



Creating a wildlife friendly garden

How you can help restore the natural balance on the Sunshine Coast

Neat and tidy gardens can be environmentally unfriendly places. With native plants in your backyard the parrots squawk and flash of bright colours, the magpies beautiful carolling and the sights and sounds of other native animals will surround your home.

Native animals, from determined diggers like termite eating Echidnas, through to daytime drowsing Koalas to industrious insect eating Willie Wagtails, Magpies and Bandicoots (which eat our lawn grubs) need native plants. The survival of our wildlife depends upon vegetation to provide food, shelter and a place for them to live and grow.

A balanced native garden with trees, shrubs, ground cover, worms, spiders, insects, lizards, birds and mammals replicates a small forest. Virtually maintenance free, it can provide shade and wind and noise barriers. Small gardens of local native trees, shrubs and ground cover may not be important by themselves but a whole suburb of native plant gardens can be just as important for nature conservation as the nearest national park.

Corridors of natural vegetation along a water course, fence line or roadside are vital for the movement of wildlife from one area to another. Some animals need to move over large distances to obtain their food while others need corridors to meet other members of their species for breeding.

Very few animals will move from the protection of vegetation. When forced to do this, due to lack of food, territorial disputes or overpopulation, they will often fall prey to another animal or become road victims.

Isolated patches of vegetation are therefore of little benefit unless corridors are provided. Planting and retaining natural vegetation on farms has many advantages to the landowner. Vegetation around dams and along creeks can help prevent evaporation, erosion and siltation. Vegetation along fence lines (hopefully not barbed-wire) provides protection for stock and crops. Clearing ground cover exposing our fragile soil to the elements makes it susceptible to salination and erosion problems. Native plants also attract birds, such as Magpies, Friarbirds, Ibis and Willie Wagtails which reduce insect pests and the need for chemical control.

Planting can be an enjoyable project for the whole family to participate in. You and your children can share the growth of nature, experiencing the delights of birds, possums, gliders, skinks and other native animals as they eat, sleep, play and grow around you.

So why not start planting today! Find out what native plants grow locally on soils similar to yours. Plant local species as they will grow well and support animals which naturally occur in your area.

To provide the best wildlife habitat, plant a wide range of locally occurring native plants. Have a look at the [Growing plants to attract wildlife to your garden](#) brochure from the Environmental Protection Agency and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, consult your local native nursery for information on the variety of plants native to your area, or visit the [Noosa Native Plants](#) website to get started.