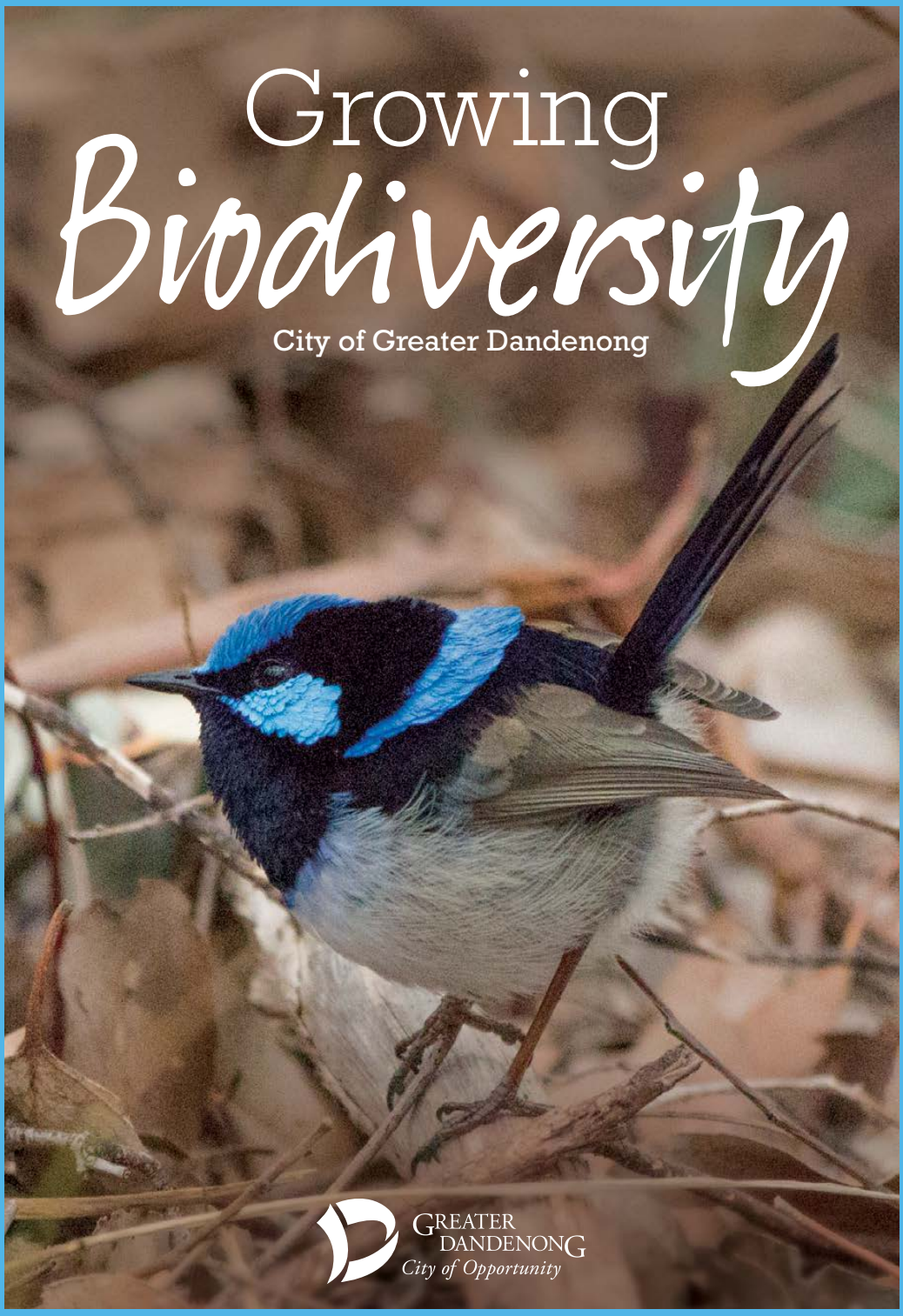
Growing Biodiversity

City of Greater Dandenong



GREATER DANDENONG
City of Opportunity

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Introduction

Our gardens provide an opportunity to support our local plants and animals. Many local plants are great choices for gardening and can be used for formal gardens or more natural gardens. Once you've established your local plants, sit back and watch the birds and butterflies enjoy your garden space!

Spotted Pardalote

Indigenous plants and biodiversity

Indigenous plants are the local plants that originally grew in an area before building and development occurred. They are suited to the soil and climate of the area.

These plants in turn provide the best possible food and shelter for the native local wildlife. If we have a series of gardens with a wide range of local plants, animals can easily and safely move along these wildlife corridors.

Biodiversity

The variety of all plants, animals and fungi found within a location.

The greater the number of different local plants and animals found in an area, the higher the biodiversity. A garden that has a range of different plants such as grasses, groundcovers, shrubs and trees will attract and support a larger number of animals including butterflies, dragonflies, birds, lizards, frogs and small mammals. Having high biodiversity improves the chances of local ecosystems surviving destructive events such as fire or climate change.

Habitat

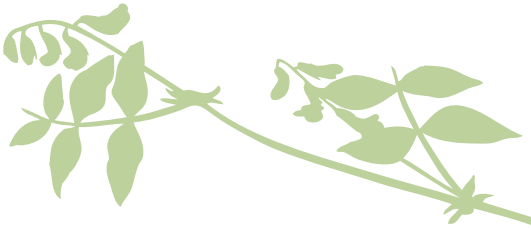
The place where a plant or animal naturally lives.

Habitats support life by providing food, water and shelter – just like your home. There are many different habitats that support different plants and animals. Examples include the bark of a tree, the soft mud of a lake or under the leaf litter.

Ecosystem

The interaction between all living (plants, animals and micro-organisms) and non-living (rocks, soil and weather) things.

An ecosystem can contain many habitats and usually covers a larger area – just like your suburb. Examples include grasslands, dry forests or wetlands. Healthy ecosystems provide us with clean air and water, healthy soils and a steady climate.



The benefits of establishing indigenous plants are that they:

- are suited to our local soil and climate
- grow quickly and often flower within the first season of being planted
- provide food and shelter for local wildlife
- are easy to look after
- will thrive without fertilisers
- have greater resistance to disease
- are most likely to survive hot, dry summers with little or no watering once they are established
- add beauty to the natural area.

While indigenous plants are species which occur naturally in a local area such as the City of Greater Dandenong, there are also species known as native plants.

Many retail nurseries sell 'native' plants, which refers to any plant species that occurs naturally in Australia. They can include a Grevillea from NSW or a Eucalypt from Tasmania.

Just like plants introduced from another country, native plants have the potential to become an environmental weed.

Our changing environment

Alterations to the natural environment can have a number of effects including a decrease in habitat and a loss of biodiversity.

Urbanisation

Vegetation in the landscape now exists as isolated patches which are not well connected. This makes it difficult for wildlife to move around and reproduce, resulting in a decline in species numbers.

Climate change

Changes in our global climate are impacting our natural environment. Ongoing lower rainfall and an increase in heatwaves and storm events are predicted to continue. It is difficult for plants and animals to adapt quickly to new conditions, resulting in a loss of native species and biodiversity.

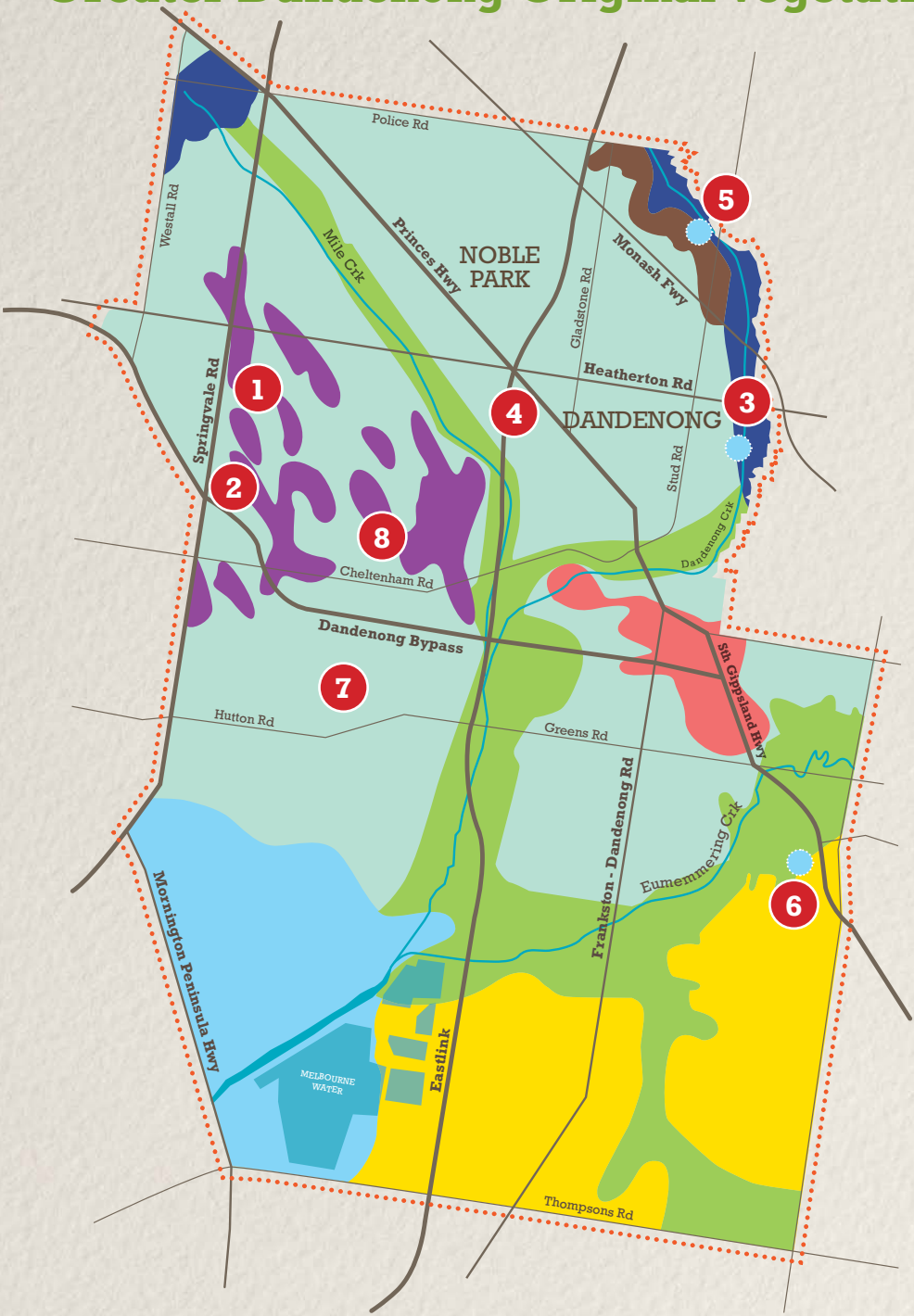
Weeds

Many non-indigenous species can become invasive, competing with indigenous plants for space, nutrients, water and light. This results in a reduction of habitat for wildlife and a loss of biodiversity. (For more information, refer to pages 58-60).

