

Native plants for school gardens in South East Queensland



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Cover photo: Red Cottonwood (*Hibiscus tiliaceus* var. *rubra*) taken by Catherine Pickering.

Back cover: Tour of the gardens at Griffith University, Gold Coast campus taken by Michelle Ryan.

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Acknowledgement of Country..... | 3 |
| Biodiversity of South East Queensland..... | 3 |
| About this guide..... | 4 |
| Why grow native plants..... | 5 |
| Gardening in schools..... | 6 |
| Engaging students, maintenance considerations..... | 7 |
| School zones..... | 8-9 |
| Garden types..... | 10 |
| Griffith University..... | 11 |
| Structure of book and icons..... | 12 |
| Ground covers and vines..... | 13-26 |
| Ferns/sedges/rushes..... | 27-38 |
| Shrubs..... | 39-56 |
| Tall shrubs/small trees..... | 57-71 |
| Taller trees..... | 72-80 |
| Cultivated varieties or species from elsewhere... | 81-90 |



Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith University acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including the traditional custodians of South East Queensland. We pay respect to the Elders, past, present, and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Griffith University is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contributions to society.

Biodiversity of South East Queensland

The South East Queensland bioregion is a subtropical area of around 78,000 km² with high biodiversity including around 4,500 species of native plants across a diversity of ecosystems. This includes subtropical rainforests, open eucalypt forests, wetlands, heaths, mangroves, and coastal dunes, with more than 145 Regional Ecosystems. There are hundreds of South East Queensland native plants in cultivation, including species that are well-suited to local gardens including in schools. Further details about the Regional Ecosystems and threatened plants are available online from the Queensland Government, while information about native plants are available in books such as *Mangroves to Mountains*, published by the Logan Branch of Native Plants Queensland.

About this guide

This book provides details of 80 plants that are suitable for school gardens, with most native to the region. For each plant there is information about how easy it is to grow, light and water requirements, colours of flowers and fruit, along with characteristics including size, optimal growing conditions, where the species occurs naturally and if it is rare or threatened. Although each school and garden is likely to have different requirements including layout, topography, soils, resources and microclimate, this book provides a range of options and so it is likely to include suitable native plants for most situations. The plants were selected to be relatively easy to grow, hardy, and were not listed as poisonous or irritants on reliable websites in 2023 (unless indicated) but please check the latest information.

Plants can be sourced from Native Plants Queensland and other plant groups, some city councils, Landcare and catchment groups as well as local nurseries. When purchasing plants, ensure that the plants were obtained ethically, particularly for rarer species, and do not collect plants or seed from the wild.

This guide was produced by Brendon Kelly as part of his Work Integrated Learning course under the supervision of Professor Catherine Pickering. We thank experts who gave us advice and suggestions for the book and shared images including members of Native Plants Queensland, and all those working in education and landscaping to enhance biodiversity conservation in the region and promote the use of native plants in gardens including in schools.

Why grow native plants?

Growing local native plants has numerous benefits for the environment, gardeners and those enjoying gardens. Native plants are adapted to the local climate, soils, and pests, and hence can require less resources and maintenance. There is also less risk of them becoming weeds, a major problem in the region. These plants provide habitat and food for native animals including birds, bees and butterflies, supporting local biodiversity and ecosystem process such as pollination and seed dispersal. Growing natives also helps us conserve and protect local flora and prevent the loss of genetic diversity. Finally, native plants provide a sense of place and bring beauty and interest to our gardens, with a range of shapes, sizes, and colours that reflect our local environment. Overall, growing native plants is an excellent way to create sustainable and beautiful gardens including in schools, while benefiting the environment and preserving local biodiversity.



Gardening in schools

School gardens provide a wide range of benefits. This includes education, places to play or relax, reducing stress and promoting well-being, as well as fostering responsibility and respect for the environment and a sense of adventure. There are guidelines and regulations relating to the construction of new gardens in schools, and hence gardening initiatives need be assessed by leadership and grounds staff.

Well-designed and maintained gardens can passively direct people through the landscape by using low plantings (under 1 m) along the edge of paths, and discourage access with stiff rigid plants. They should provide clear sightlines around entrances, car parks, and drop off areas, while enhancing the ability for passive observation near entrances and windows. Plants should be selected to minimise risks such as tripping hazards and damage from dropping fruit or branches and should not be poisonous. The gardens can encourage students and staff to spend more time outdoors by providing attractive shady areas to sit or play in summer and sunny areas in winter while enhancing a sense of ownership and community pride.



Engaging students

Native plants and gardens provide diverse learning opportunities relating to the Australian curriculum covering English, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education, Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Technology and Languages. This includes opportunities for primary school students to be involved in planting days, nature craft, bushtucker, sensory activities, outdoor class activities and learning about wildlife, through to more targeted learning activities in senior years. Students, staff and volunteers can also be involved in maintaining current plants, rejuvenating existing gardens by incorporating more native plants, and collaborating in designing and creating new gardens. There are also opportunities to highlight the benefits of green spaces in schools during annual events including National Tree Day for Schools (last Friday in July), World Environment Day (5 June) and Arbor Day (second Tuesday in October).

Maintenance considerations

Understanding maintenance requirements is critical to the success of gardens and plants. Most of the plants in this book are low maintenance with specific details in each species profile. More detailed resources about design, soil, water and maintenance requirements are available in books and websites, as well as from industry professionals such as landscape architects, councils, and organisations such as land care groups and Native Plants Queensland.

Zoning

Individual gardens reflect their location and functions across zones within a school including:

Entry zones reflect and reinforce a schools image and hence should be friendly and inviting, welcoming students, staff, and visitors. They are often well maintained and have more formal designs with mass planting of fewer species with attractive architectural forms and flowers including hedges and flower beds. Suggested species include Grass Trees, Spear Lily, Boobialla, Little John Bottlebrush, Little Penda and Holly-leaved Native Fuchsia.

Road frontage zones occur on the boundaries of schools, and present the school to the wider community. They include traffic calming features that contribute to road safety. Gardens in these areas need to provide clear sightlines as well as serving as way finders, directing people to entry ways while providing shade. Some of the same species as the entry zone can be used along with Swamp Banksia, Bottlebrushes, as well as appropriate trees with dome forms/high canopies.

Active zones play an important role in fostering healthy children through physical development and providing places for controlled risk taking. In these areas there needs to be good visibility and sightlines, way finders, and shaded edges for reprieve from the sun during play. Suitable species include hardy ground covers include Boobialla and Hop Goodenia, with a range of mid-sized hardy shrubs including Pink Flowering Lillipilli, and mid-sized trees.



Quiet/study zones are where students can feel the strongest ‘sense of place’ and ownership. Well-planned quiet zones are the hub of day-to-day outdoor life in schools and crucial to the wellbeing, contentment, and imagination. They should be shady, support wildlife, culturally important, and stimulating. Some options include rainforest trees and ferns depending on microclimate.

Natural zones provide a balance between the built and natural environment with seating areas for outdoor learning. With an interactive aspect in these zones students can learn more about ecosystems and develop lifelong interest in nature. They can be spaces for themed areas such as bushtucker and sensory gardens, and should be green, shady, and support wildlife. Some great suggestions are Blue Tongue, Midgen Berry, Mint Bush, Purple Bush-pea, Banksia, Bottlebrushes, and suitable trees.

Garden types

In addition to functional zones, gardens reflect and suit microclimate, soils, culture and functions. Some popular styles of gardens that can be planted with natives include cottage, tropical-rainforest-Balinese, bushtucker, minimalist architectural, coastal, meadow, bee, butterfly and bird gardens, sensory gardens Tuscan, Japanese, Hamptons, rainwater gardens, swales and wetlands, among others. For those looking to pique students interest, gardens add personality, character and history to schools and other green spaces. We invite people to explore the diversity of garden styles as there are many interesting and delightful variations where native plants would be suitable.



