

## Templetonia retusa – Cockies Tongue

A semi-woody medium density shrub to 1.8m in height and width with leathery thick grey green leaves. The red pea style flowers of the Cockies Tongues are up to 5cm long and the plant gets its common name from the similarity to the red crest of the cockatoo. This species flowers from early Winter to mid Spring (May to December in Australia).

This one is native to South Australia and the southern part of Western Australia but can grow in most cool temperate to semi-tropical climates with moderate or slightly higher rainfall and is handy in coastal areas as it is resistant to salt spray. It is frost tolerant to –7°C. It does not like soils which are heavily acid based and is at its very best in well-drained limestone soils. Plant in full sun to maybe half shade.

### Propagation

Propagation is easy from seed. Pre-treat seed by scarification or hot water treatment. To scarify the seed place the seed between a fold of medium sandpaper and rub between your fingers to wear away some of the seed surface. Alternatively use hot water treatment - soak the seed by placing it in nearly boiling water and allow it to sit overnight. Each of these methods allows water to penetrate the hard seed coating and promote germination.

**WHEN TO SOW:** In warm climates at any time. In colder climates at any time in a greenhouse or outside after the danger of frost has passed.

**WHERE TO SOW:** In full sun to half shade in any neutral to alkaline soil. Avoid acid soils or reduce the acidity before sowing.