Pollution

Herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers from our gardens can enter our stormwater system if used incorrectly, where they end up polluting our local waterways and harming plants and wildlife. (For more information, refer to page 30).

Greater Dandenong Original Vegetation



CGD plant communities

- Plains Grassland
- Plains Grassy Wetland
- Swampy Riparian Woodland
- Heathy Woodland
- Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland
- Plains Grassy Woodland
- Grassy Forest
- Swampy Woodland

Eco Hotspots

One of the best ways to find out how indigenous plants look and the conditions they thrive in is to go and see them in their natural environment. The City of Greater Dandenong's most significant natural environments include:

1. Alex Wilkie Nature Reserve
2. Coomoora Flora and Fauna Woodland Reserve
3. Falkiner Reserve
4. Fotheringham Reserve
5. Tirhatuan Park
6. National Drive Reserve
7. Hidden Grove Reserve/Pencil Park
8. Roth Hetherington Botanic Gardens

Kids in the garden/reserves

Being outdoors in the garden or a local reserve is fun and exciting for children.

Nature Play ideas:

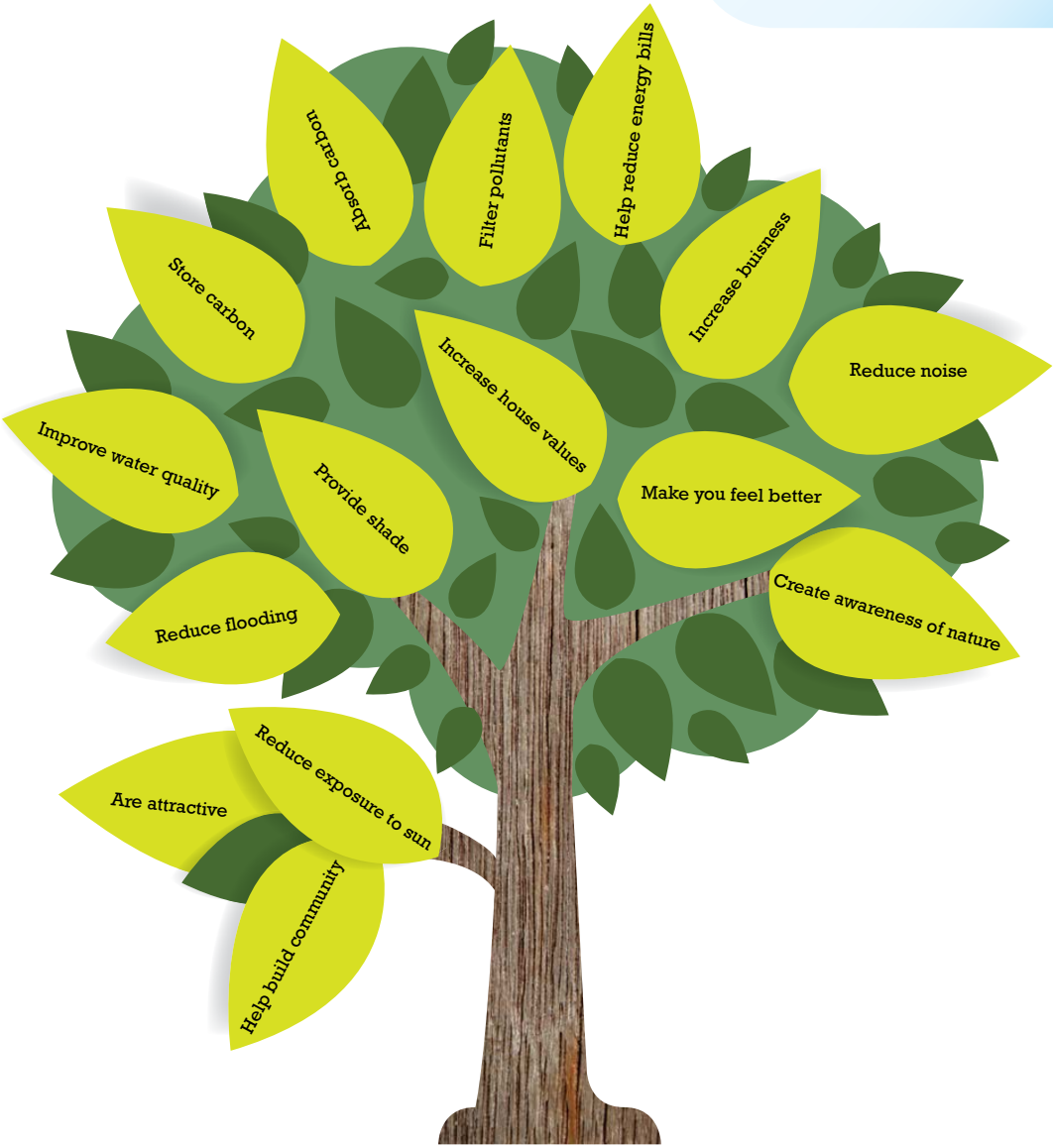
- Make secret places to hide
- Plant a feature tree for kids to run around
- Explore with a magnifying glass
- Make a small maze
- Grow vegies, especially fast growing pea, corn and radish
- Build a fairy house
- Plant bright flowers like sunflowers
- Plant native mint and lemon balm for their scent
- Build wind chimes
- Use old shoes or wheelbarrows as pots
- Explore your local parks and reserves.

Trees

Trees produce oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide and filter airborne pollutants. They also provide shelter, shade and reduce the effects of wind. Trees add enormously to the beauty of our street-scapes and provide habitat for wildlife.

The City of Greater Dandenong manages approximately 55,000 street trees that are worth approximately $182 million.

Trees in built up areas improve the quality of urban life and contribute to a sense of community; they also contribute to an attractive green city and communicate the image of a positive, nature-oriented city. Below are some benefits.



River Red Gums

Harry Habitat is a River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus Camaldulensis*) mascot. Red Gums are an important part of the landscape and across the municipality there are many magnificent old examples.

River Red Gum trees are important in providing habitat for local wildlife, mainly birds and mammals, through the formation of hollows. If you look closely at a large old tree you will likely notice a number of hollows that have developed along the trunk but also at the end of large branches. When a branch falls off a tree it creates a wound that allows air and water in, which over time begins to rot and eventually forms a hollow. Tree hollows are the natural habitat of many species of possum, gliders, small marsupials and microbats as well as parrots, lorikeets and cockatoos to name a few.

Fallen limbs on the ground also provide similarly important habitat for small ground dwelling marsupials and reptiles.

The bark of the River Red Gum also provides habitat for a range of insects to hide under.

The flowers of the River Red Gum are an important source of food for butterflies, insects, honeyeaters, parrots, microbats and mammals. In turn, insect-eating birds and mammals are attracted to the tree to feast on plump insects.

Harry Habitat

Garden Maintainence

Good gardening practices can save you time and money.

Healthy soil = healthy plants

All soil benefits from the addition of organic matter. This includes leaf litter, compost, aged animal manures and mulch. Worms in the soil break down organic matter to make food for plants, and worm burrows allow air into the soil so that plant roots can breathe.

To work out your garden soil type, simply take a handful of slightly moist soil and squeeze it. If it forms a smooth ball, it's a clay soil. If it does not hold form and simply falls apart, it's a sandy soil. If it roughly holds together, but falls apart readily when squeezed, it's a loam soil.

Clay soils

- have fine particles that tend to stick together
- can have poor drainage when wet and become hard when dry
- add organic matter to your soil
- add a dusting of gypsum and water in. (You may need to repeat this process and it can take months to take effect).

Sandy soils

- to drain freely
- can dry out quickly becoming hydrophobic (repel water with water beading on the soil)
- can lose nutrients
- are improved by the regular adding of organic matter.

Loam soils

- drain well
- have a good nutrient base for gardening
- benefit from the addition of organic matter to replace nutrients taken up by your plants.

Greater Dandenong soils

Australia is an ancient land with generally shallow, nutrient-poor soils. Our local plants are well adapted to be able to establish and thrive in these soils.

The local soils of Greater Dandenong are generally a loam/sand to loam/clay on the surface with an underlying clay layer. This means that your topsoil can be quite different to the clay base it is sitting on. Deep-rooted plants such as trees and large shrubs will need to cope with the growing conditions of a clay soil while your smaller plants need to be suited to your topsoil. There are also small, isolated areas of sandy soil towards the west of the municipality, and clay soil associated with wetland areas.

