

# The Western Suburbs Greening Plan



## Guide

# wildflowers and other local native plants for your garden



**WESROC**

Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils

Bring the beauty and variety of plants that grow naturally in the Western Suburbs into your garden.

When you choose local native wildflowers, shrubs and trees for your garden you can

**provide** food and shelter for native birds, butterflies and other animals

**save** water, fertilisers and pesticides

**enjoy** planning and watching your garden grow, knowing that it is working with nature.

The information in this booklet will help you choose local native plants and grow them successfully in your home garden.

Your local Council has sponsored the development of the booklet as part of the Western Suburbs Greening Plan.

## WESROC

Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils





Old Man's Beard

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Couch Honeypot

plan  
nurture



Western Patersonia

enjoy your garden

# why choose local native plants?

Many people are now growing wildflowers and other local native plants in their home gardens – and for good reasons too...



The wildflowers, shrubs and trees of the Western Suburbs are suited to our sandy, alkaline (lime) soils. In fact, they like them like that! They are also used to our hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters.

Local native plants support the range of living things (or biodiversity) within our area. They provide homes and food for native birds, butterflies, frogs and other animals and provide 'stepping stones' for the movement of these animals between our bushland areas.



Photograph by Matt Williams



Photograph by Eric McCrum

The plants that belong here are easy to care for. Generally, they need less water, less fertiliser and less pruning than exotic plants, so they can save you money and leave you more time to enjoy your garden.



Local native plants, unlike some exotic species commonly used in home gardens, are not likely to become weeds in local bushland, parks and reserves.



There are local native plants to suit every situation in your garden, whether you wish to plant one or two attractive favourites, establish a feature area or create an entire garden of wildflowers, shrubs and trees.

When you add local native plants to your garden you not only make an important contribution to the greening of the Western Suburbs... you bring the beauty and variety of our world-renowned flora closer to home where you can enjoy it all year round!

Prickly Conostylis



Acorn Banksia



Parrotbush



Native wisteria

# getting started

Taking some time to plan your garden carefully will help you make choices you are happy with.

## deciding what to plant where

Where would you like to have local native plants in your garden? What types of plant would you like to include? Do you need climbing plants or tall shrubs to screen a shed or fence? Would you like to create a protective thicket for birds, with perhaps a bird bath nearby? Are windbreaks needed or shady trees to sit under? If you have in mind what you want to achieve you are more likely to make suitable choices for each area.

If you have an established garden, you might like to create a wildflower garden in an area where there is too much lawn or paving or where existing plants are unsuitable. Perhaps you have spaces that could be enlivened with the colours of a few new additions! Your street verge is another possibility and your local council can assist you with guidelines for choosing the types of plants that will be suitable.

## colour and flowering

Check the flowering season of your plants so that you can plan for year-round colour. Different leaf colours and textures also add variety. You can mix and match a range of colourful plants to provide striking contrasts or use groupings of particular plants to feature in different areas of your garden. You might like to choose a sunny space for a colourful mass display of herbaceous plants such as kangaroo paws or fringed lilies.



## shade and sun

Most local native plants like plenty of sunshine but some are more shade-tolerant than others. If you notice which parts of your garden get the sun in winter and summer you will be able to plan and create areas that give you winter sun and summer shade. Generally, sun-loving plants will need to be planted on the north side of trees or buildings and shade-tolerant plants will do better on the south side. Plants for the east and west walls of houses can be more shade-tolerant.

## when to plant

Natives are best planted in the autumn months of Perth's mediterranean climate, when the soil is still warm. The plants can settle in before the spring growing season and the heat and dryness of summer arrive. You can plant in spring if you are prepared to water as needed until your plants are established. Planting in the heat of summer is best avoided.

## buying your plants

At the nursery, take your time to browse and ask for advice about choosing plants most suited to your area. If possible, choose the local form of the plant – many plants sold in nurseries are cultivars that have been selectively bred or hybrids (two species that have been cross-bred). The local native form of the plant will bring more environmental benefits.



