Pimelea glauca is much-branched perennial herb or small shrub to 1 m high [9, 10, 11], with a thick woody rootstock [6]. Its common name is Smooth Rice-Flower [11].


Pimelea glauca occurs in Qld, NSW, Vic, Tas and SA [9]. It is widespread and common in forests and grasslands [9, 13], as well as in open woodlands, mallee or sandhills [5]. In Tasmania it occurs in coastal vegetation and occasionally in dry places inland [12].

It grows on clay, loam, or sandy soils but it is not tolerant of high phosphorus levels [12].

Natural Populations

Flowering and Seeds

Pimelea glauca flowers mostly from spring through to summer and seed is collected 2-3 months after flowering, from October to February [11, 12, 13].

The seed releases very quickly once ripe, especially during hot weather. Slightly immature fruit may be harvested and allowed to mature in a warm position. Rub seeds against fine wire screens to remove the outer coverings [1, 8].
Pimelea glauca

Cultivation and Uses

_Pimelea_ species are difficult to grow from seed, so are usually grown from cuttings [1, 2, 13]. For successful germination, the dormancy of _Pimelea_ seed may require breaking through temperature and moisture cycles in the field [1]. Smoke treatment has improved results for some _Pimelea_ species, but not for _P. glauca_. The seed may respond to a combination of heat and smoke treatment.

For _Pimelea floribunda_ (a WA species), baking seed in the sun for two summers, resulted in germination 20 days after watering in autumn, but there was only 5% seed viability [3]. Smoke and heat treatments have also been suggested but success is variable [12].

A few species may be easier to grow from seed and have shown good results without treatment (e.g. _P. serpyllifolia_) [7]. The Australian Seedbank Partnership is working towards understanding the seed dormancy requirements of _Pimelea_ species for restoration.

To propagate _P. glauca_ from cuttings, use barely firm young growth without stripping back the young bark. The best months to take cuttings are February and March. Plants respond well to pruning, which will rejuvenate mature plants [12].

_Pimelea_ species are attractive drought tolerant herbs with distinctive foliage and showy floral displays [11]. _P. glauca_ grows best in moderately to well-drained sites in semi-shaded or sunny positions [12, 13]. It will tolerate extended dry periods [11, 12] and will cope with dry, exposed and windy sites as well as frost [14].

The flowers provide nectar for native butterflies and other insects [5]. This species is reported to be resistant to _Phytophthora cinnamomi_ [12].

Avoid grazing stock where this plant is abundant because of the risk of poisoning [1, 4, 9, 13].

To source seeds or plants: www.grassywoodlands.org.au
References

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Internet links