An important task for any gardener is to determine the soil type across your garden as it may vary from one area to another.

Soil maintainenece

- Don't dig up your soil unless it is very compacted. Digging destroys the soil structure resulting in collapsed air holes and drainage spaces.
- Use drip line irrigation or a trigger hose with a spray setting.
- Spreading compost on your soil (before mulching) will encourage worms in your garden and will improve the soil structure.

Mulch

Mulch is an important component of a garden because it helps to smother weeds and hold water in the organic matter and soil. As some mulch layers break down, they also add nutrients to the soil. Very fine mulches are to be avoided as they can compact and not allow water to penetrate the soil beneath. Their fineness also means they are capable of holding a lot of water, once again preventing it from infiltrating the soil beneath. Good organic mulch is one that is a mix of fine and coarse particles. Avoid using grass clipping as a mulch as they tend to increase weed levels in your garden. Better to compost them or spread them lightly over your lawn.

There are different types of mulch that should be used with different gardens.

- **Straw-basedmulches** are ideal for sandy soils, vegetable gardens and fruit trees. They break down quickly returning nutrients to the soil.
- **Bark/Bush mulch** is useful for weed suppression. Bark mulch is longer lasting than straw-based mulches.
- **Stone/pebble mulch** is suitable in areas of high traffic or succulent plant beds. Make sure your stones are sourced sustainably.

- Bush mulch is not just ideal for native habitat gardens, but all types of gardens. When spread on your garden it will create a natural leaf litter look and provide habitat for insects and lizards to shelter and feed. It will break down with time to improve the quality of the soil.
- Many habitat gardeners mulch quite deep to a depth of 10-15 cm to encourage worms and insects.
- Use pine bark and needles if you have alkaline soil or plants that are acid-loving.

Erect Guinea-flower

How to mulch

1. Remove weeds from your soil.
2. Moisten the soil thoroughly. Ensure the water is soaking into the soil. If the water is running off the soil, fork through some compost to aid water retention.
3. Spread your mulch to a depth of 3-10 cm.
4. Keep the area directly around each plant mulch-free, as contact can occasionally lead to disease such as collar-rot.
5. Top up as your mulch breaks down. Generally twice a year for fine mulches and once every couple of years for coarse mulches.

Bush mulched garden bed

Fertiliser

Plants such as vegetables have high nutrient requirements and may require extra feeding. Most other plants do not (provided they have the right soil pH, water, mulch and light). If your plants are showing signs of a nutrient deficiency, you may wish to consider a fertiliser. When feeding plants with fertilisers, follow instructions carefully, and do not overdo it, otherwise you may kill your plants with kindness!

Make your own organic fertiliser

- Soak aged animal manure, comfrey leaves or garden weeds in a bucket of water for a couple of weeks.

- Pour through a strainer.

- Add water until the solution is the colour of weak tea.

- Transfer to a watering can and pour to the base of your plants.

Indigenous plants generally do not require fertilising as they are well suited to our nutrient-poor soils.

Recycling and organic waste

Composting food scraps, lawn and garden clippings can provide your garden with an excellent source of food. Compost does not have to be dug into the soil. The micro-organisms and worms will do that for you.

ADD
TO YOUR COMPOST

- Fruit and vegie scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Tea bags
- Herbs
- Leaves
- Egg shells – crushed
- Pizza containers
- Egg cartons
- Vacuum cleaner dust
- Onion – outer skin
- Finely chopped citrus peel
- Grass clippings
  – thin layers 3 to 4cm
- Chopped prunings
- Weeds
  – not bulbs or seed heads
- Shredded newspapers
- Fresh manure
- Spoilt hay

KEEP OUT
OF YOUR COMPOST

- Meat and fish scraps
  – they can attract vermin
- Dairy
  – again they attract vermin
- Office paper
  – bleached or glossy
- Weed seeds and bulbs
  – you will only spread them around your garden
- Bird, dog and cat poo
  – can be a health risk
- Large tree branches
  – unless you've put them through a chipper
- Citrus fruit
  – too acidic in large quantities, okay in small quantities
- Diseased plants
  – spreads disease

Kitchenfermentationkits

Specially designed bench kits are a convenient way to break down kitchen waste. These kits are a fermentation system that converts waste to a nutrient rich soil conditioner for your garden. The system is air tight and requires you to sprinkle a handful of the manufacturer's rice husk and wheat bran that has been infused with micro-organisms over a layer of kitchen waste to rapidly break down food scraps. The fermented product is then dug into the soil where it continues to break down.

Compost bins

Compost bins are a compact closed system. They work best if located in a sunny position during winter and a shaded position during summer. Place them on soil so that liquid drains well and worms can enter the bin to aid composting. Add alternate layers of high nitrogen ingredients (e.g. food scraps, manure, grass clippings, soft prunings) to low nitrogen ingredients (e.g. dry leaves, straw, garden waste, shredded newspaper). Keep moist but not too wet. Cover with a layer of hessian to retain heat and moisture. The compost should be ready in as little as 16 weeks when full.

Composting your food scraps and garden waste helps reduce global warming. Plus your plants will love you!

Worm farms

Worm farms are a great option if you have limited space and predominantly want to dispose of food scraps. So if you live in a flat or a house with a small backyard, worm farms are ideal. Worms produce rich, inexpensive garden fertiliser, called worm castings and liquid worm tea.

Worm farms can be purchased from garden centres and hardware stores, and come with instructions and bedding material. There are specific worms that eat kitchen scraps only and these are different from the earthworms you encounter in the garden. These can be purchased by the box and you should start with a minimum of 1,000 worms.

Food

When you introduce worms to your worm farm they may take a few weeks to start eating and slowly build up their appetite. Add fruit and vegetable scraps, cut up as small as possible. Avoid meat, bread, onions and citrus. If you are adding more food than the worms can eat, your worm farm may become smelly as the food is rotting. Be sure to monitor and adjust the amount of food you are giving your worms.

Moisture

In order to breathe, worms need to keep their skin moist and cool. Keep a few moist layers of newspaper or hessian over the top of your worms before placing the lid on your worm farm.

Temperature

Worms stop eating if they are too cold and will die if they are too hot. They perform best at temperatures 18 - 24°C so it is important to keep your worms in a shady place out of direct sunlight in summer.

Using your worm castings and tea

Worm castings will not burn your plants and can be mixed directly into the soil before adding seedlings. Use as much as you like! Worm tea on the other hand is a strong nutrient boost for your plants and needs to be diluted at a ratio of 1 part tea to 10 parts water before you water the base of your plants.

Worm farm

So if you live in a flat or a house with a small backyard, worm farms are ideal.

Planting

The most important first step is to ensure you have the right plant for the right spot. Make sure you know the conditions where you are planting (e.g. full sun, sandy soil) and then find a plant that will thrive in those conditions.

Buy from a reputable nursery to ensure the foliage and roots are well formed and free from pests and diseases.

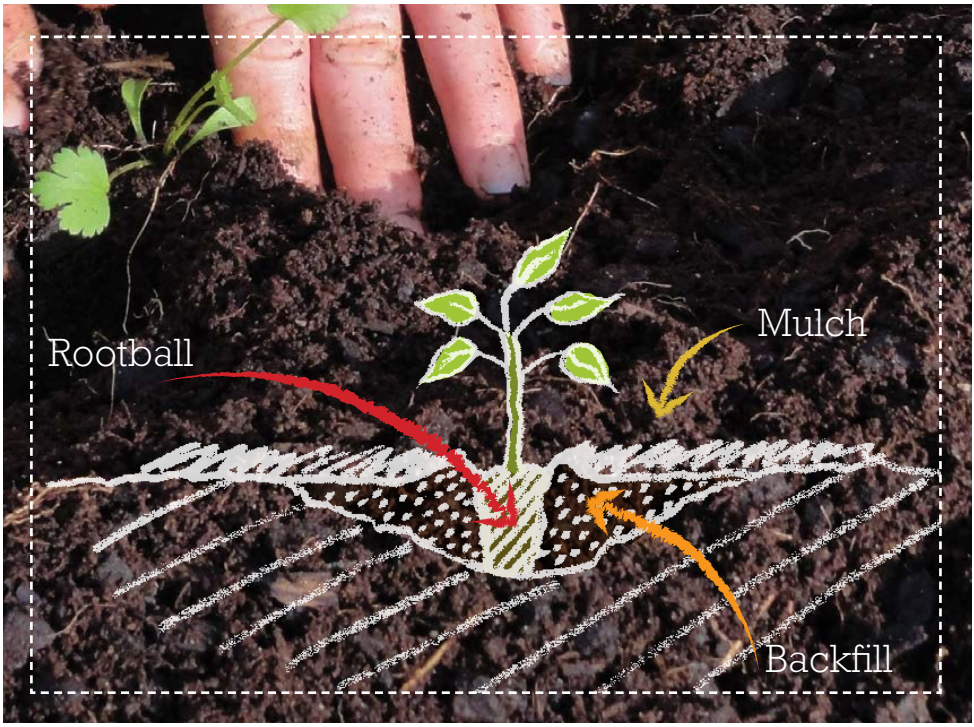
You can plant into your garden with seeds, cuttings or potted plants of various ages. In general, buying younger stock in tubes (tubestock) is better as the roots are less likely to girdle (to be 'strangled') and the plant establishes more readily. Tubestock is also a cheaper option than most potted plants.

You can buy good quality indigenous plants in tubestock from nurseries listed on page 61.

Planting indigenous plants after the first rainfall in autumn generally works best.

