

Swainsona species

One of the most singular and attractive of Australian plants with masses of deep scarlet flowers with a black or maroon centre boss. A vine style creeper or ground cover, this plant flowers within three months of propagation.

Propagation

WHEN TO SOW – In warm areas sow from late winter to mid summer. In frost prone areas when the danger of frost is over.

WHERE TO GROW – Full sun. This versatile plant is suitable for the garden, rockery, pots or hanging baskets in any soil type.

SOWING – Knick the seed coat of the seed lightly with a sharp knife opposite the eye and/or soak seeds in a cup of initially hot water overnight or until swollen. Sometimes some seeds may require soaking more than once to swell. Sow two or three seeds in small pots or peat pots, about 1.5cm. Keep moist. Place in a warm shady position to germinate. Swollen seed should germinate within about 10 days.

CULTIVATION – When a seedling appears or a tap root appears at the base of the pot set out in a sunny garden position. Water in well, regularly until established and then once a week in dry weather for quick flowering.

Protect from slugs and snails. Use a light application of low-phosphate or slow release fertiliser.