Griffith University


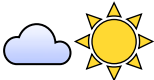



The three main campuses of Griffith University in Brisbane, Logan and the Gold Coast conserve and support hundreds of native plants and animals. In particular, the Gold Coast campus, showcases native plants suitable for schools and public spaces with over 250 species/cultivars across 9 ha of gardens. These gardens, like those in schools, provide a wide range of benefits to staff, students and the community including storing and sequestering carbon, cooling, shading, reducing UV, glare and reflection, controlling wind, improving air quality, filtering air pollutants, improving stormwater quality, reducing surface flow and flooding risk, reducing soil erosion and improving soil quality, reducing infrastructure damage and renewal costs, reducing energy expenditure, and providing habitat for wildlife including birds, bees and butterflies. They also improve community cohesion, health and well-being, enhance social behaviour and public safety, provide cultural, spiritual and social meaning, enhance a sense of place and conserve pre-settlement vegetation. Finally, they act as living laboratories showing the impacts of urbanisation, ecological process, and green solutions as well as foster a sense of fun, play and joy. Please feel free to visit our campuses, gardens and forests.

Structure of the book and icons

In this guide, the plants are arranged into six groups based on size/form: **(1) Ground covers and vines** **(2) Ferns/sedges/rushes** **(3) Shrubs** **(4) Tall shrubs/small trees** **(5) Taller trees**, **(6) Cultivated varieties or species from elsewhere in Queensland**. Within each group, plants are listed in alphabetical order by their common name.

Icons

Throughout this booklet, the growing requirements of species are indicated using the following icons:

| Icon | About |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Recommended level of care/ pruning/nutrients |
|  | How much sun or shade the plant needs |
|  | How much water (low, moderate, or high) the plant needs |
|  | The season when the plant flowers, with the icon colour reflecting the flower's colour |
|  | Plant can be found in the forests or gardens at Griffith University |

Angular Pigface

Carpobrotus glaucescens



Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low water
requirement



Summer to
Autumn



Description

This attractive native coastal plant is a prostrate, creeping succulent which works well as a groundcover including covering large areas. It is very easy to grow in full sun and tolerates drought, strong winds, humidity, and salt but is easily damaged by trampling so plant away from paths, keep it in a pot or use it in a rockery. It prefers free draining soils and is suited to coastal gardens. With thick, fleshy leaves and stunning deep-pink daisy-like flowers this plant grows up to 20 cm high and requires little to no maintenance. There are many non-native pigfaces but *Carpobrotus glaucescens* is native to eastern Australia.

Birdwing Vine

Pararistolochia praevenosa



Some
Maintenance



Full to
filtered sun



Moderate-high
water requirement



Spring

Description

The Birdwing Vine is restricted to subtropical rainforests, in Queensland and New South Wales where it is a food plant for the larvae of the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly, a rare butterfly that is at risk of extinction and listed as vulnerable in Queensland. Government and conservation organisations actively encourage people to grow this vine to support butterfly conservation, however, it can be challenging to grow and so more suitable for experienced gardeners. The vines prefer to climb living trees but can also thrive on a semi-shaded trellis and require consistent watering during dry seasons.

Boobialla

Myoporum boninense subsp. *australe*



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Autumn



Description

Boobialla is a hardy and sprawling prostrate shrub that is a perfect groundcover for most gardens. It grows up to 0.6 m high and spreads 1-2 m wide preferring well-draining soils and thrives in full sun to part shade. As it grows naturally in coastal areas, it is salt-tolerant, frost-resistant and drought-tolerant and can cover large areas and is very easy to grow in hot areas. The plant produces clusters of small white flowers from spring to early autumn that are followed by smooth, glossy, light to dark purple fruits. Boobialla naturally occurs in salt marshes, coastal heath, sand dunes, and coastal woodland along the coasts of Queensland and New South Wales.

Climbing Guinea Flower

Hibbertia scandens



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This vigorous climber is a versatile plant that can be trained to grow up to 5 m tall when supported by a trellis, or spread out to form a low groundcover that reaches 0.5 m in height and 2-5 m in width. To promote optimal flowering, it prefers full sun, and works well as a screening plant when grown along a trellis or open wire fence. The large yellow flowers contrast against the plant's dark green foliage, with blooms occurring year-round, but particularly abundant in spring and summer and have a slightly mousey smell. This climber is a magnet for local bees, butterflies, and birds, and occurs in Queensland and New South Wales along coastal areas.

Fraser Island Creeper

Tecomanthe hillii



Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

Fraser Island Creeper is a versatile vine growing with lush green glossy foliage and attractive clusters of large pink bell-shaped flowers on the woody stems in spring. It can be trained up a fast-growing, open-canopied tree, or alternatively used as feature plant or screen in courtyards, walls, and fences. While it does not require large amounts of water, regular watering will enhance flowering. It is one of three species of *Tecomanthe* (*T. dendrophila*, *T. burungu* previously known as 'Roaring Meg' and *T. hillii*), that are sold in Australia and there are even hybrids available. It is native to K'gari (Fraser Island), with small, isolated populations on mainland South East Queensland.

Golden Everlasting

Xerochrysum bracteatum



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low water
requirement



Year round

Description

Golden Everlasting is a compact ground cover that produces attractive clusters of small flowers surrounded by papery bracts in a variety of colours. Growing to 1.2 m in height and 0.6 m in width, it prefers well-draining soil in full sun to light shade. Once established, it is heat and drought tolerant, although it is not long lived. It looks good in cottage gardens, flower beds, courtyards and mixed plantings. The flowers bloom most of the year and the flower heads can be picked and dried. It attracts butterflies, moths, and bees, and is widespread in Australia. There are a range of cultivated forms available.

Hop Goodenia

Goodenia ovata



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Moderate water
requirement



Year round



Description

A fast-growing, low-sprawling shrub growing 1 m high by 1-3 m wide, this tough, salt-tolerant, low maintenance native is very adaptable. It likes full sun and is great for garden borders, informal hedges, and rockeries and can cover large areas. Attractive bright yellow flowers are produced throughout the year that attract butterflies, bees and native birds to the garden, and provides habitat for native lizards. It grows in forest and woodland in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia with two distinct forms, with the southern lower growing form more common in cultivation.

Kreysigia

Tripladenia cunninghamii



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer

Description

This small upright herb grows to 40 cm tall with a spreading habit in sheltered positions in light shade. It works well as a small feature plant among others or in a pot including in class rooms, but is not suitable to cover large areas in gardens. They produce delightful violet/pink star-like flowers from late spring to summer. These long-lived plants have attractive, dark-green, dense foliage and grow in the rainforests of north-eastern New South Wales and South East Queensland.

Love Flower

Pseuderanthemum variable



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



Moderate water
requirement



Year round

Description

This small upright herb grows to 40 cm high in sheltered positions in light shade. It works well as a small feature plant among others or in a pot, including indoors but is not suitable to cover large areas in gardens. It produces delightful pale violet/pink star-like flowers from late spring to summer and can be grown indoors very successfully in kitchens, offices and bathrooms. These long-lived plants have attractive, dark-green, dense foliage and grow in the rainforests of north-eastern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland. They are also host plants for at least five species of butterflies in Queensland.

Native Coleus

Coleus graveolens



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Moderate
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



High water
requirement



Year round

Description

Native Coleus is an aromatic, herbaceous shrub that grows up to 1.5 m high by 1 m wide. This plant is low maintenance once established in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil and looks great in cottage gardens and rockeries. The attractive, but slightly smelly deep green foliage is complemented by slender clusters of purple/blue flowers throughout the year that attract native bees. Like other Coleus it can be easily propagated from cuttings, and benefits from an occasional trim. It occurs in Queensland and New South Wales, and was previously called *Plectranthus graveolens*.

