

LARK SELECTION

PARTRIDGE PEA (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*)

Description: Partridge pea is a native, warm-season annual legume with numerous yellow flowers produced from July to September. Plants average 2 feet tall, but may exceed 4 feet on better soil. The leaves are pinnately compound and somewhat sensitive to the touch. The black, shiny, flattened seeds are produced in pods that pop open to scatter the seed when mature.

Uses: This seed is a choice food of upland game birds and song birds.

Soil Adaptation: Grows naturally on practically all soils in Mississippi. It grows best in full sun, but will tolerate light shade.

Cultural Specifications

Method of Establishment: Seed.

Seedbed Preparation: Prepare a clean, firm seedbed.

Planting Time: March to May 1. Do not plant after May 15 because the seed may not germinate because of heat.

Planting Rate: Broadcast or shallowly drill 6 lb/acre scarified seed. To ensure nodulation seed should be inoculated with EL (cowpea) before planting. Cultipacking after planting is recommended.

Planting Depth: ¼ inch.

Fertility Requirement: Partridge peas will grow on poor soils but respond well to fertilizer. Apply 300 lb/acre of 0-20-20 or similar analysis at planting.

Management

Disking/burning of natural or planted stands of partridge peas usually reseed and do well for one to three years but will gradually decline without maintenance. Partridge peas respond well to controlled fire. Areas should be burned in February for best results. Disking will also keep stands in good condition and is probably a better method in areas where heavy stands of broomsedge occur. Disking should be done in late February to early March.

Mowing: Plants can be mowed in the spring before they are tall enough to be cut by the mower. The plants should not be mowed again until after seed matures in early to mid-October.

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