Planting out

1. Give your potted plant a good soak in a bucket of water prior to planting.
2. Dig a sloping, shallow hole 2 to 3 times the width of the root ball and as deep.
3. Fill the hole with water and allow it to drain before planting.
4. Upend your pot. Any roots protruding through the bottom can be pruned before removing from the pot. Remove the plant from the pot by holding it upside down and gently tap it.
5. Place the plant in the hole so that the top of the root ball is flush with the surface level.
6. Backfill loose soil around the plant, ensuring no weed material is present, and press down firmly.
7. Fashion a circle of raised soil around the edge of the root ball to form a watering basin.
8. Water thoroughly to settle the soil around the plant. Watering removes air pockets from the soil and helps the plant cope with the stress of relocation.
9. Mulch up to the edge of the root ball. Do not mulch up to the stem as this may cause collar rot.



Water

Australia is a dry continent and our gardens have suffered through some very extreme dry periods. Climate change modelling suggests we can expect more extreme weather conditions in the future.

Approximately 35% of household water use is for the garden. Soil improvement and mulching help save water. If you don't already, you should consider using alternative water sources, rather than mains (tap) water for your garden. In your garden, significant water savings can be made by:

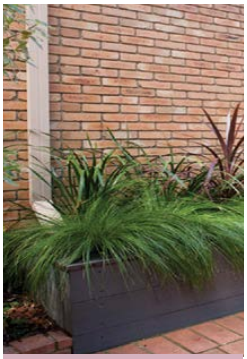
- installing rainwater tanks
- fitting greywater diverters
- using Class A recycled water (if available)
- building raingardens
- directing surface water onto the garden
- installing efficient irrigation systems
- planting low water use plants.

Most indigenous plants (unless they are wetland plants) are suited to dry conditions. They generally do not need additional watering once they are established. Monitor them during heat waves and give them a deep soaking if they show signs of wilting.

Utilising runoff

In the natural environment, rain slowly filters through the soil into the groundwater table and eventually enters our rivers and streams.

The flow rate is slowed down by plants and other natural features in the environment and nutrients and pollutants are removed. This process results in clean water entering our waterways. In Dandenong's urbanised landscape, many of our surfaces, such as roads, have been sealed and do not soak the water up. When it rains large amounts of water rapidly enters our stormwater system carrying litter and pollutants into our waterways. Stormwater runoff represents a valuable resource that can be utilised by gardeners.



Downpipe diversion

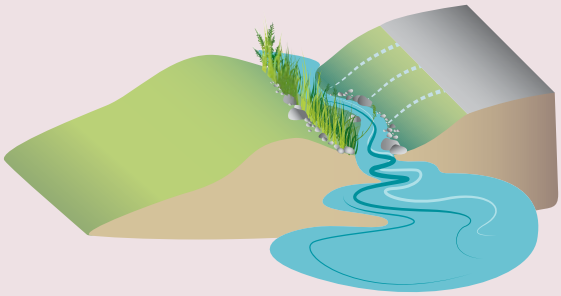
By diverting one or more downpipes around your property you can direct stormwater onto your garden beds or lawn. A downpipe diversion can easily be fitted to your downpipe by a licensed plumber.

Landscaping

If you are paving consider creating a space between that will enable water to absorb into the soil. Granitic and sand paths require more maintenance than concrete but will allow water to seep into the ground.

Swales

Water can be directed onto your garden beds by gently sloping the surface of driveways and patios towards your garden beds or lawn area. Consider building a swale (vegetated channel) positioned to move runoff from your hard surfaces to your garden or a small wetland.



Raingardens

A raingarden is a gravel filled trench designed to receive stormwater directly from a disconnected downpipe or runoff from surrounding hard surfaces. Water entering a raingarden is slowed and filtered helping to protect our waterways. Raingardens consist of layers of soil for filtration, gravel for drainage, and plants that can tolerate both extreme wet and dry conditions. There are many different types of raingardens from planter boxes to a trench.

How a raingarden works

1. Rain and stormwater wash pollution into raingarden.
2. Water spreads throughout raingarden where plants use up nutrients.
3. Water seeps down through the layers of the raingarden trapping sediments and pollutants.
4. Filtered stormwater is collected in pipes and flows to local waterways.

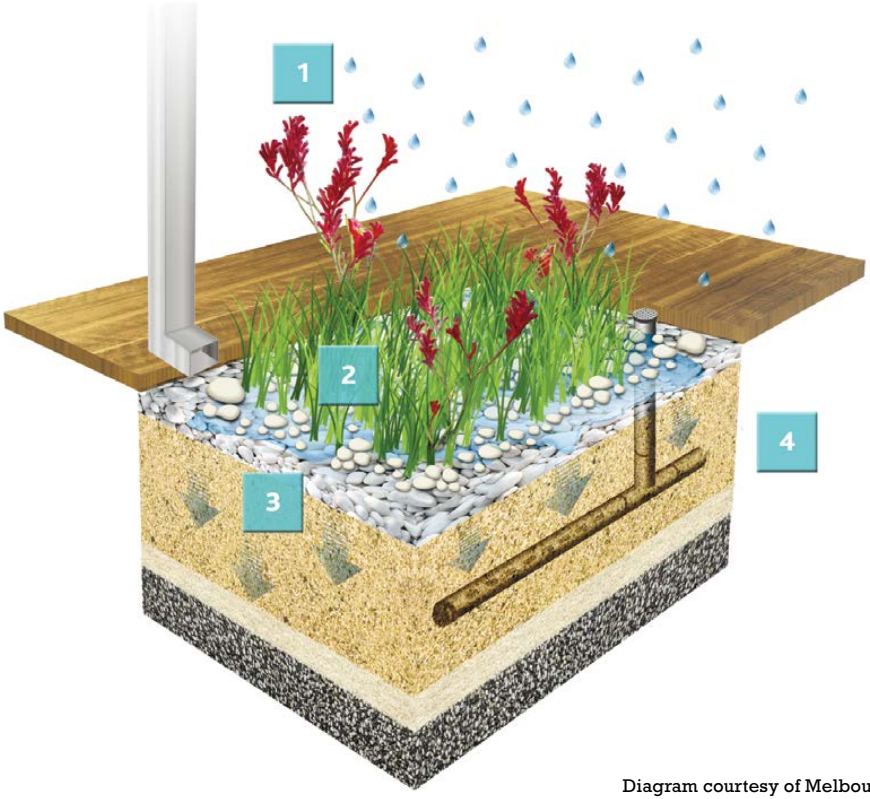


Diagram courtesy of Melbourne Water

For excellent and detailed instruction sheets visit:
www.melbournewater.com.au/raingardens

Water application

How water is delivered to your plants is very important.

- Use a drip line watering system which reduces waste by ensuring that the water only goes to the roots of your plants where it is needed.
- Check and clean your irrigation system every spring to ensure it is working efficiently.
- Install garden tap timers to reduce over-watering and monitor.
- Use a rain sensor so that watering doesn't occur automatically and ensure the system is turned off if rain is predicted.
- Water in the early morning so your plants are not distressed through the heat of the day, this may also work to reduce the impact of fungal diseases and moulds.
- Give your plants a long, deep watering and make sure they are grouped according to their water needs.
- Use a trigger nozzle hose when watering for extra savings!

For information on current permanent water use rules and rebates contact your water retailer.

Trigger nozzle with adjustable spray control.

Tap timer


Dripline irrigation

Grow your own Food

From a simple container to extensive garden beds, you can grow seasonal fresh fruit, herbs and vegetables that taste delicious and are more nutritious.

Vegetables/Seed collecting

Vegetables

Grow the vegetables you like to eat. There are generally two main planting seasons, autumn and spring.

Popular autumn seedlings include peas, kale, Asian greens, brussels sprouts, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, and onions. The makings of delicious winter soups!

Produce for planting in spring includes capsicum, chilli, eggplants, summer beans, carrots, cucumber, lettuce, beetroot, sweet corn, tomatoes and zucchini. Summer salads galore!

Seed collecting

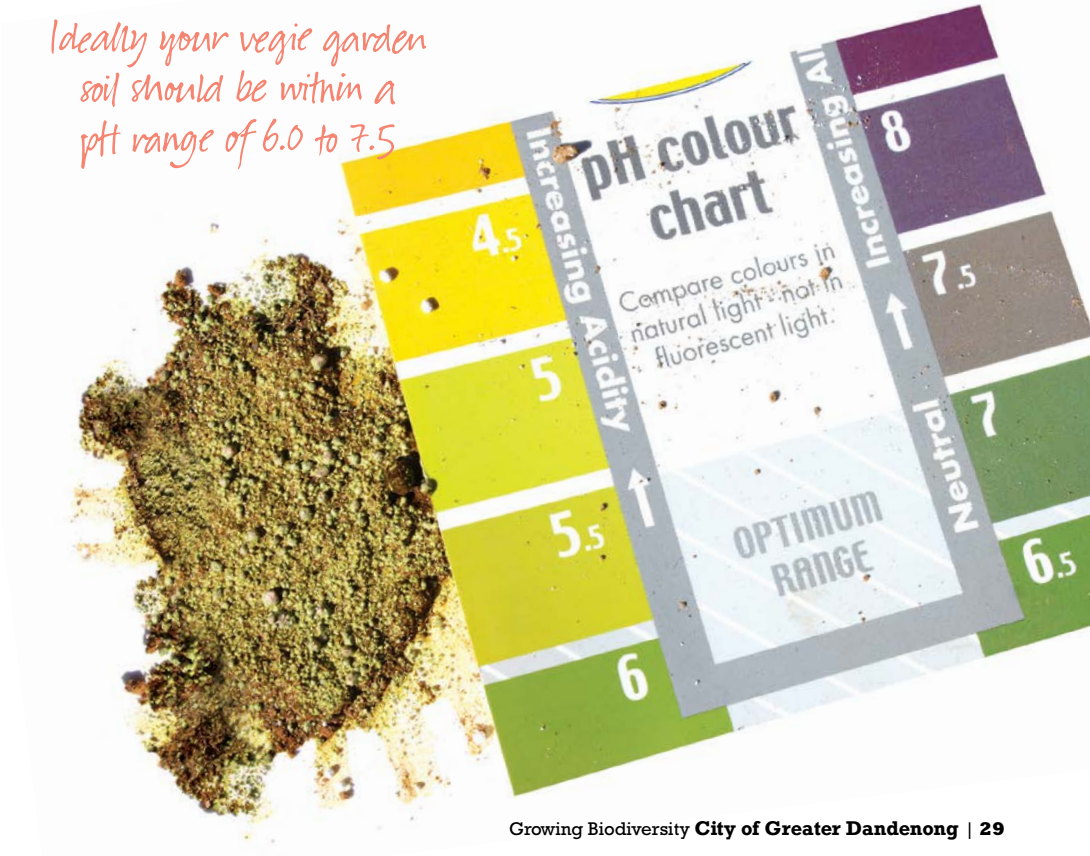
Collecting your own seeds from your best producing vegies can be an easy and cost effective way to grow future crops. Vegies such as tomato, pumpkin, pea, bean, lettuce, kale, radish and watermelon are great plants to start with.