Native Sarsaparilla

Hardenbergia violacea



GRAHAM McDONALD

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

This spectacular native grows as a shrub or a climber, to 4 m tall by 3 m wide but can be kept smaller with pruning. It is a low-maintenance and drought-tolerant plant that does well in full sun to part shade. In gardens it can be trained to grow over fences and trellises, grown in pots or used as loose ground cover. In winter and spring, it produces stunning loose clusters of purple pea flowers that attract native butterflies and bees. The Native Sarsaparilla is widespread in forests in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Radiator Plant

Peperomia leptostachya



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



Low water
requirement



Year round

Description

Radiator Plants are small, succulent, herbs that grow up to 30 cm in height. They thrive in shaded positions with good drainage. Options include growing them in amongst shaded rocks or around tree trunks or in pots including indoors, but they are less suitable for covering large areas. These plants produce numerous slender, spike-shaped flowers up to 13 cm in length and bloom most of the year. The stems range from green to reddish-green, while the fleshy leaves can be dark-green to yellow-green with a lighter underside. Also known as *Peperomia blanda* var. *floribunda*, they naturally occur in coastal areas in Queensland and New South Wales.

Shaggy-leaved Plectranthus

Coleus habrophyllus



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This fast-growing, spreading, woody herb grows up to 50 cm high and works well in rockeries and garden beds. It is hardy and responds well to pruning. It has fleshy, velvety leaves which have a strong aroma when crushed. The small bright purple to blue flowers occur along flowering stems and attract native bees. Although easy to grow, this attractive herb is listed as endangered as it is only found growing in a few small areas near Ipswich and Ormeau in rocky outcrops and open woodlands in the wild. It was previously called *Plectranthus habrophyllus* and can be easily propagated from cuttings.

Yellow Buttons

Chrysocephalum apiculatum



GRAHAM McDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Autumn

Description

Yellow Buttons is a fast-growing, native between to 60 cm high by 1 m wide. It prefers full sun in well-drained soils and looks great as a ground cover or border plant but can be damaged by trampling so best kept away from paths. Numerous bright yellow to deep gold flower heads are produced at the end of tall stems from spring to autumn. The leaves and stems are covered in small, silky hairs which gives them a silvery-green appearance. This plant is a food source for butterflies, and is widespread throughout Australia and popular in gardens. There are also a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Bare Twig-rush

Baumea rubiginosa



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Moderate
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



High water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

The Bare Twig-rush is an aquatic to semi-aquatic tufted perennial sedge, 0.3-1 m high and 2 m wide. It features compressed ribbon-like bright green stems, which often take on an orange-brown hue towards the tips. During the spring and summer, it produces soft spikes of reddish-brown flowers. This plant is useful in permanently moist areas, including in swales, and other drainage areas where it can stabilise soils, as well as providing habitat for frogs and food for water birds. It is native to South East Queensland, where it can be found in heathlands and swamps.

Binung

Christella dentata



IMAGE OF RELATED SPECIES - *CHRISTELLA PARASITICA* JOEL IRWIN

Moderate
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



High water
requirement



Description

Binung is an attractive hardy fern that grows up to 1 m high and thrives in a sheltered moist site in part to full shade. This fast-growing fern works well near water features, under decks, in shady gardens, tropical gardens, rockeries and in pots, but is not common in cultivation. It has a tufted habit with erect light to dark green fronds and grows naturally along streams, on rainforest margins, and in open forests mainly along the north and eastern coast of Australia.

Bird's Nest Fern

Asplenium australasicum



Moderate
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



High water
requirement



Description

This fern has attractive long, glossy, bright-green fronds growing up and outward from a central point to around 0.8 m high by 1.5 m wide, giving rise to its common name. It looks great as a feature plant in areas with high humidity, and does best in full shade to semi shade. This distinctive plant can be grown on trees, on rocks, in pots or in moist, well drained soil in gardens. Bird's Nest Ferns are native to the wet forests and rainforests along the east coast of Queensland and New South Wales.

Bungwall Fern

Telmatoblechnum indicum



JOEL IRWIN

Moderate
Maintenance



Part Shade



High water
requirement



Description

Bungwall Fern or Swamp Water Fern is an erect clumping fern up to 0.5-1 m high that grows best in partly shaded wet areas such as next to a water feature or in pots. It has shiny green fronds emerging erect from its long creeping black rhizome. In the wild it can form dense colonies and grows in sandy soils in coastal swampy areas from the Northern Territory through Queensland to New South Wales.

Common Maidenhair Fern

Adiantum atroviride



Moderate
Maintenance



Full shade



High water
requirement



Description

These attractive ferns grow to 50 cm high by 50 cm wide and thrive in humid, shady to semi shady locations in the ground or in pots. They can be higher maintenance and so may be more suitable as an indoor plant than large scale plantings in school gardens. They have small delicate pale green fronds clustered on wiry, shiny 'stems' and have been popular as indoor plants or in shady wet areas in gardens in the subtropics. There are two species that can be found in moist areas near creeks in open forests and rainforest with *Adiantum atroviride* more common in South East Queensland.

Creek Mat Rush

Lomandra hystrix



GRAHAM McDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
full shade



Low water
requirement



Spring



Description

Lomandra hystrix is a tough clumping grass-like evergreen that grows to 0.7-1.5 m high to 1 m wide. It does better in wet soils and more humid conditions than the taller *Lomandra longifolia*. However, it produces masses of small fragrant yellow flowers in spring, that can be prickly so should not be used near paths. It is hardy and drought-resistant, thriving in full sun to heavy shade and various soil types. It is a good choice in mass planting to stabilise sloping sites and for erosion control including in wetter areas. Found throughout eastern Australia, with a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Giant Maidenhair Fern

Adiantum formosum



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Moderate
Maintenance



Part shade



High water
requirement

Description

This attractive fern is large with 1.2 m long fronds and can grow up to 2 m high in the right conditions. It can be hard to establish as it grows best in sheltered and shady areas out of direct sunlight with plenty of water in deep friable soils. The black, shiny 'stems' complement the pretty fronds which emerge pale green in colour before darkening with age. This fern can be found growing in rainforests and open eucalypt forests in South East Queensland.

Gristle Fern

Blechnum cartilagineum



GRAHAM McDONALD

Moderate
Maintenance



Part shade



High water
requirement



Description

The Gristle Fern is an attractive, hardy fern growing to 1.5 m high with a similar spread. It prefers a semi-shade to dappled shade protected position with moist soil away from drying winds and direct sun. It works well as an understory plant, or in pots but avoid watering directly onto the fronds. The new fronds unfurl with a showy pink to bronze colour and then mature to broad, pale- to rich-green coloured fronds. It is found in open forest and rainforests along the east coast of Australia. It is sometimes referred to as *Ocniopteris cartilaginea*.

Jungle Brake Fern

Pteris umbrosa



Moderate
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



High water
requirement

Description

This decorative fern grows 1 m high by 0.5 m wide preferring full shade to dappled light. It does well in well drained soil with regular watering especially during summer and can be grown in shady moist areas in gardens or in pots, but may be harder to maintain unless it has constant humidity and water. This fern has a clumping habit with attractive light to deep green arching fronds. It is found in the wild in rainforests along the east coast of Australia.

Knobby Club-rush

Ficinia nodosa



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



All year

Description

The Knobby Club-rush is a fast-growing hardy plant to 2 m high. As it can tolerate drought and salt spray it is often used in dune restoration projects as well as in beach gardens. It has smooth, green-yellow stems with a clumping growth form and produces brown-orange globular flower heads throughout the year. It naturally occurs along the edges of creeks, salt marshes as well as coastal dunes in all states except the Northern Territory. Although it would work well for coastal school gardens, it should not be planted near playgrounds or paths due to the sharp points on the end of the leaves.

