



## NRM Plan

### CONTACT

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CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY

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# Native gardens

In the Northern and Yorke NRM Region

### Why native plants?

Gardeners in the Northern and Yorke NRM region are challenged by long, hot and dry summers, drought, water restrictions, and a changing climate. It is possible to have a garden that copes with the tough climate by using resilient, hardy, local, native plants.

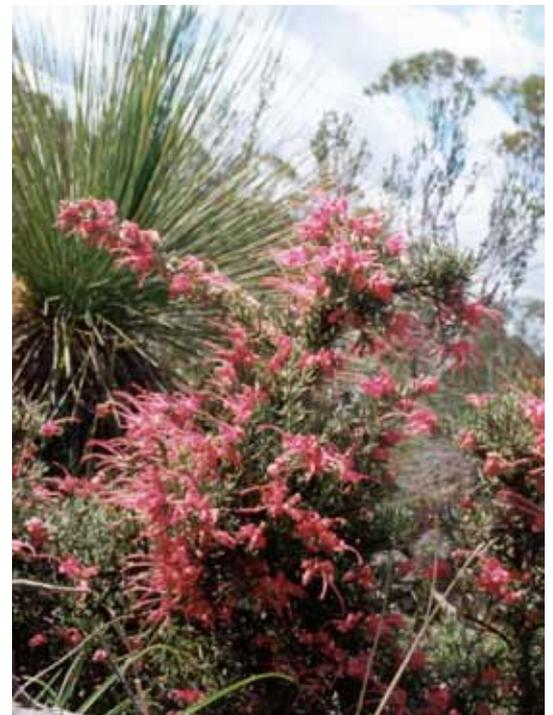
Native plants have a range of benefits:

- Low maintenance, saving time and money
- Drought tolerant and require minimal watering, conserving water supplies
- Don't need fertilisers or pesticides
- Provide habitat, food and shelter for local native animals
- They flower at different times of the year so you can have a flowering garden all year round.

There are a fantastic variety of local native plants available to make a stunning garden, (see Native Vegetation of the Northern and Yorke Region). However, there are some plants that should be avoided as they are known for becoming serious weeds in natural environments, (see other weed fact sheets in this series).

### How to grow a native garden?

Local native plants would naturally occur in your neighbourhood or district, so they have evolved to suit local conditions, (refer to Native Vegetation of the Northern and Yorke Region). Ask your nursery for plants that are of 'local provenance', meaning plants grown from seeds or cuttings collected from your local area.



Planting is best done in the cooler months through autumn and winter. The ideal time is after the autumn opening rains, when soil is moist, and plants have time to establish roots before the warm summer weather.

Over the first summer they may need an occasional deep watering. After their first summer, they should cope on rainfall alone. Prior to severe heat waves, give your plants a thorough watering, so water penetrates deep into the soil. The aim is to establish strong, deep root systems which are water-efficient and drought tolerant. Over-watering leaches nutrients from the soil creating excessive growth, less flowering and shorter-lived plants. Be mindful of any water restrictions and the prescribed times allocated to gardeners for watering.



A layer of mulch added to your garden can reduce evaporative water loss by more than 70%. Organic mulch keeps soil temperatures down, benefiting root density, suppressing weed growth, and promoting good soil structure and productivity.

Apply 5–10cm of mulch, creating a bowl shape around the plant to help retain water. To avoid plant disease, keep mulch away from plant stems.

Fertilisers aren't usually needed with local native plants. If you decide to fertilise, seek advice from your nursery, as products with high levels of phosphorus can harm some native plants.

Pruning is beneficial for many local native plants. Most species will appreciate a light trim to keep their shape, promote new growth and encourage flowering. Pruning is best done after flowering, usually late spring or early summer. Young plants can be pruned lightly and regularly. Older plants can be refreshed with a more extensive prune after flowering.

You can also help the environment by using sustainable and locally sourced materials for landscaping and avoiding materials taken from natural ecosystems such as moss rocks, river stones, fallen logs and red gum mulch.

#### Further Information

Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board, Coastal Gardens – A Planting Guide

Berkinshaw, T (2006) Native Vegetation of the Northern and Yorke Region, Greening Australia (South Australia)

Backyards for Wildlife Factsheets  
[www.backyards4wildlife.com.au](http://www.backyards4wildlife.com.au)

#### Help and Assistance NRM Authorised Officers

Riverton - 8847 2544  
Kadina – 8821 1555  
Orroroo – 8658 1086

#### Greening Australia

Wirrabara – 8668 4312  
Trees for Life – 8406 0500

#### Nurseries (specialising in native plants)

##### State Flora, Belair

Queens Jubilee Drv  
Belair National Park, Belair  
Tel: (08) 8278 7777  
Mon. to Fri 9.00am to 5.00pm,  
Weekends/public holidays  
10.00am to 5.00pm

##### Nuthin' but Natives

Wholesale Native Nursery at  
Booleeroo Centre  
Tubestock seedlings, potted  
seedlings and native seed also available.  
Open to the public by appointment only,  
Tel: (08) 86672442  
Fax: (08) 86672489  
Email: [btwhellum@bigpond.com.au](mailto:btwhellum@bigpond.com.au)

##### The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

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