Tube stock, which are young plants in small pots, are becoming more readily available and these are a good choice. Once settled in, local plants that are planted small grow quickly. You can decide on the plants you want in September/October, order them from nurseries as tube stock and they will generally be ready for collection and planting in the following autumn. If you are buying advanced plants be careful that they are not root-bound.

## garden layout

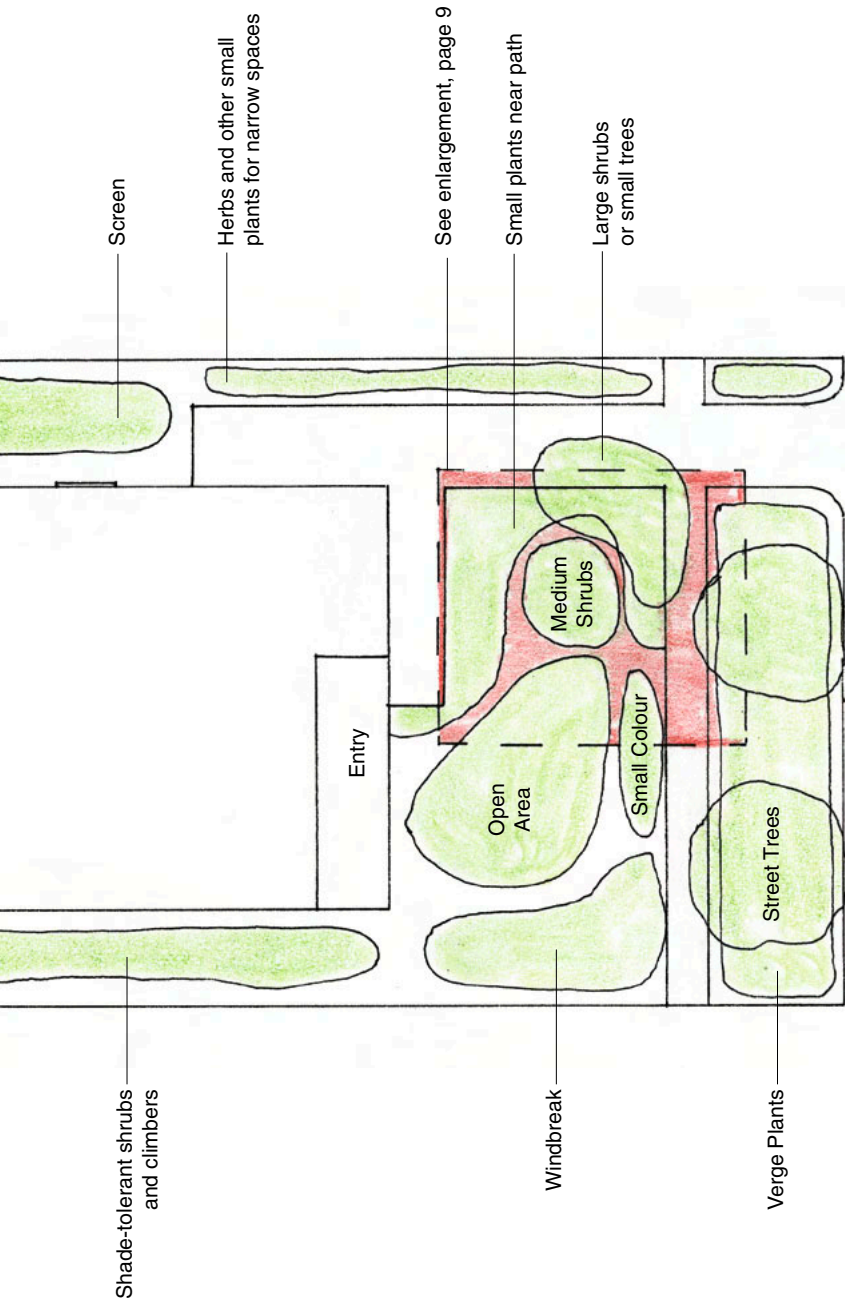
Make a scale drawing of your garden. You may already have house plans you can use. Draw in existing structures (such as pergolas, paved areas), larger plants and trees. Consider how the plants you choose will grow and leave enough space for them to mature without overcrowding. The following pages give some ideas for designing the layout of your garden.

