

MOLES SEEDS

Lewisia

Cultural Leaflet: ZZ225

Lewisia is a compact, rosette-forming rockery perennial which is sold in flower during May and June.

They need excellent drainage, so are sold as ideal for rockeries or an alpine house / cold greenhouse, but can also be grown in pots for a cool room indoors.

Variety Selection

The Sunset Strain mixture contains a wide range of colours - ivory white, rich orange, deep yellow, rich salmon, pink, peach, red and white with stripe.

Unlike any current *Lewisia*, *Elise* flowers in the first season without a cold period, usually four to five months after sowing. Flowers are pastel shades of pink, rose, salmon, orange, white, yellow and bicolour patterns. Suitable for plug production, *Elise* also makes a great patio container plant.

Programming the Crop

Sow seed in Autumn or Spring, for flowering the following year.

Propagation and Growing-on

To break the dormancy of the seed, place it in a freezer for around 10 days prior to sowing. Then sow the seeds (1,000 per gram) onto the surface of a free-draining, open, seed sowing compost, which should be thoroughly wetted with a suitable fungicide prior to sowing (to prevent damping-off diseases), and the trays allowed to drain.

Sow into plug trays to prevent root disturbance, or into seed trays. Cover the seeds with a layer of vermiculite, and cover trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germinate in a cool place, maximum 15°C – germination should commence in about 3 weeks from sowing, although it can be erratic.

Alternatively, sow the seeds in the Autumn, and leave in a cold frame – germination should be naturally broken over the Winter, and start in the Spring.

When the seedlings are large enough, prick out into a low nutrient, free-draining compost, into large-celled plug trays, then later once these are fully developed, into 9cm pots. The addition of sharp sand or grit to the compost can help the drainage, especially important when overwintering. Plants kept wet for long periods will die, so water carefully and sparingly, especially during the Winter.

Sell non-flowering plants as soon as the rosette has reached sufficient size, otherwise sell during the natural flowering time in May and June.

Pest and Disease

Keep slugs away from the plants, and monitor for signs of aphids, spraying as appropriate.

Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.

(06/19)