Taller Mat Rush

Lomandra longifolia



Moderate
Maintenance



Full sun to
full shade



Low water
requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

Growing to 1 m high and 0.6 m wide, this species is easy to establish and nearly indestructible but is often over used in public landscaping. It produces thorny spikes of scented yellow flowers during the winter and spring that may need to be removed and it should not be planted near paths or close to where children are playing. As it ages plants can look messy but can be trimmed to give a dome shape promoting new growth. This taller Mat Rush is common along the entire east coast of Australia, from Tasmania to Queensland, where it thrives in sandy soils and swamps.

Tufted Sedge

Carex gaudichaudiana



MARK RUNKOVSKI

Moderate
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



High water
requirement



Spring to
Summer

Description

This perennial sedge adds structure and form including when planted in groups. It is particularly useful as an attractive border for wetter garden beds providing habitat for frogs and lizards. This hardy plant thrives in full sun to semi-shade and requires permanently moist to wet soil. Its bluish-green leaves grow to 1 m high and feature pale yellow-brown pointed appendages. In the spring and summer, it produces erect purplish-brown flowers in dense groups of 3 to 8 linear spikes. It naturally grows in swamps and creeks in New South Wales, and South East Queensland.

Blue Grass Tree

Xanthorrhoea glauca



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring

Description

The Blue Grass Tree is a slow growing plant to 5 m high, with a branching trunk and distinctive tufted, dense clumps of long, slender, blue-green leaves to 2 m wide. It is a hardy plant that thrives in sunny areas in well drained low nutrient soils, but it is susceptible to disease in wet conditions. It is often used as a feature plant because of its distinct architectural form but larger plants are expensive. Creamy white flowering spikes are produced every few years in spring. Only source seed grown plants from reliable nurseries as sometimes plants have been taken from the wild which is illegal without a permit.

Blue Tongue

Melastoma malabathricum



MARK RUNKOVSKI

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This spreading shrub is a great addition to gardens, growing to 1-3 m high and 1-1.5 m wide in moist, well drained soils, in part shade to full sun. The large attractive mauve/pink flowers are produced from spring to summer and are popular with bees. Even when not in flower, the compact shape and attractive foliage make this shrub a great garden plant. It is also suitable for mass plantings as a screen or hedge, and benefits from pruning. It grows along the coast of Queensland. Care must be taken as nurseries often sell the introduced species by mistake.

Bottlebrush Grass Tree

Xanthorrhoea macronema



BONNI YEE

GRAHAM
MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Winter to
Summer



Description

The Bottlebrush Grass Tree is a distinctive plant in sclerophyll forests along coastal regions from north of Sydney to Queensland's K'gari (Fraser) Island. It is a slow growing, tufted, trunkless plant with attractive long green shiny foliage, typically reaching 0.8 m high and does best in full sun on well-drained soil. During late winter to early summer, it produces creamy yellow flower spikes, up to 15 cm high. Its most impressive feature, however, is the strikingly long flower stem, which can extend up to 2 m above the foliage. This plant is known to attract birds and native bees, contributing to local biodiversity.

Dwarf Banksia

Banksia oblongifolia



Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring

Description

The slow-growing Dwarf Banksia is an attractive small, native shrub that grows 0.5-3 m high by 1.5 m wide in full sun to part shade in well-drained soils. It is frost and salt-spray tolerant and can grow in sandy soils which makes it ideal for coastal school gardens. Once established, it is very hardy, and can be pruned to keep it compact. It has large, spectacular, cylindrical, pale-yellow flower heads that bloom during autumn and winter and attract nectar-feeding birds and insects. It naturally occurs along the east coast of Australia, often in coastal heaths.

Hairpin Banksia

Banksia spinulosa



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Autumn to
Spring



Description

This long-lived, medium-sized, shrub grows up to 3 m high by 3 m wide but can be kept smaller with pruning. It is tolerant of drought, frost, and salt spray and occurs in heaths and forests on the east coast of Australia. It flowers from autumn to spring, with masses of orange to golden yellow small flowers arranged in cylindrical spikes. This easy to grow shrub does well in sunny positions in well-drained soil and has a range of biodiversity benefits including supporting nectar-feeding birds and bees. There are also a range of cultivated forms including dwarf varieties available from nurseries.

Ipswich Daisy

Olearia nernstii



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full to filtered
sun



Low water
requirement



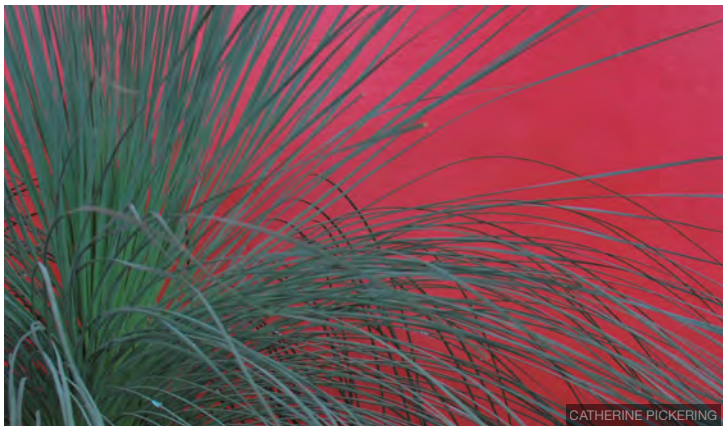
Winter to
Spring

Description

The Ipswich Daisy is an attractive perennial shrub up to 2 m tall that does well in full sun to dappled shade in well-drained soils. It produces masses of white and yellow daisy-like flowers in winter to spring and attract bees and butterflies. It is not very long-lived and so far is uncommon in cultivation but worth trying out in cottage gardens and mixed plantings. It grows naturally from Brisbane to Sydney in open woodland and eucalypt forests.

Johnson's Grass Tree

Xanthorrhoea johnsonii



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring,
Autumn,
Winter



Description

This is an extremely slow growing and long-lived grass tree that can eventually grow to 5 m high by 2 m wide. It prefers full sun to part shade in well-drained soil and makes a fantastic feature plant in low-maintenance and coastal gardens. This iconic plant has a thick blackened trunk. It occasionally produces tall spears of small white nectar-filled flowers which attract birds and bees. It occurs naturally in Queensland and New South Wales. For this and other grass trees it is best to source seed grown plants rather than transplanted samples and they should not be collected from the wild without a permit.

Lemon-scented Teatree

Leptospermum petersonii



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring



Description

This commonly grown shrub/small tree has thin, flaky bark, with delightful small lemon-scented leaves. It grows to 5 m, but can be kept compact with pruning which can also promote flowering. It is fast growing, low maintenance and tough, growing in a wide range of soil types and climates. In spring there are masses of spectacular snow-white flowers that attract bees and butterflies. The leaves are sometimes used for tea (hence the name), and oils from the leaves are used as essential oils and scents. It is native to eastern Australia.

Midgen Berry

Austromyrtus dulcis



JOEL IRWIN

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Summer to
Autumn



Description

This compact hardy shrub growing to 1 m high makes for an attractive garden border or low, compact hedge that can be pruned to shape as needed. Midyim/Midgen Berry prefers full sun to part shade and grows well in sandy soils, but it can adapt to a range of soils with good drainage and works well in mass plantings over large areas. The attractive copper-coloured new growth matures to a dark green, and star-shaped white flowers bloom in spring to summer followed by white berries with small dark spots. It attracts bees, other pollinating insects and birds to the garden. It is native to forests in South East Queensland and North East New South Wales.