# designing your local plants garden

Make a simple diagram to help you decide how you might use local native plants generally in different parts of your garden. Put in the North point for your property and take account of the seasonal path of the sun. Below is an example garden design.





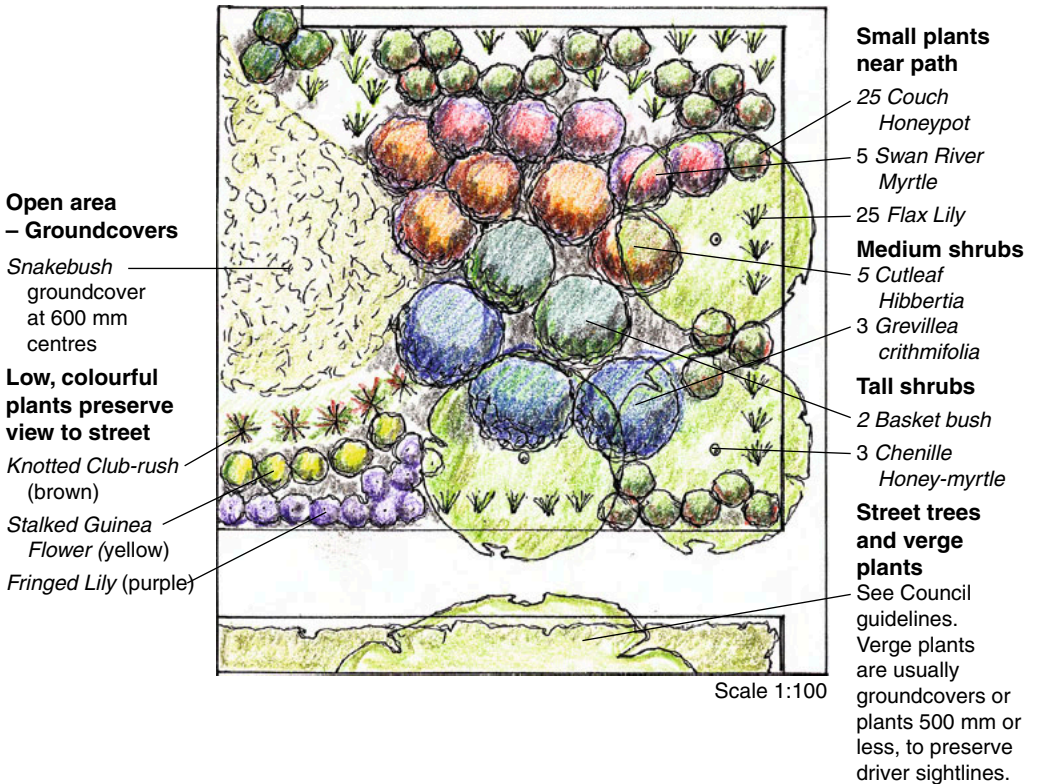


The red areas within the dashed lines are enlarged on the next two pages, to show detailed selection and spacing of plants. For which part(s) of your garden could you choose local plants?

# planning your local plants garden in detail

Below are detailed plans for selected areas in a front and rear garden. You can use these plans to guide your choice of specific plants, and the numbers of plants that you want within areas of your own garden.

## Front garden detail



Space your plants according to their height and spread. Choose smaller plants for the edges of the garden and place larger shrubs and trees where they can spread without crowding.

