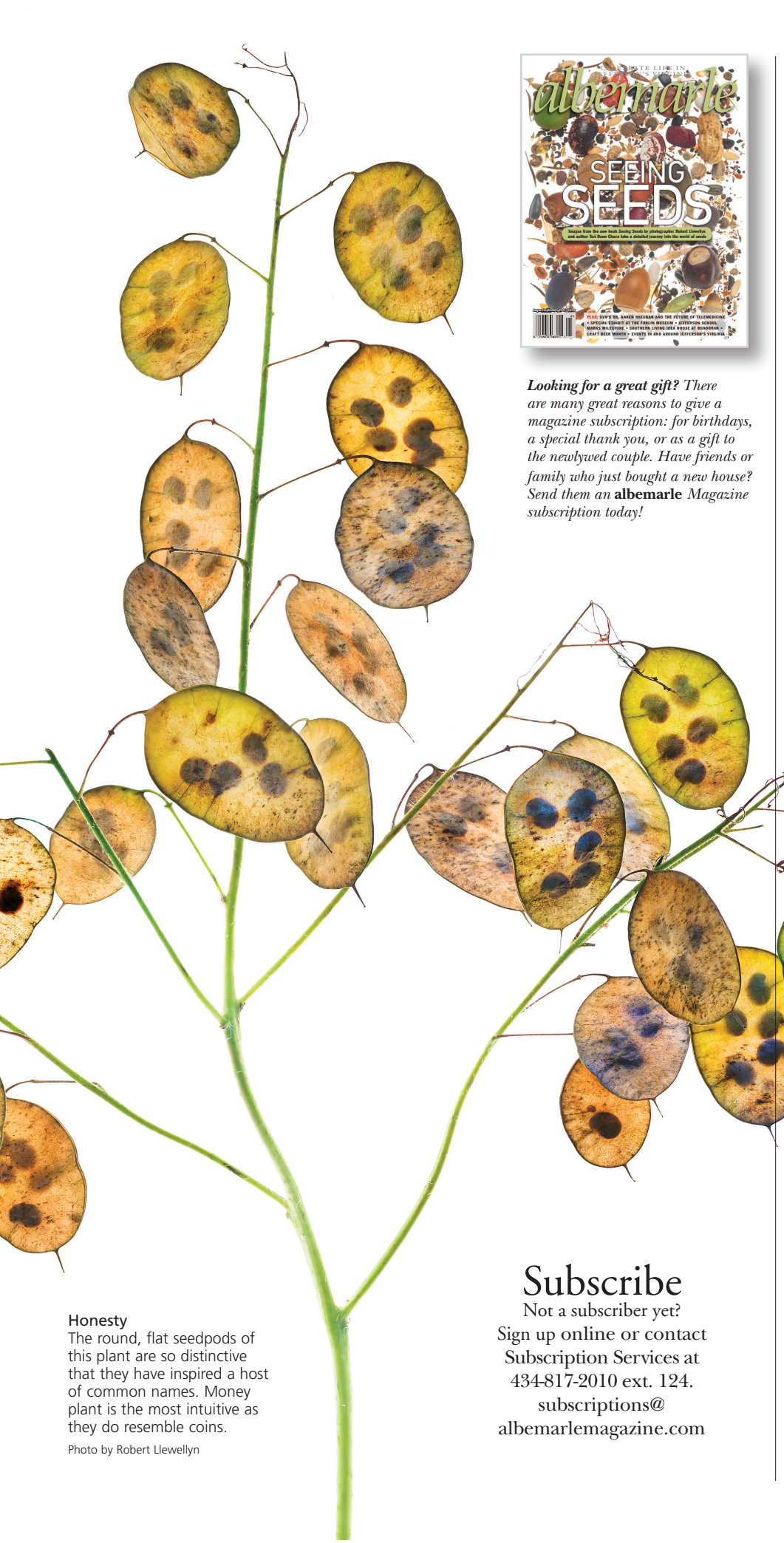
SEEING SEEDS

Images from the new book *Seeing Seeds* by photographer Robert Llewellyn and author Teri Dunn Chace take a detailed journey into the world of seeds

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Honesty
The round, flat seedpods of this plant are so distinctive that they have inspired a host of common names. Money plant is the most intuitive as they do resemble coins.

