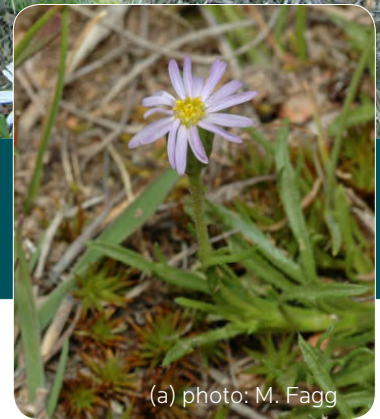


photo: J. Lindner



Vittadinia muelleri



(a) photo: M. Fagg

Vittadinia muelleri is a tufted perennial herb 12-15 cm tall, with minute glandular and longer scattered hairs, and a woody rootstock [5, 6]. Its common name is Narrow Leaf New Holland Daisy [5].

This species is distinguished from *Vittadinia gracilis* and *Vittadinia cuneata* by its deeper mauve flowers and almost hairless leaves [5].

Population map:

www.ala.org.au/explore/species-maps/

Natural Populations

Vittadinia muelleri is found in NSW, Vic and Tas [6]. It is common and widespread, growing on a range of soil types in open-forests, woodlands and grasslands [1, 4, 5, 6].



(a) photo: Schmidt-Lebuhn

Flowering and Seeds

Flowering occurs mostly in spring–summer [1, 6], and sometimes in warmer autumns after rains [1]. Numerous small purple daisy flowers with yellow centres are borne at the tips of branches [11].

The fruit is small, dry and leathery with a sparse covering of hairs and thickened margins. The pappus (ring of scales or hairs found on top of fruit) consists of barbed bristles [5]. The seedheads have a distinctly fluffy appearance when ripe [2].

Collect entire seedheads by hand into large paper bag, then allow to dry. Small portable vacuum cleaners have also been used for collection. Do not collect the seed in wet weather or after rain, as the seed readily retains moisture, and can develop fungal problems [3].

Seed handling involves breaking up the seedheads, then sieving to remove any large material [3]. Store with the fluffy pappus attached [2]. The seed doesn't usually have a long storage life [9].



Cultivation and Uses

V. muelleri is grown readily from seed, which usually germinates within 1-3 weeks. Seed does not appear to have an after-ripening period, but light is required for germination [9]. Light and cold treatments or storage at high alternating temperatures for one month have been found to promote germination in *V. muelleri* [8].

Sow seed on the soil surface or cover lightly.

V. muelleri needs full sun to partial shade [10] and is tolerant of dry conditions [7]. It could be a useful species in revegetation or horticultural projects as it produces many seeds and establishes easily from seed or division, and persists under grazing [1].

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

References

(a) Pictures under License from the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

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[2] Ralph, M. (1993). *Seed Collection of Australian Native Plants For Revegetation, Tree Planting and Direct Seeding*. 2nd ed. Fitzroy, Victoria: Bushland Horticulture.

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[8] Willis, A. J. and Groves, R. H. (1991). Temperature and light effects on the germination of seven native forbs. *Australian Journal of Botany* 39(3), pp. 219 – 228. Online: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/BT9910219.htm>

Internet links

[4] Australian National Botanic Gardens & Australian National Herbarium, Harden Species List: <http://www.anbg.gov.au/greening-grainbelt/harden-species-list.xls>

[5] Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment: [http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Attachments/LJEM-76QVTE/\\$FILE/Vittadinia%20muelleri.pdf](http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Attachments/LJEM-76QVTE/$FILE/Vittadinia%20muelleri.pdf)

[6] PlantNET National Herbarium of New South Wales: <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/cgi-bin/NSWfl.pl?page=nswfl&lvl=s&p&name=Vittadinia~muelleri>

[7] Victorian Flora: <http://www.victorianflora.wmcn.org.au/plantDetail.php?plantno=376.00000>

[9] Tasmanian understorey network: <http://www.understorey-network.org.au/family-index.html?species=Vittadinia%20muelleri>

[10] Dave's garden website: <http://davesgarden.com/guides/pf/go/139829/>

[11] The Unique Flora of Tasmania: <http://www.apstas.com/sgaptas-springflowers7.html>