

SOWING CALIFORNIA WILDFLOWER SEEDS

The key to success in growing California wildflowers is providing the correct combination of sun and moisture. The best time to sow wildflower seeds is in autumn, as this coincides with the natural cycle of germination and development.

The areas to be sown should be free of invasive weeds, lightly cultivated and raked. A loose soil and adequate drainage will also be beneficial. If planting on slopes, leave enough nooks and crannies to catch the seed.

Seeds should be broadcast or scattered over the ground as evenly as possible. It may be helpful to mix the seed with finely screened sand or soil. One (1) ounce of seed will cover from 150-200 square feet.

If sowing in autumn, normal rainfall should provide enough moisture for germination. Should rainfall be deficient or if seeds are sown later in the year (spring) supplemental watering may be needed.

Birds or other animals can be discouraged by lightly covering the area with twiggy branches, leaves, or straw.

To reseed themselves, most wildflowers need a dry period after their bloom. Allowing your wildflowers to go to seed will insure their beauty again next year.

CNPS Policy on Sowing of Wildflowers

Adopted June 1989



CNPS is concerned that:

- If rare species grow in the locality, closely related species should be avoided in seed mixtures.
- Species which are susceptible to genetic swamping should be identified, and use of any but local seed sources avoided for such species.
- Locally grown seed should be increased for local wild-collected starter source.
- Permit processes for collection must be followed.
- Species selected should be biologically and visually appropriate, that is they should be compatible with the surrounding wild landscape.
- Existing native vegetation should not be replaced by wildflower plantings.