

Coral Bean

Erythrina herbacea



Attributes: attracts hummingbirds, Texas native, xeriscapic

Foliage Persistence: deciduous

Annual or Perennial?: perennial

Exposure: part sun to full sun

Flower Color: red

Blooming Period: spring

Height: 7-10 feet

Width: 6 feet

Heat Tolerance: high

Water Requirements: low

Propagation: If not raised from seed, *Erythrina* can be grown from cuttings or shoots from the old roots or division of the rootstock. It prefers sandy soil and is found in Texas, Florida, Louisiana, to North Carolina, and down to the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon and San Luis Potosi.

However, seeds are the simplest way to increase stock, and will germinate quickly if treated or scarified. One method is to hold a bean with pliers in one hand and file through the outer layer with a three cornered file. Sandpaper may also be used. Seeds can also be nicked at the end with a single edge razor blade. After the seedcoat has been nicked, soak in water until the small "root" emerges. At this time, change the water daily. Some growers prefer pouring

boiling water over the seeds in a shallow dish. The seeds should quickly swell and then germinate. If not, repeat the process.

When the plants have achieved some growth, plant them in a container, leaving several inches of space between plants. The containers may be rested underneath shrubs where there is some protection from too much sun. Bring in the young plants the first season at least, so that they do not freeze. Keep these on the dry side during the winter - water lightly once a week.

Keep an eye out for snails and slugs. Return them to the outdoors when spring arrives and plant out into the landscape when large enough. It will be enjoyable to see the variations in flower color and size that may occur among the seedlings