## Rear garden detail

### Protective thicket for birds

- 1 Acorn Banksia
- 3 Spider-net Grevillea
- 4 Cushion Bush
- 3 Two-leaf Hakea (prickly)

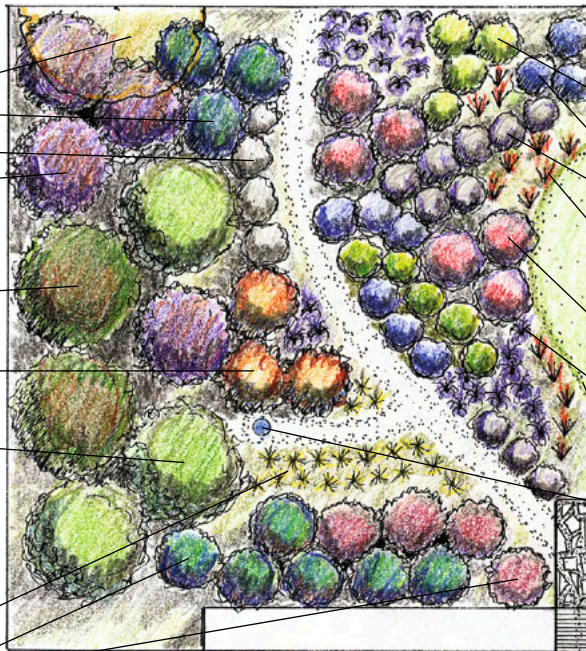
- 2 Parrotbush (prickly)

- 3 Silky-leaved Blood Flower

- 3 One-sided Bottlebrush

### Small shrubs and herbs preserve view through garden from house

- 19 Grey Cottonheads
- 6 Spider-net Grevillea
- 4 Honey Myrtle



Scale 1:100

### Sunny spot for low, colourful plants and foliage

- 9 Dune Moses (yellow)
- 9 Rose Banjine (pink)
- 10 Cushion Bush (white foliage)
- 14 Mangles Kangaroo Paw (red/green)
- 6 Swan River Myrtle (pink)
- 23 Western Patersonia (purple)

### Open play area

### Bird bath

# 50 local plants of the western suburbs



Running Postman



Limestone Wattle



Knotted Club-rush

Common Name	Species	Flowers	Colour
<b>Groundcovers</b>			
Old Man's Beard	<i>Clematis linearifolia</i>	Jul-Sep	cream
Ruby Saltbush	<i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i>	May-Sep	red
Native Wisteria	<i>Hardenbergia comptoniana</i>	Jun-Sep	purple
Snake Bush	<i>Hemiandra pungens</i>	All Year	purple
Running Postman	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Jul-Nov	red
Thick-leaved Fan-flower	<i>Scaevola crassifolia</i>	Nov-Jan	blue

## Herbs (Non-woody)

Prickly Conostylis	<i>Conostylis aculeata</i>	Sep-Oct	yellow
Grey Cottonheads	<i>Conostylis candicans</i>	Aug-Sep	yellow
Flax Lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Jun-Aug	orange
Knotted Club-rush	<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Nov-Mar	brown
Nodding Club-rush	<i>Isolepis cernua</i>	All Year	brown
Morning Iris	<i>Orthrosanthus laxus</i>	Aug-Oct	mauve
Western Patersonia	<i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>	Sep-Dec	purple
Fringed Lily	<i>Thysanotus multiflorus</i>	Sep-Nov	purple

## Small Shrubs

Couch Honeypot	<i>Banksia dallanneyi</i>	May-Sep	gold
Australian Bluebell	<i>Billardiera heterophylla</i>	Oct-Feb	blue
Silky Bloodflower	<i>Calothamnus sanguineus</i>	Mar-Nov	red
Orange Eremaea	<i>Eremaea pauciflora</i>	Sep-Dec	orange
Sea Heath	<i>Frankenia pauciflora</i>	All Year	mauve
Bacon and Eggs	<i>Gastrolobium capitatum</i>	Jun-Sep	yellow
Yellow Pea	<i>Gompholobium tomentosum</i>	Aug-Dec	yellow
Spider-net Grevillea	<i>Grevillea preissii</i>	May-Sep	red
Stalked Guinea Flower	<i>Hibbertia racemosa</i>	Jul-Nov	yellow
Swan River Myrtle	<i>Hypocalymma robustum</i>	Jul-Oct	pink
Waldjumi	<i>Jacksonia sericea</i>	Dec-Feb	orange
Cushion Bush	<i>Leucophyta brownii</i>	All year	yellow
Honey-myrtle	<i>Melaleuca seriata</i>	Oct-Dec	pink
False Boronia	<i>Phyllanthus calycinus</i>	Jun-Nov	white
Coast Banjine	<i>Pimelea ferruginea</i>	Sep-Nov	pink
Berry Salt Bush	<i>Rhagodia baccata</i>	Mar-Jun	cream

