

How to propagate native ground covers from cuttings

Myoporum parvifolium (Creeping Boobialla) and *Goodenia varia* (Sticky Goodenia) are easy to propagate from cuttings. They have vigorous root systems which help them establish quickly.

Acaena novae-zelandiae (Bidgee-widgee) can be a bit more finicky but have a go at it if you like a challenge!

Harvesting cuttings

Select a healthy vigorous plant to source cuttings.

Avoid cutting from stems that are in flower. Take cuttings from closer to the base of the plant where there are no flowers. A cutting with flowers will focus on ripening seed pods rather than growing roots.

Any time is a good time to take cuttings for propagation, but growth rates are faster in warmer weather.

Cut the stems you've collected into 5cm lengths.

Strip leaves from the lower 2/3 of the stem as shown below:



We've trialled 2 methods of striking native ground covers from cuttings:

1. Poke cuttings directly into native potting mix.
2. Strike roots in 90% perlite-10% peat moss mix then transplant rooted cuttings into native potting mix.

Method 1.

Use a face mask to avoid inhaling fine dust from potting mix.

Fill plastic pots with potting mix. You can use recycled tubs from sour cream, yoghurt, etc but remember to poke drainholes in the container's base.

If you have bigger pots you can put several cuttings into the same pot.

Use a pencil to poke a hole into the potting mix. Gently place the cutting into the hole and press closed the gaps around the cuttings.

If you need potting mix or pots please contact Jane on 0427 564 302 or John on 0422 909 710.

Water your potted cuttings and place them in a sheltered location away from direct sunlight and wind. After a few weeks you can move them into direct sunlight. Choose a mild day to make this change or they'll get burnt.

Water regularly to prevent soil drying out completely.

Not all cuttings will strike roots and thrive. Don't worry! If you stick a lot of cuttings into potting mix you are bound to have some success!



Method 2.

Use a face mask to avoid inhaling the fine dust from the 90% perlite 10% peat moss striking mixture.

Perlite is the light, white material. It is volcanic glass which has been heated until it expands - like popcorn! It's sterile, long-lasting, pH neutral and porous. Perlite can hold and release small amounts of moisture while allowing good drainage and root zone aeration. Magic! But you don't want to get it in your lungs or eyes, so fill your tray slowly and carefully.

Fill seedling tray with perlite/peat mix to 5mm below the rim. Gently water the tray to firm down the fluffy mix. Use a skewer to create rows of holes in the mix. Insert the stripped end of your cuttings into the holes. Push gaps closed.

Give the tray of cuttings a gentle watering so the water runs through and drains away. Keep the tray moist (not waterlogged) and positioned out of direct sunlight and wind.

It may take 1-2 months for your cuttings to develop roots. Lift your tray every so often to check for roots coming from the drain holes. Or gently ease a cutting out of the tray after several weeks to see if roots have formed. If not, gently replant the cutting in the tray.



When you've got roots (as pictured) on your cuttings, it's time to transfer them into native potting mix.

If you need potting mix, pots or Seasol supplied please contact Jane on 0427 564 302 or John on 0422 909 710.

Fill 50-100mm pots with potting mix. If you have bigger pots you can transfer 2-3 cuttings into the same pot. You can also use recycled tubs from sour cream, yoghurt, etc – remember to poke drainholes in the base.

Use a pencil to poke a deep hole into the potting mix. Gently slide the cutting into the hole and use the pencil to carefully point the roots downwards. Push any gaps closed.

To help prevent transplant shock, water with Seasol solution (dilute following container directions for ‘transplanting’).

Place your newly potted cuttings back into shelter from direct sunlight and wind. After a few weeks you can move them into direct sunlight. Choose a run of mild days to make this move so they don’t get burnt.

Water regularly to prevent soil drying out completely.

Use your perlite-peat moss mixture to either grow more cuttings or let it dry out completely and bag it up to use next summer(wear a face mask when handling dry mixture). Keep your plastic tray for reuse too.

Thank you for being part of the KRA Plant Propagation Team!

Keep in touch. Let us know how your cuttings are growing.

🌱 We love photos! Send happy snaps of your cuttings to Jane or John by SMS or email to contact@kra.org.au.

🌱 Ask for help if you’re worried about something or need a plant babysitter for a few weeks.

🌱 We’ll be planting in local parks in June-July. You can either bring your propagated plants to one of the planting days or arrange for us to pick them up from your home for volunteers to plant.