Photo by Robert Llewellyn

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INSIDE THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO For *Seeing Seeds*, photographer Robert Llewellyn collected and photographed over 200 different seeds and made over 1000 photographs from which 212 were chosen for the book. To make the seeds sharp throughout, Llewellyn made "focus stacks"—overlapping frames that each had a different focus point from top to bottom. Computer software then stitched the images together into one image, taking what was sharp from each. With some small seeds, like larkspur, which are the size of the period at the end of this sentence, he would make 150 frames. More than 110,000 individual frames were used to create the images for the book.

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SEEING SEEDS

A Photographic Journey into the World of Seedheads, Pods, and Fruit

Images from the new book *Seeing Seeds* by photographer Robert Llewellyn and author Teri Dunn Chace

Dandelion
Every seed of a dandelion has its own stalk and fluffy parachute. The achenes of many related plants lack this long stalk, which gives the seeds an additional boost for covering longer distances. Once released, the weight of the seed will keep this wind traveler pointed downward—just as the weight of the person under a parachute keeps him or her beneath it.

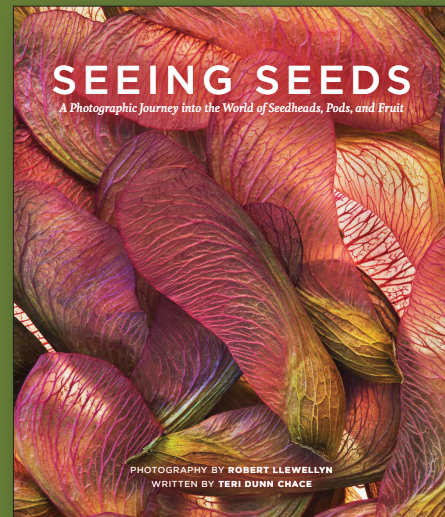


Black Eyed Susan

Like all members of the daisy family, Black Eyed Susan goes to seed in a flurry of achenes. The center cone of the original flower is made up of many individual flowers, and each one, assuming pollination is completed, develops a single seed. When ripe and ready, they disperse on the wind or at the touch or brush of someone or something passing by.

“Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.”

—Henry David Thoreau



A centuries-old saying goes, “Great oaks from little acorns grow.” But as *Seeing Seeds* reveals, there is much more to a seed than the plant it will someday become: seeds, seedheads, pods, and fruits have their own astounding beauty that rivals, and sometimes even surpasses, the beauty of flowers. In these stunning pages you’ll gain an understanding of how seeds are formed and dispersed, why they look the way they do, and how they fit into the environment. *Seeing Seeds* will take you to strange and wonderful places. When you return, it’s safe to say that you’ll never look at a seed the same way again.

Published by Timber Press, August 2015

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Castor Bean

Weird and rather scary-looking, the fruits of the castor bean plant, *Ricinus communis*, are little red spikeballs. They should be off-putting, for they harbor ricin, aka poison. Even handling the plants causes a toxic reaction for some people. Take this plant at its word and give it a wide berth.

Tree of Heaven

Ailanthus is incredibly prolific in its seed production. Each twisty reddish or yellow-green winged fruit sports a single centrally placed seed. These are carried in clusters, in like the flowers that came before them. They are generated in prodigious amounts, even on saplings. When they release, it’s a botanical tsunami.



Coneflower (*Echinacea*)
The exuberant coneflower is almost unrecognizable at season's end. The colorful petals are gone and the central cone is drained of color. Now it is studded with pointy brown achenes or one-seeded fruits. These detach as they ripen.



Hellebore
When ripe, hellebore follicles split open to reveal handsome blue-black seeds inside. As the follicles dry out, the seeds darken and fall out. They may eventually germinate.