Tar Bush



One-sided Bottlebrush



Common Name	Species	Flowers	Colour
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**Medium Shrubs**

Limestone Wattle	<i>Acacia truncata</i>	June-Sep	yellow
One-sided Bottlebrush	<i>Calothamnus quadrifidus</i>	Aug-Dec	red
Tar Bush	<i>Eremophila glabra</i>	Jul-Jan	orange
Grevillea	<i>Grevillea crithmifolia</i>	Jul-Sep	white
Two-leaf Hakea	<i>Hakea trifurcata</i>	Jul-Oct	white
Cutleaf Hibbertia	<i>Hibbertia cuneiformis</i>	Aug-Dec	yellow
Green stinkwood	<i>Jacksonia sternbergiana</i>	All year	orange
Coast Honey-myrtle	<i>Melaleuca systena</i>	Sep-Dec	cream
Cockies' Tongues	<i>Templetonia retusa</i>	Apr-Sep	red

**Large Shrubs**

Red-eyed Wattle	<i>Acacia cyclops</i>	Sep-Jan	yellow
Parrotbush	<i>Banksia sessilis</i>	May-Nov	yellow
Perth Hopbush	<i>Dodonaea hackettiana</i>	Jul-Oct	green
Chenille Honey-myrtle	<i>Melaleuca huegelii</i>	Sep-Jan	white
Basket Bush	<i>Spyridium globulosum</i>	Jun-Sep	white

**Trees**

WA Peppermint	<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Aug-Dec	white
Candle Banksia	<i>Banksia attenuata</i>	Sep-Oct	yellow
Firewood Banksia	<i>Banksia menzeiesii</i>	Feb-Aug	red
Acorn Banksia	<i>Banksia prionotes</i>	Feb-Aug	orange
Fremantle Mallee	<i>Eucalyptus foecunda</i>	Nov-May	cream
Rottneet Tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca lanceolata</i>	Oct-Mar	white



Fringed Lily



Sea Heath



Prickly Conostylis



Cockies' Tongues

Swan River Myrtle



This list is only a sample. Ask your plant supplier about other plants that are local to your area.

WA Peppermint



# planting your local native plants

These suggestions will help to get your plants off to a good start.

1

Lay plants out, in their pots, exactly where you are going to plant them. Don't start planting until you are sure that you have the right plant in the best spot! Think about the size and shape the plant will become. A shrub that will grow to a metre wide should be planted at least half a metre from any paths, but can be planted closer to other shrubs to promote interesting shapes and give a more natural look.



Spider-net Grevillea

2

Dig a hole for the plant that is slightly deeper and wider than its pot. Loosen the soil in and around the hole so that the roots will have an open, light soil mix to grow into.

3

Thoroughly water the plant, the hole and the surrounding soil before planting. This will help to reduce the shock of planting out and will ensure that the root zone does not dry out. Mixing the soil and water together in the hole will help the soil 'wet up'. If the soil will not wet up you may need to apply a wetting agent.

# 4

Remove the plant carefully from its pot to avoid disturbing the soil and roots. Check that the roots are not tightly wound to the shape of the pot (root-bound). If necessary, you can make a few vertical cuts through the root ball with secateurs to free them enough to make new growth.



A new planting



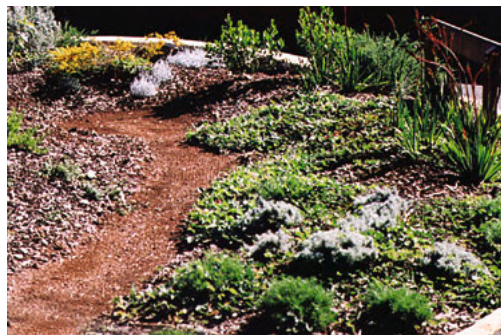
Mulch around new planting

# 5

Place the plant in the centre of the hole and draw moist soil in around it. Press the soil in gently and firmly, especially around the roots of the plant, to remove air pockets. Place the plant just deep enough so that you can form a shallow depression or saucer shape around it. This will protect the plant from drying out by directing water towards the roots.

