

## Seed Balls for a Revegetation Project

This method packs nutritional matter for the seeds into the seed ball. It's a great method to use for smaller seeds.

1. Mix equal parts of compost & dry clay powder and add a similar amount of seed. The clay can be either from your garden made into a powder or bentonite clay.
2. Continue to mix, slowly misting with water until the mix just comes together around the seed.
3. Gently roll into little balls – about 2cm across – being careful not to damage the seeds
4. Set them in a sunny spot to dry.

This is the method I used to make a test run for the Nerrena /Tarwin Valley Landcare group to use.

Bronwyn Teesdale, who worked for Greening Australia in Leongatha as a Revegetation Project Officer, made many varieties of seed balls and trialled them in various landscapes on her revegetation projects. Talking to me she shared her thoughts about this method.

This method allows you prepare ahead of time to plant, to mix your seeds evenly, and spread your seeds in areas where the landscape is not suitable for direct seeding by ploughing or scarifying.

Bronwyn found that the clay balls needed to be spread just before a long spell of rain. The rain germinated the seeds but if they dried out before the seeds were embedded into the soil, then the clay would rebind and the germinated seeds could be stopped from growing. She found that by rolling the clay mixture into balls and then coated them in the seeds it would allow the seeds to break out of the clayballs easier. This method would use more seed.

She suggested that if you used this method you would be better to plant late in Winter or early in Spring.

Bronwyn commented that she had better success by scrapping the topsoil with a hoe and then just dropping the seeds in the loose soil. Even in very steep slopes, this would be her preferred method.

We would like to thank Bronwyn for her insight on this method.

Sue Miles