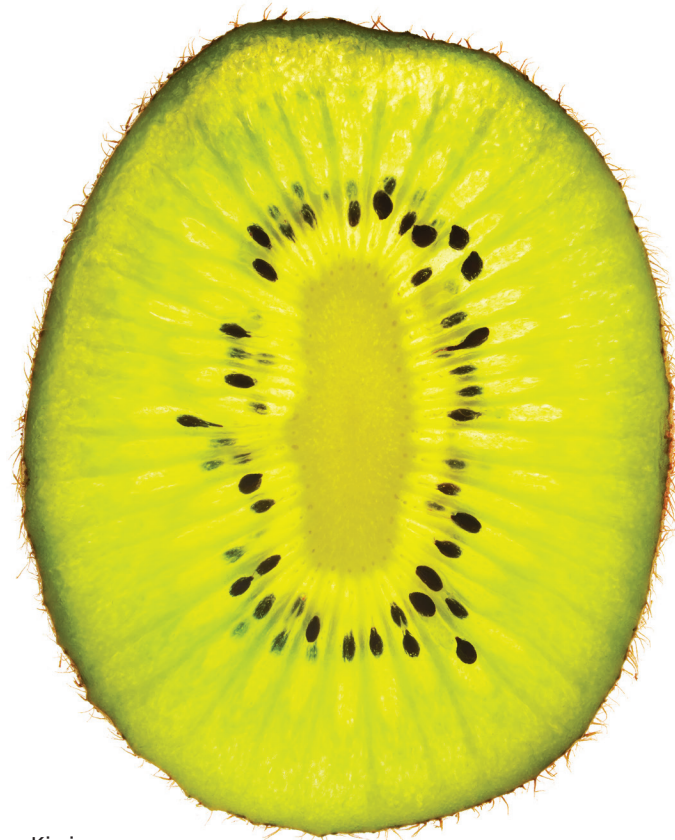
Rose Hips
Hips are the fruit of roses, and they are valued for late-season garden color and vitamin C content. Evidently the common-usage term traces back to old England, where the fruits of wild and briar roses were called hep, heope, and hiopo.



Clematis
No matter the flower color or bloom size, all clematis eventually form some version of these fuzzy-looking green-and-white seedheads.



Apple
It's no accident that apple seeds are so small and slick. They don't require the armor that some seeds and capsules have to repel predators and don't need appendages such as hairs or prickles to grab onto fur or feathers. Their dispersal agents eat the sweet, juicy flesh around them and either discard or fail to digest the intact seeds.



Kiwi
Some plants, such as kiwi, are dioecious, carrying male and female parts on separate plants. Fruit, and seeds, are produced only on the female plant. This is why gardeners, farmers and orchardists have to plant both male and female plants if pollination is to succeed. Other examples of dioecious plants include holly, ginkgo trees and hops.



Squash
Anyone who has cut open or scooped out a Halloween pumpkin recognizes these seeds. Large, flat white or tan squash seeds have a thin, naturally occurring coating that resembles cellophane.



Raspberry
Although we call raspberries and their kin berries, they are actually aggregate fruits whose many plump little globules or drupelets arose from multiple carpels. Each one contains a seed, which is why these fruits are so very seedy.



Pomegranate
A pomegranate is interesting to eat and fascinating to behold. The top end clearly shows remnants of the flower that came before. The spongy whitish material that fills up most of the interior is pith—edible, but not especially tasty. White seeds are encased in a sarcotesta, the juicy ruby red covering. The fruit's hope, if you will, is that we'll eat the sarcotesta and spare the seed.