# 6

Spread a layer of suitable mulch 5–10 cm deep and 15–20 cm wide around the plant, making sure that it is not in direct contact with the plant stem, as this may cause rotting.



The mature result

## water your plants well!

# how to avoid problems

Some basic knowledge and attention to what local plants need will ensure that they become established in your garden and remain healthy.

## choosing healthy plants

Make sure that the plants you buy look healthy and that they are not root-bound within their pots. If possible, choose tube stock or young plants rather than advanced plants, as these often settle in better. They are also cheaper to buy. Some plants may die, even in well-tended gardens. You can infill in the next planting season.

## availability

Establishing a local native plants garden can take time. Nurseries are catching up with the increasing demand for local native plants, but the choice of species in any one year can be limited. Placing an order for plants in September/October with a specialist local native plants nursery can help to ensure you have many of the plants you want in time for autumn planting. You can add plants to your garden over time as you discover more species you would like to include.

## watering

Be sensitive to your plants' water needs! Once established, local native plants will flourish with minimal summer watering. However, they will require adequate water while they are establishing themselves, and during extended dry periods at any time of the year.

Over-watering can be as much of a problem as drying out. Over-watering can cause plants to grow too quickly and become brittle and can make pruning necessary. It can also encourage weeds, fungal diseases and shallow root development so that plants cannot cope with periods of dry conditions.

Your establishing plants do need regular thorough watering. This encourages them to develop deep root systems that can access water over a large area, rather than remain dependent upon frequent watering. If possible, use drip irrigation or hand watering so that water can be directed at the root zone rather than at the foliage.

## weeding and disturbance

Take care not to disturb plant roots or the surrounding soil if you are removing weeds or planting near your local plants. Disturbing the soil may damage roots and can encourage weeds to emerge. If possible, remove weeds when they are small.



## mulching

Adding mulch after planting will help to reduce weeds, retain moisture and keep the soil around your plants cooler through the summer months. Choose chipped material or leaves from hard-leaved, preferably native plants as these more closely resemble natural leaf-litter. Beware of commercial mulches that may have added nutrients.

## pruning

Local native plants develop their own individual shapes (or habit) over time. If your plants and their position and spacing in your garden are chosen carefully pruning will generally not be needed. Plants that are not over-watered or fertilised also require little pruning. Pruning can, however, be used with care to shape some plants and to promote flowering.

Local native plants vary in their ability to tolerate pruning and you can kill some by cutting them back hard. Most of the plants listed in this booklet can be pruned after flowering. Take care with secateur hygiene for Banksias and Hakeas. For more detailed pruning information refer to an organisation listed on page 16.

## fertilising

The use of fertilisers contributes to the problem of excess nutrients in soil, groundwater and waterways. Because local native plants are adapted to local soils, they generally don't need the addition of fertilisers to thrive. Some local native plants (eg. Grevilleas, and Hakeas) will tolerate only very small amounts of the nutrient phosphorus and should not be planted in parts of the garden where phosphate fertilisers might be used.

If you do choose to use fertiliser, be sure to use it sparingly and select only low-nutrient, slow-release, preferably organic products. Ask your nursery about fertilisers that have been formulated specially for native plants and closely follow the instructions for use.

## pests and diseases

Because local native plants provide food and shelter for birds and insects you may at times see evidence of this on your plants. Healthy plants will be naturally resilient to serious damage by pests and diseases. The presence of a range of insects, birds and other animals in your garden indicates that it is providing valuable habitat. To reduce the risk of introducing diseases such as *Phytophthora* Dieback to your garden, buy plants from an Accredited Nursery. Ask for certified dieback-free materials such as soil, gravel, potting mix, and mulch. Using mulch composted to Australian Standard 4454 helps stop the spread of weeds and diseases.

