

## Hovea species

The seed of Pea-flowers has a hard coat which, in most cases, is impervious to water and germination will normally not occur unless some sort of pretreatment is first carried out. In nature this hard coating is designed to be broken down by the heat of a bushfire to allow the species to re-colonize burnt out areas.

This effect can be replicated in a number of ways but, for most species, the easiest is to pour boiling water over the seeds and allow them to stand overnight. The next day any seeds which have swollen are ready for sowing and can be removed - the remainder of the seeds can be treated with boiling water again and the process repeated for as long as necessary.

Another method of pretreatment is to rub the seeds between sheets of sandpaper to reduce the thickness of the outer coating so that moisture can penetrate.

The seed germinates well by conventional sowing methods in seed raising mixes. Pre-germination, by sowing into a closed container containing moist vermiculite or a similar material, is also a useful method. Using this method, germination usually occurs in 1-2 weeks and when the root has reached about 1cm or so in length, the seedling can be placed into a small pot of seed raising mix.