Mint Bush

Prostanthera ovalifolia



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate
water



Spring



Description

Mint Bush, also known as Oval-Leaved Mint Bush growing to 5 m high by 4 m wide is a fast-growing shrub that does well on free-draining soil. It has soft menthol scented leaves with beautiful purple-lilac-pink flowers during spring. It is a feature plant that can be used in hedges, or in a mixed borders and cottage gardens where the aromatic leaves can be best appreciated as people brush up against it. Endemic to south-eastern Australia, it can attract wildlife such as bees and butterflies.

Plum Myrtle

Ptilidostigma rhytispermum



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Winter to
Spring

Description

This attractive rounded shrub with attractive regular leaves is fast-growing, and hardy and does well in free draining soils in full sun to part shade. Growing to around 5 m high, it is ideal for hedging and can be used as a screening plant in gardens and is starting to be more common in cultivation. It has dense, dark green foliage with small pretty white flowers in winter to spring, followed by purplish-black shiny fruit. Common in coastal South East Queensland in wet eucalypt forest and scrubby watercourses, it attracts bees and nectar feeding birds.

Purple Bush-pea

Hovea acutifolia



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

Purple Bush-pea is a short-lived (around 5-8 years) attractive, small, upright shrub to 2 m high by 1.5 m wide. These hardy, drought resistant shrubs like full sun to part shade and are adaptable to a range of free-draining soils. Plants have dark-green, narrow, oval-shaped leaves and masses of purple flowers from winter to spring which add a real 'wow' factor to any garden. They attract native bees and protect small native birds in gardens, and are easy to propagate from seed after heat treatment. A native to the understory of forests and rainforest margins in Queensland and New South Wales, it is a great addition to gardens.

Sago Bush

Ozothamnus diosmifolius



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

Sago Bush, also known as Rice Flower, is a small, shrub which grows 2 m high by 1 m wide. This hardy plant prefers full sun to part shade in well-drained soil and is a great addition to cottage or coastal gardens, and can be used as an informal hedge. Sago Bush produces long-lasting clusters of small, white flowers from winter to spring. The flower buds are attractive for several weeks before they open, and the shrub can be pruned after flowering. It also attracts native birds, butterflies, and other insects, and is widespread throughout Queensland and New South Wales.

Small-leaved Psychotria

Psychotria daphnoides



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Summer

Description

Smooth Psychotria, also referred to as Turkey bush, is an attractive shrub to 3 m high and prefers well-drained soil in full shade to nearly full sun. Often characterised by clusters of smooth, glossy elliptical leaves, it creates an eye-catching display from spring to summer with clusters of small, spherical-shaped blooms of cream-white flowers that attract bees and butterflies. It is native to rainforest understory along the east coast of Australia.

Spear Lily

Doryanthes palmeri



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring



Description

This popular ornamental plant consists of rosettes of large leaves and grows up to 1.5 m high and 3 m wide and is very popular for its architectural form in landscaping and mass plantings. It is tolerant of a range of conditions but prefers free draining soils in full to part shade. The plants are very easy to maintain and produce 6 m tall flowering stems after a few years, terminating in masses of large, tubular, red flowers that attract birds, bees and butterflies. It occurs naturally in coastal areas of New South Wales and Queensland. It can be confused with Gynea Lily (*Doryanthes excelsa*) native to New South Wales that has a more erect flowering head.

Swamp Banksia

Banksia robur



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Autumn to
Winter



Description

Swamp Banksia, is a fast-growing taller shrub to 2.5 m high and wide. It can tolerate poor soils but appreciates extra water, especially during dry spells. The large hard leaves but open growth form makes it effective as a partial screen and it is often grown for its architectural look including along paths and to separate areas. The new growth is reddish, while the blueish-green flower spikes turn yellow-green as they age. Flowers can occur at any time of year but are most common in autumn to winter. It naturally occurs in wet areas on sandy soils throughout South East Queensland.

Thyme Honey Myrtle

Melaleuca thymifolia



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Moderate water
requirement



Year round



Description

Thyme Honey Myrtle is a small, dense shrub growing to 1 m high by 1.5 m wide. It tolerates most soil types but grows best in full sun and can be used as an attractive feature plant but also works well as a hedge. This native has small grey-green foliage with clusters of intricate, feathery, purple flowers produced year-round. The colourful flowers attract nectar-eating birds, bees and butterflies to the garden and have made it a popular native for gardens for many years. Thyme Honey Myrtle is native to forests in Southern Queensland and New South Wales.

Tantoon

Leptospermum polygalifolium



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This is a wonderful, slightly aromatic, hardy long-lived shrub that grows 1-4 m high by 3 m wide but can be pruned. It grows best in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil and can be used as a feature plant or in mass planting including as a hedge. Masses of small creamy white flowers are produced in spring and summer which attract birds as well as bees and other insects. There are lots of varieties available in nurseries including the popular "Cardwell" cultivar. Tantoon plants occur in sandy soils or on sandstone from far north Queensland to the south coast of New South Wales.

Black Wattle

Acacia concurrens



Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low water
requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

Black Wattle is a distinctive shrub to small tree growing to 4-8 m high and is well-adapted to a variety of soils and climates. Hardy and easy to grow, this plant thrives in sun to partial shade and grows fast, making it a versatile choice for landscaping. This wattle has sickle-shaped leaves with a bluish-green hue, and produces masses of golden-yellow flowers from late winter to early spring. It is native to the understoreys of eucalypt forests in South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales.

Blueberry Ash

Elaeocarpus reticulatus



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring



Description

This versatile small tree grows to 9 m high by 3 m wide on a variety of soils in full sun to part shade. It has narrow column-shaped growth and responds well to pruning making it a great plant for screens or hedges as well as a specimen tree. In the spring, it produces delicate pink flowers resembling fairy petticoats and emitting a faint perfume. These are followed by blueberry-like fruits, which are not only attractive, they support a range of birds. Occurs naturally in rainforest along the southern coast of Australia with a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Red Bottlebrush

Melaleuca (Callistemon) viminalis



Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Autumn



Description

This red weeping Bottlebrush is a hardy and popular tree with drooping branches that give it a graceful, cascading appearance. The greyish-green leaves provide a backdrop to striking red bottlebrush-shaped inflorescences that attract birds and bees. It is adaptable to a variety of soil types, preferring sunny to light shade. While fast growing and low maintenance, it responds well to pruning making it a perfect screen or wind break and is often used as a street tree. It is common along watercourses on the coastal plains in eastern and south eastern Australia. There are also a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Coast Banksia

Banksia integrifolia



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Autumn to
Spring



Description

Banksia integrifolia is a slow growing small to medium-sized tree from 2-15 m, with leaves that are dark green on top and silvery-white underneath, giving them a striking two-toned appearance. Its most iconic feature is its cone-shaped, lemon-yellow flower spikes seen from autumn to spring. Composed of numerous flowers, these cones are a source of nectar for birds and bees. Its attractive form, ecological value, and adaptability make it an excellent addition to many gardens. Found along the east coast of Australia, it grows best in well-draining soils in full sun to partial shade. There are also prostrate varieties available.

