

SONG TO SEED

WILLIAM RITTER

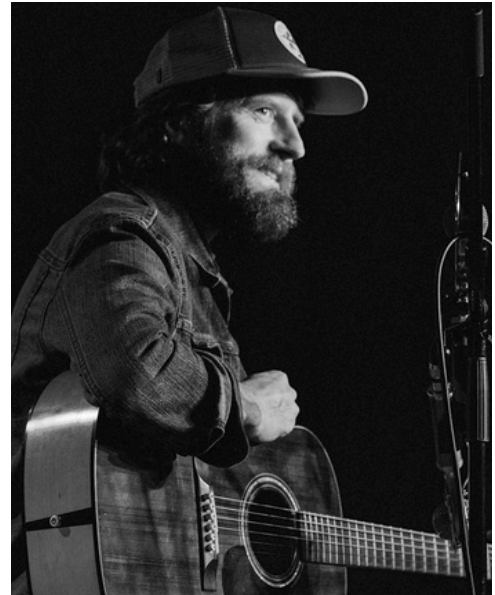
William Ritter is an old time fiddler, seed-saver, and ballad singer from the mountains of Mitchell County. For almost 20 years he has followed a passion for sharing the regional stories, songs, tunes, and seeds in his care. He is convinced that old ways and old seeds can bridge the growing gulfs and fissures in our communities and lead to real cultural resilience.

PRESS COVERAGE:

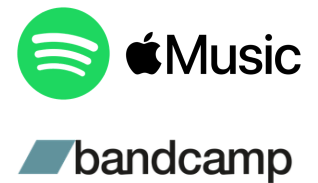
Charlotte Observer: *Freezers full of hope: After Helene, a renewed effort to protect at-risk seeds* [*Link*](#)

Rolling Stone: *Mountain Songs: Climate Change Devastated Their Appalachian Town. These Singers Are Trying to Save Its Music* [*Link*](#)

Wilkes Journal Patriot: *Seeds & songs of old: Ritter brings pitch for preservation* [*Link*](#)



Mentor Album



OFFERINGS

Seed-Saving Programs



Old Time Music & Storytelling



Ballad Swaps





SEED-SAVING

William does not sell his seeds, but he does generously share them at his seed-saving programs--which can range from educational presentations featuring stories alongside traditional and original songs, to “seed swap & shares,” where community members and organizations are invited to bring roots, cuttings, and seeds to share. In addition, William offers a program called “[the Bean String Ballad Sing.](#)”

BEAN STRING BALLAD SING



In this event, participants spend time in community snapping heirloom beans, shucking corn, or other “working bee” activities while listening to celebrated ballad singers and storytellers.



OLD TIME MUSIC & STORYTELLING

William has been playing locally-sourced traditional mountain music and telling “tales” for over twenty years--performing at festivals, schools, universities, churches, and venues, as well as playing for community dances, across North Carolina. William’s shows feature history, folk tales, fiddle, banjo, guitar, acapella ballads and old spiritual songs. Most of his repertoire was learned first-hand from friends and elder traditional musicians in his community, like Ray Dellinger, Bobby McMillon, Bruce Greene, Sheila Kay Adams, Wayne Ledford, and Brett and Pan Riggs. William is available to perform solo or as a part of duos and small ensembles.



William & mentor Bobby McMillon



BALLAD SWAPS

William performs traditional story songs or “ballads,” and is part of a collective of ballad singers called the [Nest of Singing Birds](#). Ballad Swaps can take a number of different forms, from a curated performance with a handful of selected singers, to a kind of open-mic featuring established singers with opportunities for audience members to share their own ballads. At it's best, ballad swaps are participatory, encouraging, and inclusive. The goal is, as Bobby McMillon would say, “To Keep it a-goin.”

FIND OUT MORE

Please visit [Songtoseed.com](#) to watch videos, learn more about seed saving, read William’s Blog, and listen to music. Additionally, here you can explore the [Bobby McMillon Legacy](#) project, featuring recordings, writings and more from the late ballad singer and storyteller.