

NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION

Here are some useful tips for propagating native plants.

How do I treat the seed before sowing?

- ❖ Boil 6 times the volume of water relative to the volume of seed. Add seed to boiling water after turning off heat (but while still boiling).
- ❖ Allow to stand for at least 3-4 hours, or overnight.
- ❖ Use the seed immediately or after drying (dry seed is easier to handle than wet seed).

If drying, lay out seed on hessian, shade cloth etc until dry.

What type of soil mix should I use?

The basic soil mix includes coarse river sand, loam and peat, used in equal proportions. A small amount of slow release pelleted fertiliser with a low phosphorus content can be mixed in with the soil.

How should I sow the seedlings?

- ❖ Ensure the soil mix is moist (not wet).
- ❖ Make a small depression in soil and drop in seeds (4-6 seeds each for small seeds such as eucalyptus, 2-4 seeds for acacias and other large seeds).
- ❖ Large seeds should be covered with 3-5 mm layer of the soils mix and watered gently.
- ❖ Smaller seeds should be covered with a thin layer of coarse, washed river sand and gently sprayed with water. Try not to move the seeds and sand when watering.

How do I take care of the seedlings?

- ❖ Keep the seedlings moist, but not wet.
- ❖ Keep them in open sun or part shade with good air circulation to prevent fungal disease.
- ❖ Leave all seedlings to grow until they develop their second set of leaves. Then select the healthiest - one per tube - and cut the rest off at soil level.
- ❖ To 'harden off' seedlings, place them in full sun and water less frequently 3-4 weeks before planting. These seedlings can be planted when 10 cm tall. Otherwise, wait until they are about 25-30 cm tall, and then plant.

Who can help?

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