Common Lilly Pilly

Acmena smithii



JOEL IRWIN

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
full shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This fast-growing tree to 3-6 m high by 1-3 m wide is popular in gardens. It can be grown in full sun to full shade on a range of soil types and can be used as a feature plant or in hedge as they respond well to pruning. With dense clusters of small, glossy, green leaves and lovely new red foliage, it provides a splash of colour, including the fluffy white flowers in spring and summer. These are followed by fleshy pink-red berries. Also known as *Syzygium smithii*, this tree is widespread in rainforests in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. There are also a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Creek Lilly Pilly

Syzygium australe



GLENN LEIPER

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring



Description

The Creek Lilly Pilly is an attractive hardy shrub to small tree growing to 8-10 m high by 6 m wide. With dense, light green foliage and reddish-bronze new growth, it can be pruned to shapes, making it an excellent choice for hedges and screens as well as a specimen tree in gardens. It has cream-colored flowers in spring, followed by bright red fruit and attracts birds to the garden. It is drought-tolerant and grows in full sun to shade on a range of soils. It is native to the east coast of Australia. There are also a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries including smaller forms.

Forest Pittosporum

Pittosporum revolutum



Some
Maintenance



Full sun



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring



Description

Forest Pittosporum is a spreading tall shrub to small tree growing to 4 m high by 2 m wide in cultivation. It is well-suited to a variety of soil types in full sun to partial shade and is often used in landscaping for its ornamental value, with attractive foliage and fragrant cream-coloured clusters of fleshy flowers in spring. Its dense foliage makes it a great screen or hedge plant, and it benefits from pruning. Although native to rainforests and dry forest country from Queensland to Victoria, it has been invasive in some areas.

Grey Myrtle

Backhousia myrtifolia



Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

Backhousia myrtifolia, commonly known as the Grey Myrtle or Cinnamon Myrtle, is a small to medium-sized rainforest tree to 5-15 m. One of its most distinguishing features is dense, aromatic, glossy green leaves that release a pleasant cinnamon-like fragrance when crushed. Adaptable to various soil types, and able to grow in full sun or part shade, it is resilient to most conditions. It also produces edible fruit and small cream/white flowers from spring to summer, attracting birds and bees. It is native to rainforests and along watercourses in coastal areas of New South Wales and Queensland.

Long-leaved Tuckeroo

Cupaniopsis newmanii



Low
Maintenance



Full shade to
filtered sun



Low water
requirement



Spring top
Summer

Description

The Long-leaved Tuckeroo is an attractive small tree 5-15 m high in full shade/filtered sun. Native to the rainforests and coasts of New South Wales and Queensland, this rare species is hardy and reliable, requiring minimal watering. It can serve as an attractive shade tree in low maintenance gardens, and although preferring well-drained, sandy soil, it is adaptable to most soil types. During the spring and summer, it produces small, inconspicuous pink flowers, followed by decorative orange or red fruit capsules. It is a butterfly attractor and does well in shade gardens.

Native Daphne

Pittosporum undulatum



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Some
Maintenance



Full sun



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

Native Daphne is a fast-growing small tree or large shrub, to 4 m high by 2 m wide that has attractive deep green leaves with wavy edges providing dense shade. It is hardy and does well on a range of soils in full sun to part shade. These plants are easy to grow and benefit from pruning and are often used as a screen or hedge. Fragrant clusters of small white flowers are produced in spring and early summer. It is native to moist gullies in rainforest and wetter forests, along coastal eastern Australia but can be weedy in southern states.

Scented Satinash

Syzygium oleosum



KIEREN RICHARAT

Low
Maintenance



Full to filtered
sun



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Winter



Description

Scented Satinash, also known as Blue Lilly Pilly, is a tall evergreen shrub or small tree 4 to 15 m high, adaptable to most soils. Attractive and fast-growing, it can be used as a shade, screen, or wind break with its glossy dark green foliage, preferring full to filtered sun. The leaves are distinctly aromatic when crushed, reminiscent of lemons, and it produces cream-white flowers in summer, followed by edible purple-blue fruit. It is native to wet sclerophyll forests and rainforests from North Queensland to New South Wales.

Shiny-leaved Canthium

Psydrax odorata



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring and
Autumn

Description

This medium shrub to small tree grows to 8 m high and does well in gardens but is not yet common in cultivation. It is a versatile plant with multiple uses ranging from ornamental, to hedging, to shade providing, and does well in both dry and moist soils provided they are well drained. It is low maintenance and slow-growing, growing best in full sun to part shade. It has glossy, green elliptical leaves, with prolific clusters of highly perfumed, white flowers in spring and autumn, followed by fleshy black fruits. In the wild it grows in dry shrub land and in moist forests in northern and eastern Australia.

Smooth Davidson's Plum

Davidsonia johnsonii



Moderate
Maintenance



Part shade



High water
requirement



Summer



Description

A narrow, attractive rainforest tree that can grow 4-8 m high by 2-3 m wide in sheltered, part-shade positions in moist fertile soils. It can also be grown in pots. In summer, this tree blossoms with small pink/red flowers followed by purple berries growing along the stem. It is endangered in the wild with a restricted distribution in north-eastern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland, and is similar to *Davidsonia jerseyana*.

Snow Wood

Pararchidendron pruinoseum



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Filtered sun



Moderate water
requirement



Summer

Description

Less common in cultivation, this small tree to 6-15 m does well in sandy soils with filtered shade. It has showy, spherical flower heads during summer that resemble fluffy balls of cotton that vary in colour from creamy-white to pale yellow with distinctive red-orange curled seedpods. With large, bluish-grey or silvery compound leaves, it provides an attractive contrast to other plants in gardens and is grown as a street tree, or in parks and gardens as a small feature tree. Native to dry rainforests of Queensland and New South Wales, it is the only species in its genus although closely related to wattles.

Willow Bottlebrush

Melaleuca (Callistemon) salicina



Low
Maintenance



Part to full
shade



Low water
requirement



Spring to
Autumn



Description

Melaleuca salicina grows to 7-8 m high, and is often used in landscaping for its ornamental value with weeping, willow-like foliage, and pink-red new growth. This small tree produces masses of creamy-white to pale yellow bottlebrush-shaped flower heads, on the tips of branches from late spring into early autumn that support nectar-feeding birds and bees. It is well-suited to a range of soil types and grows well in full to partial shade and benefits from pruning. It occurs in damp forests and woodlands of South East Queensland and southern New South Wales. There are also pink and red cultivars available.

Bangalow Palm

Archontophoenix cunninghamiana



CATHERINE PICKERING

Moderate
to grow



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

The Bangalow Palm is an attractive single trunked palm to 30 m high with a crown of large feathery leaves. Unlike some introduced palms, it has leaves that fall cleanly making it a more attractive and easier palm to maintain. In warmer areas flowering can be year-round, with small lilac flowers on creamy branches, and waxy, bright red fruit that attract birds. It is naturally found in wetter and warmer areas in Queensland and New South Wales including in palm groves in rainforests. It thrives on various soil types in partial shade or full sun, with consistent watering, especially during dry periods.

Black She-oak

Allocasuarina littoralis



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring



Description

This tough fast-growing tree to 8-12 m high by 4-7 m wide works well as a tall screen or wind break but may be too big for many school gardens and it can shade out other plants. It has fine, soft, needle-like 'leaves' that are technically stems that make a sighing sound in the wind. It does best in full sun to light shade in a range of free-draining soils, but has a large root system so avoid planting near drains, paths, and buildings. The seed pods are one of the favourite foods of the endangered Glossy Black-cockatoo. The trees are native to the east coast of Australia.