Background images by  
kind permission of the  
artist, Patricia Negus

## finding out more

### The following organisations provide useful information on using local native plants and waterwise gardening:



**Apace Nursery** website (<http://www.apacewa.org.au>) can be used to select local native plants for your garden. Use the suburb finder and online map showing streets to select the vegetation complex (soil type) for your garden. The revegetation guide then lists species that are local to your area. Plants can be sorted by factors such as flowering season, habit (climber, shrub, tree etc), bird and butterfly attracting plants.

**Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority** ([www.bgpa.wa.gov.au](http://www.bgpa.wa.gov.au)) Kings Park Volunteer Master Gardeners provide free telephone advice about native plants: 9480 3672.

**Wildflower Society of Western Australia (Inc)** Floreat.  
Local plant information, books and plant sales: 9383 7979.

### books

***A New Image for West Australian Plants***, Lullfitz, G (2002)  
Lullfitz Nursery, 9405 1607.

***Perth Plants for Your Garden***, Greening Australia (1997): 9335 8933.

### plant nurseries

These nurseries specialise in local native plants:

#### **Apace WA**

1 Johannah St, North Fremantle Ph: 9336 1262.

#### **Carramar Coastal Nursery**

1834 Mandurah Rd, Port Kennedy Ph: 9524 1227.

#### **Lullfitz Nursery**

Caporn St (cnr Honey Rd), Wanneroo Ph: 9405 1607

1071 Thomas Rd, Oakford Ph: 9439 2555.

#### **Zanthorrea Nursery**

155 Watsonia Rd, Maida Vale Ph: 9454 6260.



# about the western suburbs greening plan

Much of the appeal of the Western Suburbs lies in the leafy green streets and gardens, and the many parks and bushland reserves of the area.

As a means of protecting, preserving and enhancing these features into the future, as development pressures increase, the Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils and the Town of Cambridge commissioned the development of the Western Suburbs Greening Plan (2002).

Plants that are local to the area have an important part to play in the Greening Plan. Local native plants support biodiversity—the wide range of living things that share our environment. Our local native plants are known worldwide for their beauty and diversity, yet currently are not widely grown in our own gardens. Our remaining bushland and existing isolated examples of local vegetation can only go part of the way to providing enough quality habitat for animals as well as corridors for the movement of species throughout the metropolitan area.

By choosing local native plants for home gardens residents of the Western Suburbs can make the area more attractive to native birds, insects and other animals. This can help to maintain biodiversity into the future as well as add to the sense of green space that we enjoy.



## WESROC member council offices

Town of Cambridge: 9347 6000

Town of Claremont: 9285 4300

Town of Cottesloe: 9285 5000

Town of Mosman Park: 9384 1633

City of Nedlands: 9273 3500

Shire of Peppermint Grove: JG Î Â Î €€

City of Subiaco: 9237 9222

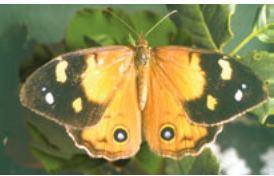
Choose local plants for your garden and join in the greening of the Western Suburbs.



plan  
nurture



enjoy local plants



Photograph by Eric McCrum

Discover the local plants of your area in nearby bushland:

- Allen Park Bushland, cnr Wood Street & Kirkwood Avenue, Swanbourne.
- Bold Park and adjacent bushland, Bold Park Drive, City Beach.
- Underwood Avenue Bushland, cnr Selby Street, Shenton Park.
- Shenton Bushland, Lemnos Street, Shenton Park.
- Pelican Point, Hackett Drive near Australia II Drive, Crawley.
- Minim Cove Park, Fairbairn Street, Mosman Park.
- Chidley Point, Chidley Way, Mosman Park.
- Lake Claremont, Strickland St, Swanbourne
- Buckland Hill Reserve, Boundary Road, Mosman Park.

Contact your council (see page 17) or the Urban Bushland Council WA Inc. (page 16) for more information.