How to Take Woolly Bush Cuttings

This easy guide shows how to take Woolly Bush cuttings so you can create many plants without the expense of buying them. There are many different varieties of this Australian native bush which originates in south western West Australia.

These plants will tolerate frosts once established with a little damage to the tips. They respond well to regular pruning which will create a denser shrub making them perfect for screening.

Woolly bush will grow both in dry and coastal conditions and in most soil types. The flower is a red half bottlebrush with soft heath-like leaves resembling a Christmas tree. Consider planting one in your front yard to decorate at Christmas time.

Common varieties include Calothamnus Quadrifidus, Calothamnus Villosus and Adenanthos Sericeus.

Tools and Materials Needed

Small Pots and Tray
Potting Mix
Pruners
Small Container
Cutting Powder

Method

It is best to take cuttings in the spring or autumn. First fill the pots with potting mix then place on a tray. Water well then make a hole in the centre of each pot with your finger down to your first knuckle.

Next fill the small container with water then take the container and pruners to the woolly bush. Find the new growth then cut at an angle with the pruners. The cutting should be 5 to 10 cm (2 to 4 inches) long. Place the cutting in the water.

Once you have taken all the cuttings take them back to the pots. Pinch off all the leaves at the bottom of the cutting leaving 1 to 2 cm of the tip with leaves.

Dip the bottom half of the cutting in the powder then place in the hole in the pot. Gently push the soil around the cutting.

Keep moist in a shady place that is protected from frost. It will take up to two months to start growing roots and up to six months before they are ready to plant out.
If they don’t show any new growth after 3 months then gently pull the cutting out of the soil and see if any roots are growing. If there are roots replant in the pot and give it some more time.

After 3 to 4 months it is a good idea to pot up the woolly bush to a larger pot with native slow release fertiliser mixed in with the potting mix.

Tip

It is always a good idea to take more cuttings than you need as some won’t grow roots. I have about a 50% success rate with woolly bush cuttings.