Soil Health

Keeping soil healthy is an ongoing process in a productive garden where plants are continually removing nutrients from the soil. Produce requires large amounts of soil nutrients for optimum growth. This is particularly true for fast-growing annual crops. Adding compost and aged manures to your vegie garden soil will provide most of your plant's nutritional needs. Existing soil nutrients can be made more available by regulating the soil pH.

Ideally your vegie garden soil should be within a pH range of 6.0 to 7.5 where most plant nutrients are readily available. A good investment is a soil pH testing kit that has everything you need to check whether your soil is acidic, alkaline or something neutral. Such kits are readily available from garden centres and hardware stores.

If your soil pH is too low (acidic), it can be raised with dolomite or lime. If the pH is too high (alkaline), it can be lowered with an application of sulphur. Carefully follow the instructions for application on the packet. However, altering pH takes time, so don't expect immediate results.



Pest Control

Chewing, sap-sucking and rasping pests are part and parcel of gardening. We can often tolerate a minor infestation, but need to take action if the pest is damaging our plants.

It is important to correctly identify the pest, its consequences, the severity of the problem, the possibility of natural predators keeping the pest under control, and control techniques you can put in place. You can help minimise pest problems if you:

- Check your garden regularly for signs of infestations.
- Avoid using high nitrogen fertilisers that produce soft, sappy growth that attracts pests.
- Squash or remove pests with a gloved hand. e.g. caterpillars and snails- chooks love them.
- Spray the pest off with a jet of water e.g aphids.
- Cut off heavily infested plant parts. Do not compost.
- Pick up fallen fruit.

Home remedies

To control **aphids**, crush a whole bulb of garlic and cover with vegetable oil. After two days, strain off the liquid, add a couple of drops of dishwashing liquid and use one millilitre of concentrate to one litre of water. Spray on pests.

Pour linseed or fish oil set in a flat dish at soil level to trap **earwigs**.

Deter **snails** and slugs by ringing your plants with a circle of coffee grounds or sawdust. Likewise set beer traps.

Trap **coddling moths** by half filling a jar with water and add a little sherry and some vegetable oil. Hang in your apple and pear trees.

Dab **mealybugs** with a cotton bud that has been dipped in methylated spirits.

Ladybird eating aphid

Snail/earwig trap

Growing fruit trees

What can be better than picking and eating a crisp apple or sweet apricot fresh from the tree? Fruit trees also provide wonderful shade in your garden.

- All fruit trees require plenty of sun and good drainage.
- Most fruit trees prefer a neutral pH of 6.0 to 7.0.
- Prepare your soil in advance by adding lots of compost.
- Apply liquid fertiliser at bud burst and during fruiting.
- Water to the base of the tree.
- When choosing a fruit tree it is important to check whether it is self-fertile e.g. apricot, or requires another tree for pollination e.g. apple.
- Think about the space you have available and how big your tree will grow. If space is limited consider dwarf varieties or espaliering.

Citrus Gall Wasp

The adult female wasp emerges from the gall (calluses) in late winter and lays her eggs in the soft stem of the same tree. The larvae grow in the stems until they pupate and reinfest the tree.

Treatment:

- Avoid high nitrogen fertilisers in late winter and spring.
- Remove all newly formed galls before the end of winter.
- Hang yellow sticky traps on infected trees in late winter.
- Remove infected stems and burn.

Keeping Bees & Chickens

Chickens

A few hens in the backyard provide an excellent source of eggs and fertiliser for your vegetable garden, plus they love kitchen scraps and garden waste. There are a few things to consider before setting up your hen house.....

Council regulations

Within the City of Greater Dandenong a maximum of 10 hens is allowed on land that is less than 400 square meters in size. Roosters are not permitted. Properties between 400-5000 square meters require a permit to have a rooster.

Basic requirements

You will need to provide your hens with a secure, clean and comfortable hen house that includes nest boxes and a space to run. They will require fresh, clean water in containers that cannot be knocked over and chicken pellets and grain provided in vermin-proof containers.

For more information visit: www.sgaonline.org.au

Honeybees

Since the 1990's the world's honeybee population has been in serious decline. Bees are one of the main pollinators of plants and without them our food supply and biodiversity are at risk. Pesticides, disease and climate change are believed to be the main cause of this concerning situation. Backyard beekeeping can help support bee populations, increase pollination rates and provide you with delicious honey.

Anyone who keeps one or more hives is required to register with Agriculture Victoria.

For further information on registering and keeping honeybees visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au

Backyard beekeeping can help support bee populations

Habitat Gardening

Attracting native animals to your garden can add extra colour, interest and enjoyment.

Key design elements of a habitat garden

Many native animals depend on indigenous plants for food, shelter (from predators, competitors or the weather), or somewhere to breed safely. Likewise, indigenous plants benefit from native animals through pollination, seed dispersal, pest control, waste breakdown and soil maintenance.

Layers

A key to creating a habitat garden is to create structural diversity – lots of plants and lots of different layers. Aim to create a mix of trees, shrubs of varying height, grasses and groundcovers.

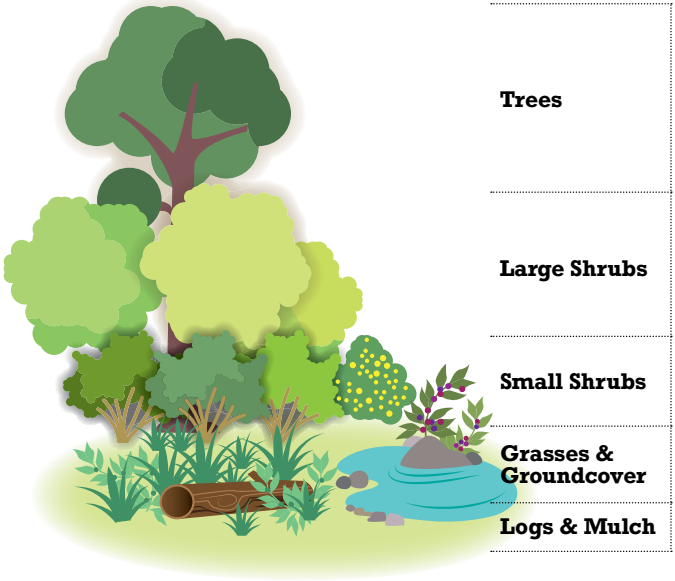
Dead trees and shrubs can also provide habitat for many of our native wildlife. Likewise a few logs, rocks, sticks, mulch and leaves on the ground can provide habitat for many local insects and lizards.

Food

Plants that produce nectar, pollen, seeds, fruit and leaves provide food for many of our native animals. Dead plant material can also be a source of food. Insects that live on the plants, mulch and soil also provide food for birds, lizards, frogs and mammals. (For further information on plants to attract wildlife, refer to pages 47-57).

Create structural diversity.

Garden Layers



Purple Flax-lily berries

Dead trees and shrubs can also provide habitat for many of our native wildlife.

Water

A reliable water source, particularly in summer, will help attract wildlife to your garden. A shallow birdbath on a pedestal next to a dense or prickly shrub will help protect birds from predators while they bathe and drink. Frogs need a permanent or semi-permanent water source to keep their skin moist and provide opportunities to breed. Butterflies love to gather on a wide dish of damp sand or a smallpuddle in the soil.

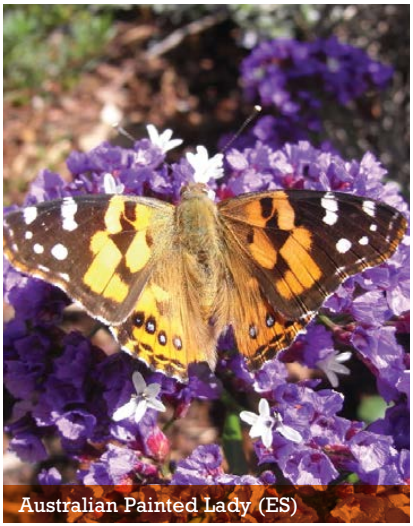
Shelter

Native wildlife need to find shelter from bad weather, predators, and competitors. They need a refuge in which to build their homes and raise their young. Prickly shrubs such as Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa*), Prickly Currant-bush (*Coprosma quadrifida*), Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*) and mature trees such as the Narrow-leaved Peppermint (*Eucalyptus radiata*) can provide homes for a large range of insect, bird and mammal species.

Bird bath

Silvereye

Attracting butterflies



Australian Painted Lady (ES)

Imperial Jezebel on Silver Banksia (RB)

Butterflies are a welcome addition to any garden. They will travel quite a distance in search of nectar-producung plants for food and host plants to lay their eggs on. Don't be too concerned about the resulting caterpillars as they are not destructive like the introduced Cabbage White Butterfly caterpillars that chomp through your garden.