Cheese Tree

Glochidion ferdinandi



ROCHELLE STEVEN



GRAHAM MCDONALD

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



All year

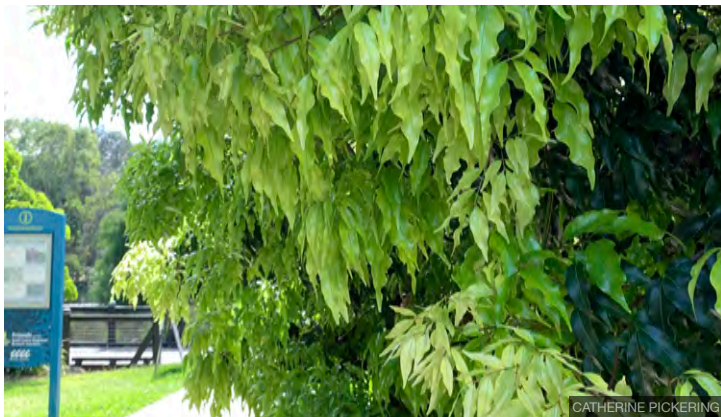


Description

The Cheese Tree is fast-growing, and low maintenance to 8 m high with a dense canopy in full sun and partial shade on a range of types of soil. It produces yellow and green flowers most of the year, which mature into distinctive small pumpkin-shaped fruit, initially green and later changing to white and pink. Sometimes clusters of seedlings can emerge around 'parent' trees. It occurs in rainforests and wet eucalypt forests in south-eastern New South Wales to northern Queensland and is a favourite with birds including pigeons, figbirds, and parrots.

Fine-leaved Tuckeroo

Lepiderema pulchella



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low water
requirement



Spring



Description

The Fine-leaved Tuckeroo is an attractive small tree to 8 m high. The glossy, light green leaves make this tree an excellent choice as a screening plant or a feature tree. In spring, it produces small yellow to orange flowers, which give way to smooth orange seed capsules in summer. This low-maintenance tree thrives in most soil types in full sun to half shade, but benefits from some protection from wind. It is found naturally along creeks, riverbanks, and the edges of rainforests, from far South East Queensland to the Tweed River in New South Wales.

Lemon Myrtle

Backhousia citriodora



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Summer to
Autumn

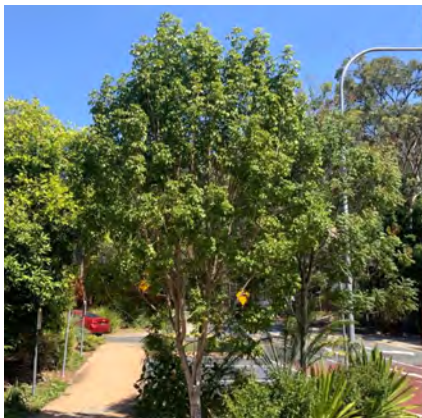


Description

Lemon Myrtle is a beautiful small tree to 3-8 m high by 2-5 m wide but may be kept smaller with regular pruning. This hardy plant grows well in full sun to part shade in moist, rich, well-drained soils and is suitable for low-maintenance gardens. It has attractive glossy green lemon-scented foliage with clusters of small fluffy white flowers from summer to autumn that attract birds, bees, and butterflies. Lemon Myrtle is native to subtropical rainforests of central and South East Queensland and works well in sensory and bushtucker gardens.

Small-leaved Tamarind

Diploglottis campbellii



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring



Description

This beautiful fast-growing larger rainforest tree to 7-10 m high has glossy dense foliage that makes it an attractive shade tree as well as working well in rainforest gardens in full sun to light shade on well-drained to moderately moist soils. In spring it produces cream-brown flowers, while red, orange, or yellow fruit are produced in late summer to early autumn. It is native to rainforests in Queensland and New South Wales but is endangered in the wild.

Red Cottonwood

Hibiscus tiliaceus var. *rubra*



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring



Description

This red form of the common coastal Cottonwood tree is both versatile and attractive. It is hardy and grows in a range of conditions to 8 m high by 4 m wide, but can be pruned to shape. It can even thrive in coastal areas where it can be hard to grow other trees on saline sand soils and even those subject to water logging. The attractive deep red to green heart shaped leaves of the red form add a splash of colour to the garden, while the yellow classic hibiscus flowers transition to pink-red over the course of a day before falling to the ground.

Small-leaved Lilly Pilly

Syzygium luehmannii



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Summer



Description

The Small-leaved Lilly Pilly is a medium-sized rainforest tree, to 15 m high that is very popular in cultivation including as hedges for shade, screens and as a wind break. The dense deep green glossy foliage, with pink new foliage, fluffy cream flowers in summer followed by pink to red fruit make it an attractive species to grow in gardens. It is low-maintenance, growing on a range of soil types in full sun to partial shade. It is native to parts of the east coast of Australia, and there are a range of cultivated forms available from nurseries.

Water Gum

Tristaniopsis laurina



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Moderate water
requirement



Summer



Description

Water Gum is a small tree to 5-15 m high that has a compact growth. It is ideal as a screen or specimen tree in a garden, with spreading glossy green foliage and mottled attractive bark. It produces profuse yellow flowers in the summer, and is easy to grow on moist, well-drained soils, in full sun to light shade. It is native to creek banks and the edge of rainforest from the Brisbane River in Queensland through coastal New South Wales and is increasingly used as a street tree in the region.

Little Penda

Xanthostemon verticillatus



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Year round
flowering



Description

This is a north Queensland species, that is starting to be used in gardens in South East Queensland as it is a hardy shrub to around 4 m that responds well to pruning. It has attractive glossy dark green leaves in whorls and produces clusters of yellow flowers year round that are popular with bees, butterflies and birds. This shrub works well on its own, among other flowering shrubs or in a hedge, and responds well to pruning to keep a dense form. It is hardy and fast-growing, in a range of soil types, with the best results in well-drained soils and sunny to lightly shaded gardens.

She Oak

Casuarina glauca "Cousin It"



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun



Low-moderate
water requirement



Description

This dwarf form of the She Oak *Casuarina glauca* is a captivating ground cover with a distinctive appearance with a character all of its own and is low-maintenance. Forming mounds of fine, soft to the touch, "hairy" strands of cascading foliage, it can spread up to 1-2 m across and 0.2 m high. It is an excellent feature plant in rockeries and raised garden beds and creates spectacular effects when spilling down embankments or flowing over rocks and hillocks. The thick foliage not only adds visual interest to gardens but also helps retain moisture, prevent erosion, and suppress weeds.

Fairy Fan-flower

Scaevola aemula



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
light shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

Fairy Fan-flower is a fast-growing spreading shrub or groundcover to 0.5 m high by 1 m wide and grows best in well-drained soils in full sun to light shade. This plant looks great in cottage gardens, coastal gardens, rockeries, and along garden borders. It produces small, green foliage and masses of white, purple, or blue fan-shaped flowers during spring and summer that attract birds, butterflies, and bees. This hardy groundcover is widespread in dry sclerophyll forests generally in sandy soils from South East Queensland through New South Wales and Victoria to South Australia.

Golden Penda

Xanthostemon chrysanthus



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun



Moderate water
requirement



Summer to
Autumn



Description

Endemic to coastal rainforests in North Queensland, this hardy tree is very popular in gardens, parks and as a street tree. It is a relatively fast-growing species to 10-15 m tall and 5 m wide and grows well in full sun and on a range of soil types. This tree provides dense shade with an attractive canopy and overall form, or alternatively can be pruned as a hedge. With masses of bright fluorescent yellow blooms in clusters near the ends of branches in summer and autumn, it is very popular including with birds and bees so may work best in garden beds.

