

Eucalyptus calycogona



Unlocking the Secrets of Eucalyptus calycogona Propagation: From Seed to Stunning Specimen

Eucalyptus calycogona, commonly known as the Gooseberry Mallee or Square-fruited Mallee, is a striking evergreen native to Australia. With its smooth, grey-green bark, attractive foliage, and vibrant red flowers, it adds a touch of the Outback to any garden with a sunny disposition and well-drained soil. But how do you go about growing this beauty from scratch? Let's delve into the fascinating world of Eucalyptus calycogona propagation.

Seed Starting: The Adventure Begins

Propagating Eucalyptus calycogona from seed is a rewarding experience, offering a front-row seat to the plant's lifecycle. Here's how:

- 1. Seed Collection:** While you can purchase seeds, collecting them from mature capsules offers a sense of

connection with your plant. Look for brown, dry capsules and gently crush them to reveal the tiny, brown seeds.

2. **Sowing the Seeds:** Eucalyptus seeds benefit from light to germinate. Use a well-draining seed starting mix and sprinkle the seeds on the surface, pressing them in gently. Mist lightly and cover the tray with a humidity dome or plastic wrap to maintain moisture.
3. **Warmth and Patience:** Place the seed tray in a warm location, ideally around 70-77°F (21-25°C). Germination can take anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of months. Keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged.
4. **Pricking Out and Potting On:** Once the seedlings have developed their first set of true leaves and are large enough to handle, it's time to "prick them out." This means carefully separating the seedlings and transplanting them into individual pots filled with a well-draining potting mix.

Cuttings: A Faster Route to Success

Propagation from cuttings offers a quicker method, especially if you want to ensure the offspring are identical to the parent plant.

1. **Timing is Key:** Take cuttings during the plant's active growing season, ideally in spring or early summer.
2. **Selecting the Cutting:** Choose a healthy, non-flowering stem tip that's about 4-6 inches long.
3. **Preparation is Key:** Remove the lower leaves from the cutting, leaving only a few at the top. Dip the cut end in rooting hormone to stimulate root development.
4. **Planting the Cutting:** Plant the cutting in a pot filled with a well-draining, sterile potting mix. Make sure at least one node (the bump where leaves grow) is buried in the mix.
5. **Creating a Humid Environment:** Cover the pot with a clear

plastic bag or use a humidity dome to trap moisture. Place the pot in a warm, bright location out of direct sunlight.

Caring for Your New Eucalyptus

Whether you've chosen seed or cuttings, here are some essential care tips for your young *Eucalyptus calycogona*:

- **Light:** Provide your plant with plenty of sunlight. Aim for at least six hours a day for optimal growth.
- **Water:** While Eucalyptus are generally drought-tolerant once established, seedlings and cuttings need regular watering. Keep the soil moist but not waterlogged.
- **Fertilizer:** Feed your plant with a balanced, slow-release fertilizer during the growing season.
- **Pruning:** Pinch back the growing tips of your Eucalyptus to encourage a bushier habit.

With a little patience and the right care, you'll soon be enjoying the unique beauty of *Eucalyptus calycogona*, a testament to your green thumb and a captivating addition to your garden.