Recipe:

- Add a dish of damp sand. Butterflies take in water and essential salts and minerals from the soil.
- Include a flat rock or paving to bask in the morning sun.
- Create a shady retreat from the midday sun and somewhere to shelter from rain e.g. broad-leaved plants enable them to cling safely to the underside.
- Practice natural pest control.
- Plant a range of host plants for different butterflies to lay their eggs (e.g. Kangaroo Grass for Common Browns, Everlasting Daisies for Australian Painted Ladies, Austral Indigo for Common Grass-blue).
- Plant lots of open, nectar-producing flowers particularly blue, red and yellow coloured flowers. Examples include daisies such as Coast Daisy, pea flowers including Running Postman, grasses such as Kangaroo and Wallaby-grass; and many of our flowering wattles, banksias and eucalypts.

Threats:

- insecticides and lack of habitat

Butterflies

Look for the butterfly icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for butterflies.

Native sweat bee collecting pollen on Showy Podolepis (*Podolepis jaceoides*).

Native bees

Native bees are quite different to European Honey Bees. They are often solitary and nest alone. A single female bee will build a small nest in either a burrow in the ground or burrows in soft timber, rock crevices or in tunnels left behind by wood-boring beetle larvae.

There is often a shortage of suitable nesting places so native bees will readily move into a home-made bee hotels..

Locate your bee hotel under an overhang to protect it from rain. Place it at least 1m but no more than 2m above the ground in a warm, sunny spot.

Bees need protection from most pesticides, a source of water nearby and access to clumps of blue, pink, white or yellow flowering plants.

Local native bees

The native bee species local to the City of Greater Dandenong include Reed bees (*Exoneura and Braunsapsis* species), Blue-banded bees (*Amegilla bombiformis*) and Leafcutter and Resin bees (*Megachilles*).

Bamboo bee hotel

Bamboo bee hotels can attract Reed, Leafcutter and Resin bees. Bamboo should be cut into short lengths just behind the nodes, so that there is only a hole at one end. Bundle them together with wire or in a frame. Or you can bundle paper drinking straws into a piece of downpipe or an empty drinking bottle.

Timber bee hotel

Reed bees can be attracted to timber bee hotels. Use blocks of untreated hardwood and softwood to drill holes of varying size. Make the holes smooth and blind (not right through the timber). Drill a variety of hole sizes from 2mm-10mm wide and to a depth of 120-150mm.

Clay bee hotel

The beautiful Blue-banded Bee can be attracted to nest in a clay/mud hotel. Mudbricks, they work brilliantly. Carefully drill a variety of different sized holes similar to the dimensions given for a timber bee hotel. Or fill a section of PVC pipe with clay and add some holes!

Leafcutter Bee (MJS)

Chequered Bee (MJS)

Blue-banded Bee (MJS)

Attracting small birds

Small garden birds are delightful to watch as they forage around the garden or queue up to take a bath. While finches are seed-eaters and Silvereyes berry-eaters, the majority of small birds are insect-eaters. Great natural pest controllers!

Recipe:

- Provide a shallow dish of fresh water in an elevated safe position for bathing and drinking.
- Create open areas for foraging
- Mulch garden beds to attract tasty insect treats.
- Practice natural pest control.
- Plant dense or prickly indigenous shrubs for protection and safe nest sites.
- Prune indigenous shrubs to create a denser form.
- Plant a range of plants including prickly wattles, tea-trees, correas and climbers.
- Lock up your pets at night.

Threat:

- Carnivorous birds, wattlebirds, Noisy Miners, cats and dogs (night curfew essential), pesticides.


Silvereye


Superb Fairy-wren


Eastern Yellow Robin (RH)


Striated Thornbill

Small birds

Look for the small bird icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for small birds.

Attracting honeyeaters

Honeyeaters are very active birds that need a rich supply of nectar and pollen-producing flowers to keep them fuelled. They have a brush-tongue they use to collect nectar and pollen. Honeyeaters can be protective of a good supply of food and quite aggressive towards other nectar feeders. They also need insects in their diet, so, despite their name, don't be surprised if you see them snapping at some bugs.

Recipe:

- Include a shallow dish of fresh water in an elevated safe position for bathing and drinking.
- Practice natural pest control.
- Plant dense or prickly small and large shrubs for protection and safe nest sites.
- Plant a range of nectar and pollen-producing plants.
- Lock up your pets at night.

Threats:

- Carnivorous birds, wattlebirds, Noisy Miners (territorial), cats and dogs (night curfew essential), and pesticides.

Honeyeaters

Look for the honeyeater icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide(pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for honeyeaters.

Eastern Spinebill

New Holland Honeyeater

White-plumed Honeyeater

Red Wattlebird

Attracting parrots

Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo

Eastern Rosella

Red-rumped Parrot

Little Corella

Parrots feed on a wide variety of plants. Nectar-feeders such as the Musk and Rainbow Lorikeet have a brush-tongue to collect nectar and pollen. Seed-eaters such as the Red-rumped Parrot, Galahs and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos feed on wattles, banksias, eucalypts and grasses. Corellas dig in the ground for tubers and the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo loves to find grubs hiding under tree bark.

Recipe:

- Include a source of fresh water, especially for the seed-eating parrots.
- Plant a range of nectar, pollen and seed producing plants.
- One tall tree for perching, roosting and nesting.
- Provide tree hollows to nest in, or a nest box especially designed for parrots .
- Practice natural pest control.
- Lock up your pets at night.

Threats:

- Carnivorous birds, wattlebirds, Noisy Miners, domestic cats and dogs (night curfew essential), lack of nesting places (hollows) and pesticides.

Parrots

Look for the parrot icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for parrots.

Attracting large birds and owls

Birds such as Tawny Frogmouths, Magpies, owls, Kookaburras and butcherbirds are meat-eaters that feed on small mammals, lizards and large insects. A few large birds, such as the Common Bronzewing and Crested Pigeon are seed-eaters that mainly feed on grass seeds.

Recipe:

- Provide a source of fresh water for bathing and drinking.
- Include a few tall trees for perching, roosting and nesting.
- Provide tree hollows, or a nest box for some large birds such as owls.
- Plant a range of different plant types to attract their food.
- Practice natural pest control.
- Lock up your pets at night.

Threats:

- Other carnivorous birds (to eggs, chicks and fledglings), wattlebirds, Noisy Miners, cats, dogs (night curfew essential), and pesticides.


Australian Magpie


Grey Currawong


Southern Boobook


Tawny Frogmouth

Large birds & owls

Look for the large bird icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for large birds and owls.

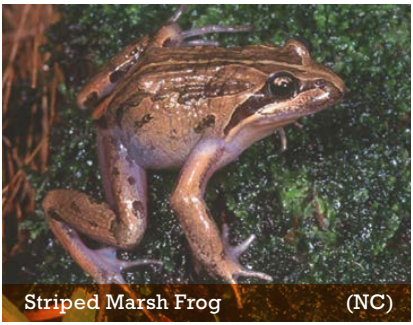
Barn Owl

Tree hollows

can take up to 100 years to form. They are important habitat for gliders, possums, microbats, parrots and owls. Due to the clearing of old trees, there is now a shortage of hollows for many of our native mammals and birds. As a result, many species are finding it difficult to nest and breed. Consider adding nest boxes to your garden. Different species require different sized nest boxes.

Attracting frogs to your garden

Pobblebonk (NC)



Striped Marsh Frog (NC)

Frogs need a sheltered and well vegetated pond (free from fish) for the egg and tadpole stages of their life cycle. Breeding time is when you will hear frogs calling. During the non-breeding season they are quiet and live away from the water. Tadpoles feed on algae, decaying plants and tiny water bugs while adult frogs eat larger insects.

For further information on building a frog pond visit: www.sgaonline.org.au/frog-ponds.

Frogs

Look for the frog icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide(pages 47-57) for plants that provide food and shelter for frogs.

Spotted Marsh Frog (NC)

Common Eastern Froglet (JB)

Southern Brown Tree Frog (JB)

Attracting lizards, skinks and mammals

Blue-tongue Lizard

Garden Skink

Marbled Gecko (JB)

Blue-tongued Lizards, Marbled Geckos and Garden Skinks generally prefer to snack on insects, but are opportunists that will also eat berries and seed.

Recipe:

- Provide flat rocks in a sunny spot to warm up.
- Mulch garden beds to attract insects to eat.
- Practice natural pest control.
- Include a shallow water supply on the ground.
- Provide shelter under shrubs and tussocky grasses.
- Lock up your pets at night.

Threats:

- Carnivorous birds, cats and dogs (night curfew essential), and pesticides.

Lizards & skinks

Look for the lizard icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57).

Brushtail Possum

Possums and bats are the most likely mammals to visit your garden. Protect your favourite plants; refer page 46.

Mammals

Look for the bat icon in the Indigenous Plant Guide (pages 47-57).

Living with wildlife

Birds, possums and bats enjoy our plants as much as we do, sometimes a bit too much! To reduce the impact of wildlife on plants there are a number of options.

Tree guards
If your indigenous plants are in danger of being eaten, it may be worthwhile protecting them with a staked tree guard until they are established.

Tree Collars
Attach a ring of hard plastic or thin metal around the trunk of your trees to prevent wildlife climbing up and down.

Scare Devices
There are a lot of devices out there, such as plastic owls, scarecrows, rubber snakes and CDs, that work to varying degrees. The most important thing is to move them about regularly to avoid your wildlife getting used to them.

Fencing
You can enclose your garden beds in a fence of floppy chicken wire with the top curved outwards. For smaller areas you can build a portable wire frame to cover your plants.

Netting
Nylon netting should be avoided as it can trap animals resulting in their death.

