

How studies of seed traits can inform restoration practice

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Seeds are a primary source of plants for ecological restoration and understanding the requirements for seed germination and seedling establishment of diverse wild species is fundamental to improving our ability to re-instate diverse plant communities across degraded landscapes. Studies of seed traits are central to defining the germination niche, provide insights into how seeds may interact with the abiotic environment and the soil substrates specific to each restoration site, and underpin the development and evaluation of seed pre-treatments and sowing methods. Using examples from projects in the biodiverse Western Australian landscape, in this presentation I will outline some of our ecologically guided approaches to identifying seed physiological and morphological traits that influence seedling establishment and provide examples of how those traits can inform the development of improved techniques for restoration practice.