



How to Grow Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthin*)

Prepared by Maria Hitchcock - Leader Waratah and Flannel Flower Study Group.

You need fresh seed if possible no more than 2 months old. Older seed is less viable but you may get some seed to germinate. Store it in the fridge after collection.

The best time to germinate is when the daytime temperature is about 20° C daytime maximum - Autumn or Spring.

Add 3 drops of Wettasoil to 1 cup of tepid water in a jar. Add some seeds. Put on the cap of the jar and shake. Leave for one hour. Alternatively pour some smoke water in a jar, add the seed and shake. Leave for one hour.

Make up a seed raising mix of perlite:peat:vermiculite (1:1:1 ratio). I use fine perlite and vermiculite. Fill some punnets with this mix.

Put the punnets in trays and water from below by capillary action. Now sprinkle the seeds on top and cover with about 5mm of seed raising mix. It usually takes about 4 weeks until seedlings appear.

Leave the seedlings in the punnets until they have developed a few pairs of leaves. This could take some time as they grow very slowly.

Add some coarse sand to some cheap potting mix (no additives) in a 1:5 ratio. I have used potting mix alone with good results. Pot on into a large pot. They are sensitive to root disturbance so it's better to do this once only.

Sprinkle some slow release fertilizer on top of the pot and water in with Seasol (or substitute). Feed once a fortnight in winter and every week in spring through to autumn with alternating Calcium Nitrate and a low phosphorus general fertilizer.