Responsible pet ownership
Ensure your efforts to attract native wildlife to your yard are not undone by pets such as cats and dogs. Keep your pets, especially cats, inside during the night to avoid them attacking wildlife. Collar bells on cats have limited success.

Avoid feeding birds
Wild birds do not need extra feeding and in many cases it will make them ill. Seed trays tend to attract the more aggressive birds, and introduced pest birds such as the Indian Myna love nothing more than an easy feed from a pet food bowl. Feed pets indoors or where birds cannot access their bowls.

Do not feed ducks as bread is human food, not duck food!

Injured Wildlife

If you come across injured wildlife you can contact Wildlife Victoria for advice. See page 61 for contact details.

Black duck (RH)

Indigenous Plant Guide

Indigenous plants look great in any garden, providing spectacular displays of colour and texture throughout the year.

City of Greater Dandenong has a vast array of indigenous plants that differ to those in other parts of Australia, and even parts of Melbourne. They tend to grow quickly often flowering within the first season of being planted and have greater resistance to disease.

The following plants are a sample of the diverse range of indigenous plants of Greater Dandenong and surrounds. Visit the nurseries listed on page 61 for a wider range and expert advice on how to grow and maintain your plants.

Refer to this fauna key for the following table of 50 common indigenous plants.

Butterflies such as the Australian Painted Lady.

Small birds such as wrens, robins and fantails.

Parrots such as rosellas, lorikeets and cockatoos.

Honeyeaters such as spinebills, wattlebirds and honeyeaters.

Large birds such as owls and kookaburras.

Lizards such as skinks and Blue-tongue Lizards.

Frogs such as Pobblebonk and Spotted Marsh Frog.

Mammals such as microbats, echidnas and possums.

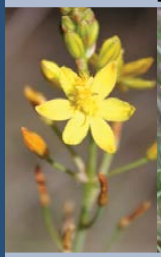
50 Common **Indigenous Plants**

HERBS, GRASSES & LILIES

Austral Stork's-bill *(Pelargonium australe)*


- A fast-growing plant for rockeries and small gardens.
- Grows to 30-60cm high and 30cm-1m wide.
- Flowers from October-February.
- Prefers well-drained soils in full to part sun.

Bulbine Lily *(Bulbine bulbosa)*




- Long-flowering plant grows to 25cm high and 30cm wide.
- Full to part sun, well-drained soils.
- Flowers from September-January.
- Dies down to underground tuber after flowering or in dry conditions, to re-shoot in autumn.

Common Tussock-grass *(Poa labillardierei)*


- A fast-growing tussock with delicate flowerheads from October to February.
- Grows 0.5-1m high and wide.
- Requires cutting back every few years to de-thatch old growth.
- Prefers moist to slightly dry soils.
- Full to part sun.

Button Everlasting *(Coronidium scorpoides)*


- Useful rockery plant.
- Grows 20-30cm high and wide.
- Yellow daisy flower September-December.
- Well-drained soil.
- Full to part sun.

Grass Trigger-plant *(Stylidium graminifolium)*

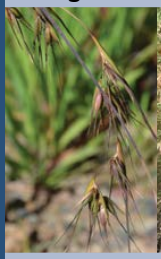
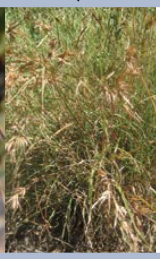

- Tufted plant to 25cm.
- Pink flowering spikes up to 1m tall from September-December.
- Prefers full sun and moist, well-drained soil.
- Tolerates both wet and dry periods once established.

HERBS, GRASSES & LILIES

Ivy-leaf Violet *(Viola hederacea)*


- A fast-growing groundcover with creeping stems.
- Ideal for moist, shady positions.
- Attractive purple/white flowers most of the year, especially June-March.
- Moist to wet soil.
- Full to part sun.

Kangaroo Grass *(Themeda triandra)*

- An attractive plant, particularly when mass planted.
- 30cm-1m high and 20-60cm wide.
- Will tolerate most soils, but performs best in well-drained soils.
- Grows in full or part sun.
- Decorative flowerheads held above foliage from September-March.

Kidney-weed *(Dichondra repens)*


- Creeping groundcover that forms a dense mat of leaves.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soil.
- Light to full shade.
- An excellent lawn substitute in low traffic areas.

Knobby Club-rush *(Ficinia nodosa)*


- Distinctive flowerhead for most of the year.
- Grows 15cm-1m high and 60cm-2m wide.
- Moist soils, tolerating dryness once established.
- Full or part sun.

Long Purple-flag *(Patersonia occidentalis)*


- Grows from 20-40cm high to 30-60cm wide.
- Attractive purple flowers September-January.
- Grows in most soil types.
- Tolerates wet and dry periods. Suitable for pond edges.
- Full to part sun.

50 Common **Indigenous Plants**

HERBS, GRASSES & LILIES

Spreading Flax-lily *(Dianella admixta)*


- 30-80cm high to 50cm-1m wide.
- Grows in well-drained soils.
- Full to part sun.
- Fragrant, blue flowers September-January.

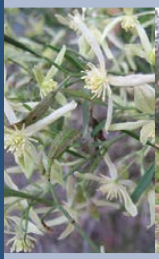
Purple Coral-pea *(Hardenbergia violacea)*


- Attractive fast-growing creeper.
- Can be trained on a trellis or over a retaining wall.
- Showy purple flowers from July-November.
- Full to part sun with well-drained soil.

Running Postman *(Kennedia prostrata)*


- An attractive, trailing groundcover that also grows well in containers or hanging baskets.
- Showy flowers from August-November.
- Prefers dry, well-drained, gravelly soils.
- Full sun or light shade.

Small-leaved Clematis *(Clematis microphylla)*



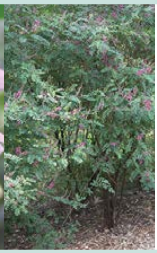

- A scrambling climber can be trained to cover a fence or trellis.
- Prefers well-drained soils in full to part sun.
- Produces masses of starry flowers from July-September.
- Attractive, feathery seedheads after flowering.

Tall Bluebell *(Wahlenbergia stricta)*


- Masses of flowers peaking from October-March.
- Grows 20-50cm high and wide.
- Prune after flowering and provide additional water in summer.
- Full to part sun.
- Well-drained soils, tolerates some dryness once established.

SMALL SHRUBS

Austral Indigo *(Indigofera australis)*

- An attractive, fast-growing shrub that looks great planted in a group.
- Grows 1-2m high and wide.
- Adaptable, but prefers a sheltered position in dry, well-drained soils.
- Suitable for sandy soils.
- Beautiful mauve flowers from September-December.

Common Beard Heath *(Leucopogon virgatus)*


- Grows 30-80cm high and wide.
- Upright, wiry shrub.
- Fragrant, white flowers July-October.
- Well-drained soil, tolerates dryness once established.
- Full to part sun.

Common Correa *(Correa reflexa)*


- Fast-growing shrub to 2m high and wide.
- Grows well in dry, shady positions and under existing trees.
- Green or red bell flowers March-September.
- Benefits from pruning after flowering.

Common Heath *(Epacris impressa)*


- 50cm-1m high, an abundance of red, pink or white flowers crowded along branches from March-November.
- Requires moist, well-drained soils.
- Tolerates limited dry and wet periods once established.
- Grows in full to part sun.

Common Rice-flower *(Pimelia humillis)*


- Grows 10-30cm high and up to 1m wide.
- Fragrant, creamy flowerheads September-January.
- Well-drained soil.
- Full to part sun.

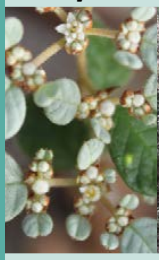
50 Common **Indigenous Plants**

SMALL SHRUBS

Drooping Cassinia *(Cassinia arcuata)*

- Grows 1-3m high and wide.
- A hardy shrub with graceful foliage.
- Small, pale brown flowers from November-February.
- Full to part sun.
- Adaptable to a wide range of soils.

Dusty Miller *(Spyridium parvifolium)*




- Grows 1-2m high and wide.
- Sprays of small white flowers August-November.
- Moist well-drained soils, tolerating dryness once established.
- Part sun.

Erect Guinea-flower *(Hibbertia riparia)*


- Grows to 1m high and 60cm wide.
- Pale to bright yellow flowers September-December.
- Moist well-drained soil. Extra summer watering.
- Full to part sun.

Golden Bush-pea *(Pultenea gunnii)*


- Grows 1m high and wide.
- Bright yellow-orange flowers from September-November.
- Well-drained soil.
- Full to part sun.
- Grows well under established trees.

Heath Wattle *(Acacia brownii)*

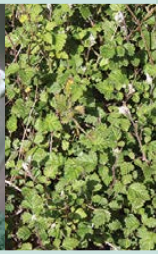

- Grows 0.5-1m high and 1-2m wide.
- A spreading, prickly shrub.
- Yellow flowers July-November.
- Light, gravelly soils tolerating dryness.
- Part sun.

SMALL SHRUBS

Hop Goodenia *(Goodenia ovata)*


- A fast-growing shrub that responds well to pruning.
- Grows 2m high and wide.
- Attractive yellow flowers from August-February.
- Prefers moist, semi-shaded position, but will tolerate a range of conditions.

Native Raspberry *(Rubus parvifolius)*

- Rambling plant grows to 2m high and wide.
- Pink flowers peaking October-February.
- Edible berries.
- Full to part sun.
- Well-drained soil.

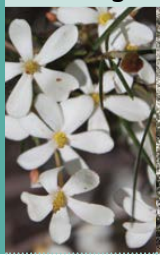
Showy Bossiaea *(Bossiaea cinerea)*


- Grows 1-2m high and wide.
- Tolerates all well-drained soils. Suitable for sandy soils.
- Grows in full sun, put prefers part sun.
- Spectacular flowers from August-December.
- Responds well to pruning after flowering.