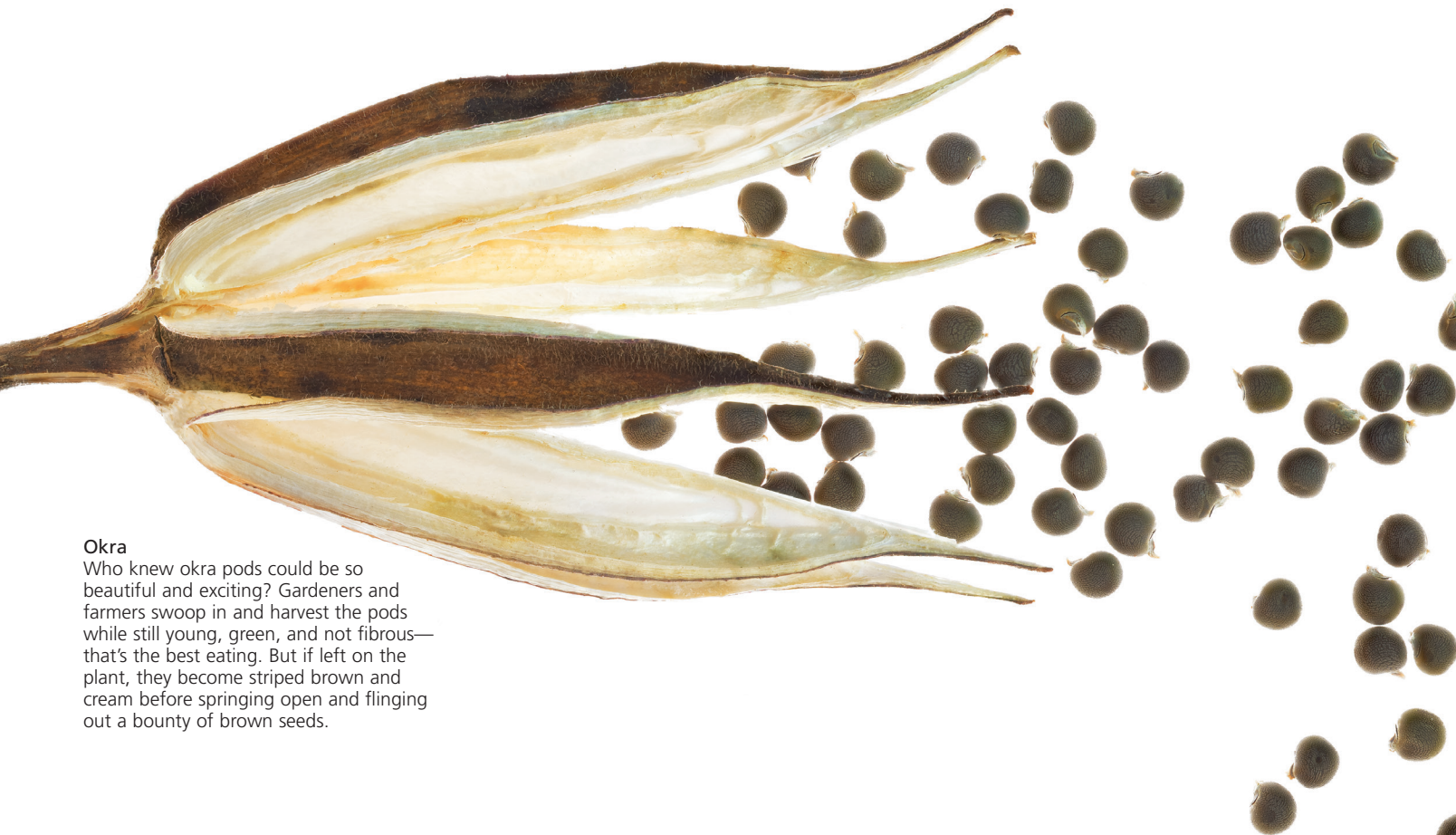
Lotus
The large-blossom lotus, up to 10 inches across, is beautiful even as its petals and stamens fade and fall. If pollination occurred (usually aided by bees or beetles), substantial seeds form. When ripe, these will drop into the water below and sink.



Chinese Lantern
Is the fruit safe to eat? Well, only when it's fully ripe. Unripe fruits—like their relatives potatoes—contain solanine, which, at best, causes gastric distress. You're better off eating relatives such as the tomatillo.



Okra
Who knew okra pods could be so beautiful and exciting? Gardeners and farmers swoop in and harvest the pods while still young, green, and not fibrous—that's the best eating. But if left on the plant, they become striped brown and cream before springing open and flinging out a bounty of brown seeds.



Lily
Lily parentage and reproduction has been complicated—and refined—by lily breeders. Seeds may be hard to germinate or sterile. In most cases, the most reliable way to get more *Lilium lancifolium* plants is to collect and plant the stem bulbils when they become ripe.



ROBERT LLEWELLYN has been photographing Virginia for over forty years, and more than thirty books featuring his stunning photography are in print. Llewellyn's previous books, *Seeing Trees* and *Seeing Flowers* have both earned glowing reviews; *Seeing Trees* was chosen as one of the best gardening books of the year by the *New York Times*. Some of his other books include *Remarkable Trees of Virginia*; *Empires in the Forest*; *Jamestown and the Beginning of America*; *Albemarle: A Story of Landscape and American Identity*; and *Mr. Jefferson's Upland Virginia*. Bob and his wife, Bobbi, live in Albemarle County. To learn more about Robert Llewellyn and his work, visit www.robertllewellyn.com.

TERI DUNN CHACE is a writer and editor with more than thirty titles in publication, including *Seeing Flowers* (Timber Press, 2014), *How to Eradicate Invasive Plants* (Timber Press, 2013) and *The Anxious Gardener's Book of Answers* (Timber Press, 2012). She has also written and edited extensively for *Horticulture*, *North American Gardener*, *Backyard Living*, and *Birds & Blooms*. Raised in California and educated at Bard College in New York, Chace has gardened in a variety of climate zones and soil types, from inner city Portland, Oregon, to coastal Massachusetts. She now lives in a small upstate New York village with snowy winters and glorious summers. To learn more about her work, visit terichacewriter.com.