

Revegetation Planting

Limestone Coast Landscape Board

Successful revegetation and plant survival relies on:

- Timing
- Seedling care
- Plant layout
- Planting method.

Timing

The best time to plant will vary between years and location. The soil profile should have moisture down below the plants root zone when planting, not just the top few centimetres. For tubestock this would be 30cms. Generally June to July is best but in high rainfall areas or in heavier soils August to September may be better.

Plant layout

Review your plant layout design before heading out. Be confident where each type of plant will go. Remember how big each plant will get in the future and give them room to grow properly.

Plant trees appropriately; 6-10m apart for shelterbelts in middle rows only and up to 20m apart for large block habitat planting.

Mix up the planting and avoid uniformity - it's not a garden. Where possible clump insect pollinated plants together to enhance pollination and seed production, e.g. Bursaria, Hakea.

Plant quality and care

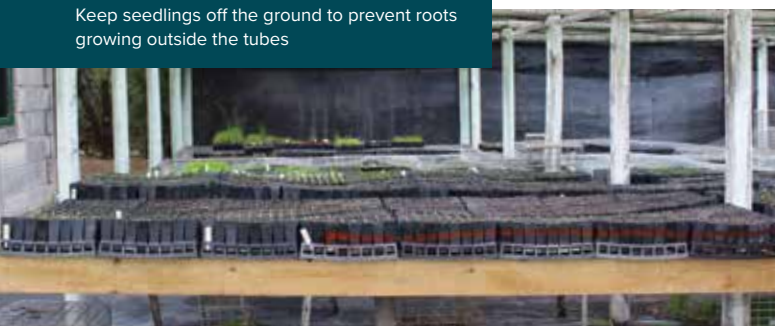
The plants need to be looked after. Rough handling results in more failures.

Prior to planting, keep seedlings on raised benches. It only takes two to three days for roots to quickly grow out the tube and into the ground, then lifting the seedlings will break their roots. Excessive root growth outside the tube will also make getting the seedling out of the tube difficult.

Before planting trim tall seedlings to 15cm high. Tall seedlings look nice, but will struggle after planting because their roots are too small to cope with moisture lost through the leaves.

Thoroughly water seedlings before planting. They need to be fully hydrated to help them cope with planting shock.

Keep seedlings off the ground to prevent roots growing outside the tubes



Trim seedlings to 15cm prior to planting and store off the ground to prevent roots growing outside the tubes.

Planting Method

Do not plant near powerlines or underground services (Dial 1100 before you dig).

Planting tools

Choose a planting method that is efficient and sustainable for a whole day. Tired planters make more mistakes and ineffective planting means that more plants will struggle or die.

Holes must be deep enough so once planted, the potting mix is level with the soil.

The spade

Think twice. Digging an appropriate size hole is laborious, time consuming and exhausting after several hundred holes.

Hamilton planter

The planter is suitable for most soil types, but is difficult in heavy clay. It is pushed into the ground removing a plug of soil ready for the seedling. Square and round based Hamilton planters of varying sizes are available to suit your type of seedling tube.

The pottiputki

The Pottiputki is suitable for most soil types, but becomes more difficult as soil clay content increases. It is pushed into the ground and a lever opens its jaws creating a space for a seedling, which is delivered down a hollow tube. It works well with small or straight, single stemmed seedlings. Multi-stemmed, branched seedlings are less successful.

The mattock

On sticky heavy clay soil the mattock is still the best planting tool.

Planting wells

45cm auger holes 15cm deep create the perfect planting well. The soil does not need to settle, so the wells are best done at the time of planting. Then plant by hand.

It is best to use a vehicle mounted auger as petrol driven hand augers are extremely fatiguing, especially after a few hundred holes. Accidents occur more often when people are tired and fatigued.

When factoring in planting costs and failures, the cost of drilling wells is not much more. Benefits include,

- Faster planting, (plant by hand, no tools required)
- Higher survival rates (moisture concentrates at plant's roots)
- Faster, easier watering if required.

Weed matting

Weed matting helps retain soil moisture and limit weed growth around a seedling. However, they can impede water infiltration.

Weed mats must be securely pegged down otherwise animals will dig under them and birds pull them apart for nesting material.

Weed matting is not a substitute for weed control.



L-R - Hamilton Tree Planter, Kidney tray and Pottiputki

Tree guards (see table below)

Tree guards help protect seedlings from wind and large grazing animals, such as rabbits and kangaroos. They also make future weed control easier. Guards come in various types, each with their own benefits. The best guard will depend on your particular situation.

Time and ease to install a guard is also important, especially when you have several hundred seedlings to protect.

Mulching

Mulching is unnecessary. It impedes water infiltration and keeps moisture near the surface. Deep plant roots are essential for summer survival. Shallow roots under mulch will dry out over summer. Pest birds and animals love to dig around in mulch exposing shallow plant roots.

Guard Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Milk carton	Cheap Quick to install in soft ground	Flimsy Easily damaged by cockatoos and animals
Plastic sleeve (bamboo stakes)	Cheap Strong seedlings	Tedious to install Sleeves blow off easily Easily damaged by cockatoos and animals
Corflute (hardwood stake)	Robust protection from most animals Quick to install Easier weed control; spraying herbicide Re-useable	Results in weak stemmed plants if left on too long (remove when plant is 15cm above guard)
Large wire guard	Robust protection from most animals Strong seedlings Plants are larger when guard removed Re-useable	Expensive Slow to install

Acknowledgements

The content of this publication has been funded by the Australian Government and has been reproduced by the Limestone Coast Landscape Board with support from Mister Tucker's business, Ralph Scheel, Eucaleuca Native Services and from text reference "Planning Revegetation on Farms in the South East", Copyright 2010.

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202108 | Revegetation Planting | Reissued Feb 2021

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