

Direct seeding for small and large properties

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(with input from
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**Murrumbateman
Landcare Group**

May 2026



There is no need to take notes as the talk will be loaded to the MLG website.

Please feel free to ask questions during the talk.

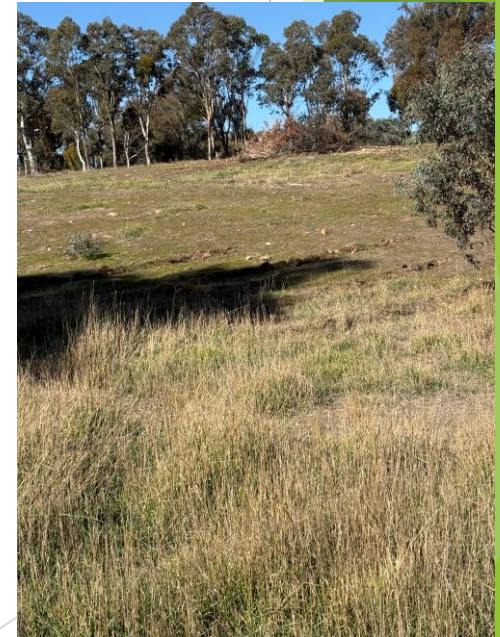
There will also be time after the talk for questions.

Brief history of direct seeding in our region

- ▶ Many big local projects incorporated direct seeding by machine and by hand from 1990s onwards.
- ▶ Workshop on direct seeding Gundaroo February 2026.
- ▶ Bowning-Bookham Landcare Group (part of the Yass Area Network) is doing a direct seeding activity as part of Humelink East funding.
- ▶ Series of direct seeding events planned by YAN.

Brief history of direct seeding in our region

- ▶ Early days - machine seeded plots on our driveway (late 1990s).
- ▶ The machine was designed and built by Skip Wilson and the late John Betts.



Workshop on direct seeding Gundaroo February 2026

- ▶ Sharing Direct Seeding Knowledge to Grow Climate-ready Landscapes. The aims were to:
 - ▶ learn from one another,
 - ▶ distil practical knowledge and
 - ▶ strengthen our approach to building revegetation through direct seeding.

Gundaroo workshop participants



Busting some myths about direct seeding

- ▶ Direct seeding is only for large properties needing many trees, for example, in long shelter belts.
- ▶ Direct seeding requires complicated and expensive machinery.
- ▶ Direct seeding wastes seed – some of which is very expensive.

Comparing direct seeding with revegetation using tubestock

- ▶ Direct seeding and tubestock planting are complementary. Direct seeding can work in many, but not all situations.
- ▶ Supplementing with tubestock may be useful at sites where direct seeding is less successful e.g. sites with high fertility, where access is difficult, or for species that are difficult to germinate from seed. (GA)
- ▶ Direct seeding will often provide a denser revegetation which leads to deaths of weaker plants and creates a mess. Mess is good!

Comparing direct seeding with revegetation using tubestock

- ▶ Direct seeded plants are more likely to develop resilience to adverse conditions.
- ▶ Direct seeding generally costs much less than tube stock planting (in \$ and volunteer time) and requires lower ongoing intervention.
 - ▶ According to GA, direct seeding can cost as little as 10% of the cost of planting tubestock and can be done much more quickly with minimal labour and site preparation costs. The low cost of direct seeding also makes it very low risk – if the seeding is unsuccessful, for example because of poor climatic conditions, it can easily be redone.

Comparing direct seeding with revegetation using tubestock

- ▶ Where the conditions are suitable, direct seeding can be done in any season. If the rain isn't there, the seed still is. When conditions are right, plants will emerge.
 - ▶ Direct seeding mimics natural regeneration, making it more resilient in the long term. The young seedlings will self-select for the strongest individuals at a particular site, thinning out naturally to create a more resilient planting (GA).
 - ▶ Direct seeding can result in 'patchy' plantings, ideal for habitat (NSW LLS).
- ▶ Generally, less protection from animals is required for direct seeding.



Preparation for simple direct seeding

- ▶ Direct seeding can occur with little preparation. For example, a spray with no soil cultivation, or a small amount of soil preparation with no spraying.
- ▶ Many native plant seeds have evolved to stay dormant until certain conditions, such as bushfires, arise. To aid germination, some seed may need to be treated prior to sowing.
- ▶ To control weeds and grasses, one or two applications of a broad-spectrum herbicide could be applied over a strip 1m wide in each row.
- ▶ However, many sites do not need prior spraying, for example, sites without 'improved' pastures or rocky hilltop sites with native vegetation.



Tools for direct seeding

- ▶ Range from very simple hand tools to complicated machinery.....
- ▶ This is Greening Australia's direct seeding machine. It has a disc used to scalp some topsoil away then drops separate trails of small and large seed, with a tine to cover with soil, followed by a press wheel.



Focus on simplicity and accessibility - tools for direct seeding

- ▶ These are very simple tools, easy to make and use but still effective.



Focus on simplicity and accessibility - tools for direct seeding





Simple direct seeding – rocky hilltop (late 1990s)



Simple direct seeding – riparian site (late 1990s)



Seed

- ▶ Germination testing Gill Hall, MLG nursery team
- ▶ Climate ready seed – talk to Gill or Sonya
- ▶ Source of seed from many provenances: Nindethana Seed www.nindethana.net.au
- ▶ Collect your own seed
- ▶ When choosing your seed, you will find this list from our website useful: [Local native plants suitable for planting or direct seeding in the Murrumbateman region, September 2020 - short document — NSW Landcare Gateway.](#)

Direct seeding contractors

- ▶ Tom Deery, Natural Capital ph 0429 550 336
- ▶ Dan Florance, Woodland Ecosystems
ph 0400 682 789
www.woodlandecosystems.com.au