Spreading Wattle *(Acacia genistafolia)*


- 1-3m high and wide.
- Fast-growing, prickly, open shrub.
- Flowering January-May, and again August-October.
- Tolerant of most growing conditions.

Wedding Bush *(Ricinocarpos pinifolius)*




- Grows 1-3m high and wide.
- Masses of fragrant white flowers from September-November.
- Prefers moist, well-drained sandy soil.
- Full to part sun.
- Responds well to pruning and can be hedged.

50 Common **Indigenous Plants**

LARGE SHRUBS

Kangaroo Apple *(Solanum laciniatum)*


- Fast-growing plant to 3m high and wide.
- Hardy in most soil types and sun conditions.
- Purple flowers from September-March.
- Responds well to hard pruning.
- Relatively short-lived (2-5 years).

Prickly Current-bush *(Coprosma quadrifida)*


- Grows 2-4m high and 1-2m wide.
- Small greenish flowers September-January.
- Attractive red fruit January-March.
- Moist well-drained soils.
- Full to part sun.

Prickly Tea-tree *(Leptosperma continentale)*


- Grows 1-4m high and wide.
- A hardy shrub that can be pruned into a hedge.
- Masses of white flowers from October-March.
- Suitable for all local soils and growing conditions.

Snowy Daisy-bush *(Olearia lirata)*


- Open shrub grows to 3m high and 1m wide.
- Profuse clusters of white, daisy-like flowers September-December.
- A shade lover that thrives in sheltered spots with well-drained soil.

Yellow Hakea *(Hakea nodosa)*


- Grows 1-3m high and wide.
- A fast-growing shrub that copes with all local soils and growing conditions.
- Fragrant flowers from April-August.
- Responds well to hard pruning after flowering.

SMALL TREES

Golden Spray *(Viminaria juncea)*


- An open small tree with drooping branches.
- Grows 2-5m high and 2m wide.
- Fragrant, yellow flowers from October-February.
- Adaptable to poorly-drained soils.
- Full to part sun.

Golden-tip *(Goodia lotifolia)*


- Fast-growing open small tree 1-5m high and wide.
- Attractive pea flowers September-December.
- Prune after flowering.
- Moist to dry soil.
- Full to part sun.

Prickly Moses *(Acacia verticillata)*


- Open small tree grows to 4m high and 3m wide.
- Fine, prickly foliage an ideal refuge for small birds.
- Yellow flower spikes from June-December.
- Tolerates a variety of soil and sun conditions.

Scented Paperbark *(Melaleuca squarrosa)*


- Grows to 2-5m high and 1-2m wide.
- Responds well to pruning and is suitable as a hedge.
- Scented cream flowers September-February.
- Moist to wet soil.
- Full to part sun.

Sweet Bursaria *(Bursaria spinosa)*


- Slow-growing tree to 2-6m high and 2-3m wide.
- Masses of fragrant flowers from October-February.
- Prefers dry, well-drained soils.
- Full to part sun.
- Can be pruned for hedging.

50 Common **Indigenous Plants**

MEDIUM TREES

Drooping Sheoak *(Allocasuarina verticillata)*


- Grows 4-11m high and 3-6m wide.
- Fast-growing and graceful tree.
- Male flowers from March-December produce a golden effect.
- Prefers full sun and well-drained soils.
- Drought tolerant once established.

Golden Wattle *(Acacia pycnantha)*


- A spreading tree, although pruning while young encourages denser growth.
- Grows 3-10m high and 3-5m wide.
- Large golden flowers from June-November.
- Full sun and dry, well-drained soils.

Lightwood *(Acacia implexa)*

- Grows 5-15m high and 4-7m wide.
- Thrives in dry, sunny spots with shallow soil.
- Will also tolerate moist, well-drained soil types.
- Full to part sun.
- Cream flowers from October-November.

Silver Banksia *(Banksia marginata)*


- Striking feature tree or excellent screening plant.
- Grows 1-6m high and 1-4m wide.
- Bright yellow flower spikes from September-April.
- Well-drained local soils, but tolerates being wet in winter and dry in summer.
- Grows in full to part sun.

Snow Gum *(Eucalyptus pauciflora)*

- A striking feature tree that grows 5-10m high and wide.
- Beautiful white to cream trunk.
- White to cream flowers from October-January.
- Grows in all local soils.
- Full to part sun.
- Excellent for soil erosion control and honey production.

LARGE TREES

Coast Banksia *(Banksia integrifolia)*


- Grows 10-20m high and 5-10m wide.
- Fast-growing and long-lived.
- Useful screening plant.
- Striking pale yellow flower spikes February-September.
- Grows in all well-drained local soils.
- Full to part sun.

Narrow-leaf Peppermint *(Eucalyptus radiata)*


- Grows 10-30m high and 6-20m wide.
- Well-drained soils with reliable moisture.
- Full to part sun.
- Masses of white flowers from October-January.

Silver Wattle *(Acacia dealbata)*


- Grows 6-30m high and 5-10m wide.
- A fast-growing, open tree with feathery leaves.
- Flowers from June-October.
- Full to part sun.
- Moist soil. Tolerates poor drainage.

River Red Gum *(Eucalyptus camaldulensis)*

- Grows 12-50m high and 15-35m wide.
- Large, open spreading tree.
- Flowering November-March.
- Damp, deep, well-drained soil. Tolerates very wet and dry periods once established.
- Full sun.

Yellow Box *(Eucalyptus melliodora)*


- Attractive tree highly regarded for honey production.
- Variable open to dense tree. Grows 10-30m high and 8-25m wide.
- Perfumed flowers from September-February.
- Well-drained, deep soils.
- Full to part sun.

Weeds

When a plant thrives and invades an area where it does not naturally occur, it is known as a weed.

Weeds are a problem because they out-compete indigenous plants for light, water and nutrients. In a short time they can replace indigenous plants, effectively removing the food source and habitat of local wildlife.

It is therefore important to know which plants are a problem in Greater Dandenong so you can avoid planting them or consider removing them if they are already in your garden.

The following plants are a sample of common garden weeds with suggested native replacements.

Refer to this key for weed control methods.

Hand pull
Hand removal of plant, most suitable for small plants and seedlings.

Mulch
Smothering plants with a thick layer of appropriate mulch. Ensure that the chosen mulch is weed-free.

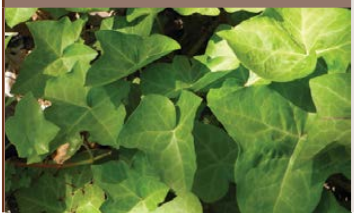
Chemical spraying
Apply herbicide to the surface of the foliage.

Cut and paint
Cut stem and immediately paint an appropriate herbicide to the stump.

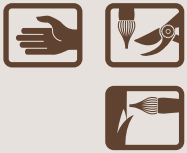
Scrape and paint
Scrape the outer layer of an area of the plant stem and immediately apply an appropriate herbicide.

Drill and fill
Use a drill or other small tool to cut into the outer bark layer and apply an appropriate herbicide to the soft layer underneath the bark.

10 Common **Weeds**

WEED	HOW TO REMOVE	REPLACEMENT PLANT
Agapanthus *Agapanthus praecox subsp. orientalis* 	 	**Black-anther Flax-lily** *Dianella admixta* 
Arum Lily *Zantedeschia aethiopica* 	  	**Spiny-headed Mat-rush** *Lomandra longifolia* 
Asparagus Fern *Asparagus africanus* 	  	**Small-leaved Clematis** *Clematis microphylla* 
Bluebell Creeper *Billardiera heterophylla* 	   	**Purple Coral-pea** *Hardenbergia violacea* 
English Ivy *Hedera helix* 	    	**Common Apple-berry** *Billardiera mutabilis* 

10 Common **Weeds**

WEED	HOW TO REMOVE	REPLACEMENT PLANT
Mirror Bush *Coprosma repens* 		Coast Banksia *Banksia integrifolia* 
Morning Glory *Ipomoea indica* 		Purple Coral Pea *Hardenbergia violacea* 
Nasturtium *Tropaeolum majus* 		Running Postman *Kennedia prostrata* 
Sweet Pittosporum *Pittosporum undulatum* 		Snowy Daisy-bush *Oleria lirata* 
Wandering Trad *Tradescantia fluminensis* 		Bidgee-widgee *Acaena novae-zealandiae* 

Reference & advice

Indigenous Plant Nurseries

Greenlink Sandbelt Nursery
587 Heatherton Rd,
Clayton South 3169
Tel: 9551 3039
www.greenlinksandbelt.org.au

Carrum Indigenous Nursery Inc.
Learmonth Reserve,
Cnr Learmonth and Thompson Rds,
Patterson Lakes 3197
Tel: 9776 0823
www.carrumindigenousnursery.com.au

Friends of Braeside Park Nursery
370 Lower Dandenong Rd,
Braeside 3195
Tel: 9265 7300
www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

What can I do?

- Plant more indigenous plants.
- Remove weeds from your garden.
- Dispose of garden waste appropriately.
- Compost waste.
- Install a rainwater tank for your garden.
- Use mulch.
- Grow your own food.
- Create habitat for wildlife.
- Get your kids involved in gardening.
- Have fun!

Useful websites

Sustainable Gardening Australia
www.sgaonline.org.au

Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association
www.iffa.org.au

Australian Plant Society, Victoria
www.apsvic.org.au

Weeds Australia
www.weeds.org.au

Wildlife Victoria
www.wildlifevictoria.org.au
Phone: (03) 8400 7300

Get involved

For further information on Greater Dandenong community environmental groups visit:
www.greaterdandenong.com/sustainablecommunities

GREATER DANDENONG
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