

## Daviesia species

*Daviesia cordata*

*Daviesia latifolia*

*Daviesia ulicifolia*

Daviesias are pea flowered legumes which are important parts of Australian native understorey plantings. They usually blend into the background until flowering and then are a magnificent sight. Some species such as *D. latifolia* were used as a substitute for hops in the last century as the leaves have a bitter taste. The family has a diverse range of soil type, climate and habitat. Temperature ranges between -15°C to +42°C and rainfall between 60 – 125cm per year.

Seed germination has traditionally been by scarification by hot water treatment. Either soak the seed overnight in water that is initially just off boiling point or nick the seed coat lightly on the outer curve to enable water to penetrate the hard seed coating. Another method is to rub the seed in light sandpaper between finger and thumb to thin the seed wall.

Recent experimentation by Alcoa in its revegetation nurseries has shown that Bookleaf (*Daviesia cordata*) responds readily to dry heat pre-treatment - by placing the seed in dry heat at one of several temperatures - dry seeds are placed in a pre-heated oven at either 30°C, 60°C or 100°C for 2 weeks, 1 hr or 0.5 hrs respectively 14 days at 30°C.

This species prefers well drained sandy, sandy loam or gravelly soils. This species is mildly frost tolerant in Australian terms to -2°C.

Sow seed in a medium seed mix of 40% peat moss and 30% each of fine and coarse seed and place in a shady warm place to allow germination. Prick out individual seedlings after the formation of the first true leaf and grow on to say 10 – 20cm in individual tubes using a similar medium. Plant out after the risk of frost has passed in a sunny to dappled shade position in a well-drained soil.