Grevillea Honey Gem and other cultivars

Grevillea "Honey Gem"



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun



Low-moderate
water requirement



Winter to
Spring



Description

This hybrid between *Grevillea banksii* and *G. pteridifolia* is a fast-growing shrub to 4 m high by 3 m wide. It is low-maintenance, and features deep green, strongly divided leaves and grows well on a range of soils in full sun as a feature or screening plant. It produces deep golden-orange clusters of flowers year-round, that attract birds. Other popular cultivars including 'Peaches and Cream' with cream to pink flowers, and 'Superb' with red-orange and yellow flowers. **Note: These types of Grevilleas may cause severe skin allergies in some people and so if used at all in schools must be in less accessible areas.**

Holly-leaved Native Fuchsia

Graptophyllum ilicifolium



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
light shade



Moderate water
requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

Vulnerable in the wild, the Native Fuchsia occurs west of Mackay, Queensland, although it is increasingly common in cultivation. This handsome medium-sized shrub to 3 m high has shiny, dark green, holly-like leaves and red or pink tubular flowers in pairs or clusters along the stems in spring to early summer. It is an excellent choice as a slow-growing plant in full sun to deep shade and is popular with bees and birds. This Native Fuchsia can also be used as a hedge with pruning maintaining a bushy form and promotes prolific flowering. The related Scarlet Fuchsia (*Graptophyllum excelsum*) is also suitable for gardens.

Ivory Curl Flower

Buckinghamia celsissima



Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Summer to
Autumn



Description

The Ivory Curl Flower is a spectacular tall shrub to small tree from the rainforests of northern Queensland. It is tough and hardy and is often used as a street tree, as well as grown in gardens and parks. During summer and autumn, masses of long, showy sprays of sweetly fragrant, creamy-white flowers are produced that often completely conceal the dark green glossy foliage and attract masses of bees. It grows well on a range of soil types in full sun to light shade. The seeds are food for birds including parrots, and the tree serves as a host species for a range of butterflies.

Little John Bottle Brush

Callistemon "Little John"



CATHERINE PICKERING

Some
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring to
Summer



Description

This dwarf compact shrub is a popular cultivar due to the attractive foliage and form. Typically growing to 1 m tall, its dense evergreen blue-grey foliage can be easily pruned to shape and hence works well in mass plantings including in hedges, although slow growing initially. Scarlet red clusters of bottlebrush flowers are produced most of the year and attract birds, bees and butterflies to the garden. A very hardy plant that does well in a range of conditions, but will produce more flowers with watering. It is one of our go-to plants as it is tough, attractive, low growing plant that requires little maintenance once established.

Native Gardenia

Atractocarpus fitzalanii



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
full shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Spring



Description

The Native Gardenia is a versatile, easy to grow, tall shrub to small tree reaching 5-8 m. Endemic to coastal areas in tropical Queensland, it is increasingly popular in tropical style gardens as a shade tree. The glossy evergreen foliage can be pruned to maintain a more compact size. It produces scented starry white flowers with a fragrance reminiscent of gardenias in the spring. This is followed by large heavy fruit in winter that turn from green to yellow when ripe that attracts birds and flying foxes. Because of the fruit it may not be suitable near paths or carparks in schools.

Pink Flowering Lillipilli

Syzygium "Cascade"



CATHERINE PICKERING

Low
Maintenance



Full sun to
part shade



Low-moderate
water requirement



Summer



Description

This hybrid between *Syzygium luehmannii* and *S. wilsonii* is a fast-growing shrub to 3-4 m high by 3 m wide. The glossy apple-green leaves form a thick, cascading canopy, with new reddish growth produced year-round. During the summer, it produces clusters of pink powder-puff flowers, followed by pinkish fruit. It grows well on a range of soils in full sun to part shade and as it is easy to maintain, it works well as a feature plant, screen, or hedge, offering visual appeal in gardens.

Index

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Acacia concurrens</i> | 57 |
| <i>Acmena smithii</i> | 61 |
| <i>Adiantum atroviride</i> | 31 |
| <i>Adiantum formosum</i> | 33 |
| <i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i> | 73 |
| <i>Archontophoenix cunninghamiana</i> | 72 |
| <i>Asplenium australasicum</i> | 29 |
| <i>Atractocarpus fitzalanii</i> | 89 |
| <i>Austromyrtus dulcis</i> | 47 |
| <i>Backhousia citriodora</i> | 76 |
| <i>Banksia myrtifolia</i> | 64 |
| <i>Banksia integrifolia</i> | 60 |
| <i>Banksia oblongifolia</i> | 42 |
| <i>Banksia robur</i> | 54 |
| <i>Banksia spinulosa</i> | 43 |
| <i>Baumea rubiginosa</i> | 27 |
| <i>Blechnum cartilagineum</i> | 34 |
| <i>Buckinghamia celsissima</i> | 87 |
| <i>Callistemon "Little John"</i> | 88 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Carex gaudichaudiana</i> | 38 |
| <i>Carpobrotus glaucescens</i> | 13 |
| <i>Casuarina glauca</i> "Cousin It" | 82 |
| <i>Christella dentata</i> | 28 |
| <i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i> | 26 |
| <i>Coleus habrophyllus</i> | 25 |
| <i>Coleus graveolens</i> | 22 |
| <i>Cupaniopsis newmanii</i> | 65 |
| <i>Davidsonia johnsonii</i> | 69 |
| <i>Diploglottis campbellii</i> | 77 |
| <i>Doryanthes palmeri</i> | 53 |
| <i>Elaeocarpus reticulatus</i> | 58 |
| <i>Ficinia nodosa</i> | 36 |
| <i>Glochidion ferdinandi</i> | 74 |
| <i>Goodenia ovata</i> | 19 |
| <i>Graptophyllum ilicifolium</i> | 86 |
| <i>Grevillea</i> "Honey Gem", "Superb", "Peaches & Cream" | 85 |
| <i>Hardenbergia violacea</i> | 23 |
| <i>Hibbertia scandens</i> | 16 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i> var. <i>rubra</i> | 78 |
| <i>Hovea acutifolia</i> | 50 |
| <i>Lepiderema pulchella</i> | 75 |
| <i>Leptospermum petersonii</i> | 46 |
| <i>Leptospermum polygalifolium</i> | 56 |
| <i>Lomandra hystrix</i> | 32 |
| <i>Lomandra longifolia</i> | 37 |
| <i>Melaleuca (Callistemon) salicina</i> | 71 |
| <i>Melaleuca (Callistemon) viminalis</i> | 59 |
| <i>Melaleuca thymifolia</i> | 55 |
| <i>Melastoma malabathricum</i> | 40 |
| <i>Myoporum boninense</i> | 15 |
| <i>Olearia nernstii</i> | 44 |
| <i>Ozothamnus diosmifolius</i> | 51 |
| <i>Pararchidendron pruinoseum</i> | 70 |
| <i>Pararistolochia praevenosa</i> | 14 |
| <i>Peperomia leptostachya</i> | 24 |
| <i>Pilidiostigma rhytispermum</i> | 49 |
| <i>Pittosporum revolutum</i> | 63 |
| <i>Pittosporum undulatum</i> | 66 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| <i>Prostanthera ovalifolia</i> | 48 |
| <i>Pseuderanthemum variabile</i> | 21 |
| <i>Psychotria daphnoides</i> | 52 |
| <i>Psydrax odorata</i> | 68 |
| <i>Pteris umbrosa</i> | 35 |
| <i>Scaevola aemula</i> | 83 |
| <i>Syzygium "Cascade"</i> | 90 |
| <i>Syzygium australe</i> | 62 |
| <i>Syzygium luehmannii</i> | 79 |
| <i>Syzygium oleosum</i> | 67 |
| <i>Tecomanthe hillii</i> | 17 |
| <i>Telmatoblechnum indicum</i> | 30 |
| <i>Tripladenia cunninghamii</i> | 20 |
| <i>Tristaniopsis laurina</i> | 80 |
| <i>Xanthorrhoea glauca</i> | 39 |
| <i>Xanthorrhoea johnsonii</i> | 45 |
| <i>Xanthorrhoea macronema</i> | 41 |
| <i>Xanthostemon chrysanthus</i> | 84 |
| <i>Xanthostemon verticillatus</i> | 81 |
| <i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i> | 18 |




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