

Medium shrubs 1.3-2.5 m high

*Acacia buxifolia**
*Acacia lanigera**
Banksia spinulosa var *collina*
*Bursaria spinosa**
Callistemon subulatus
Calytrix tetragona
Correa alba
Correa glabra
Correa 'Marian's Marvel'
Correa reflexa many forms
Grevillea 'Crosbie Morrison'
Grevillea 'Evelyn's Coronet'
Grevillea aquifolium
*Grevillea victoriae**
Grevillea 'Winpara Gem'
Melaleuca diosmatifolia
Micrantheum hexandrum
*Olearia tenuifolia**
Philotheca myoporoides (syn. *Eriostemon myo.*)*
Westringia 'Wynyabbie Gem'
Westringia fruticosa
Zieria cytisoides
Zieria littoralis

Large shrubs 2.5-6 m high

Acacia boormanii
Acacia cultriformis
*Acacia rubida**
*Banksia marginata**
Banksia spinulosa var *spinulosa*
Callistemon 'Kings Park Special'
Callistemon 'Eureka'
Callistemon phoeniceus
Callistemon sieberi
Grevillea 'Dargan Hill'
Hakea dactyloides
Pomaderris intermedia

Trees above 6 m high

*Acacia doratoxylon**
*Acacia implexa**
*Acacia pravissima**
*Allocasuarina verticillata**
Banksia serrata
*Brachychiton populneus**
*Callitris endlicheri**
Eucalyptus crenulata
*Eucalyptus moorei**

Climbers

Clematis microphylla var *leptophylla**
*Hardenbergia violacea**



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Planning a Low Water Garden In the Canberra Region



Correa 'Dusky Bells'

Many Australian native plants have a natural advantage as they are genetically predisposed to low water conditions once they have been established

Planning a Low Water Garden in the Canberra Region

Low water gardening begins with three basics

The first of these is **soil preparation**. Improving the soil already in your garden is recommended rather than importing soil. Improvement should make the soil friable so that water will penetrate and reach the roots of the plants rather than be lost by run-off. Compacted soil should be ripped or turned over with a fork and organic material such as compost or well rotted manure dug in to a spade depth. Clay soils will be helped by adding gypsum at the rate of 500g to the square metre. Heavy clay soils will also benefit from the digging in of up to 10% coarse sand. If more soil is needed it should be thoroughly incorporated into the natural soil as well.

The second basic is making an **appropriate choice of plants** for our dry climate. Here, many Australian plants have an advantage as they are adapted to dry conditions once established. By planting our unique and beautiful flora we can save water. There is a native plant to suit nearly every situation. Plants indigenous to our local region are especially useful as they are able to cope with heavy frosts in winter yet tolerate high summer temperatures. Plant selection should be based on the ability of particular plants to adapt to your environment as well as achieving the effect you want including size, texture and colour. The correct choice of plants will enhance your garden or rural holding with minimal supplementary watering needed after establishment. Some suitable plants are listed overleaf.

The third basic is **mulching** to retain any precious moisture that does penetrate the soil. Many materials are used as mulch: Eucamulch, bark chips, wood chips, leaf litter, shredded prunings, hay, pebbles, sand and others. Using a mulch which breaks down over time has the advantage of adding organic matter and attracting earthworms to improve the structure and nutrient level of the soil. However it is important to keep the mulch about 40mm away from the stems of plants to avoid collar rot diseases.

The depth of mulch needed depends on its texture. Generally, something between 30-40 mm for fine mulch and 60-80 mm for coarse mulch will allow moisture to penetrate and not be totally absorbed by the mulch yet be thick enough to help retain soil moisture and suppress weed growth.

More points to consider

The lawn. Lawns have high water needs so reduce the lawn area as much as possible. Use dry tolerant grasses and keep your lawn well aerated to minimise run off. Alternatives to lawn include areas of mulch or establishing a native grassland area using local grasses.

Free water. Consider installing rainwater tanks, diverting tank overflows or other unused water from roofs into shallow ponds or wet areas, and using grey water where possible.

Run off. Keep as much water on your block as possible by using low mounds and swales to slow flows and increase absorption. If this is done it is important to match plantings to local soil moisture.

Watering. Water thoroughly but less frequently and only when needed. Install a timer controlled dripper system for applying the right amount of water in the right place, near the roots of the plants.

Maintenance. Keep your plants vigorous by regular pruning and get rid of weeds which use up precious water.

Further information. Refer to the Society's book "**Australian Plants for Canberra Region Gardens**" for more details on the use of native plants in our area. This book describes over a thousand Aussie plants and gives their cultivation requirements.

A list of some suggested plants is given overleaf.

Plants marked * are native to the local area.

Some suggested plants

Groundcovers

Acacia amblygona prostrate
Acacia cultriformis prostrate
Gastrobium minus (syn. *Brachysema minor*)
Calytrix tetragona prostrate forms
*Chrysocephalum apiculatum**
Correa reflexa prostrate forms
Dodonaea procumbens
Grevillea 'Bronze Rambler'
Grevillea lanigera prostrate forms
Grevillea 'Pink Lady'
Hibbertia pedunculata
Lasiopetalum macrophyllum prostrate
Micromyrtus ciliata prostrate
Myoporum parvifolium

Grasses and clumping plants

Austrodanthonia carphoides & other local species*
*Austrostipa densiflora**
*Dianella longifolia**
*Dianella revoluta**
*Lomandra longifolia**
*Poa sieberiana**
*Themeda triandra**

Small shrubs to 1.3 m high

Acacia acinacea
Acacia flexifolia
Astartea fascicularis
Callistemon 'Little John'
*Chrysocephalum semipapposum**
Correa 'Dusky Bells'
Correa reflexa
Crowea 'Festival'
Cryptandra several species, some local*
Einadia hastata
Eremophila glabra
Grevillea baueri
Grevillea dimorpha fine leaf form
Melaleuca thymifolia
Myoporum 'Monaro Marvel'
Philotheca verrucosa (syn. *Eriostemon verrucosus*)
Rhagodia spinescens
*Xerochrysum viscosum**