Camden Native Garden Guide

A guide to bring native plants and animals back to your garden

camden council

Table of Contents

Introduction

Native vegetation is important for the health of our environment, as it provides habitat for our native plants and animals, including threatened species. Biodiversity found within our natural areas supports community wellbeing in terms of aesthetics, science, recreation, culture, health and spirit.

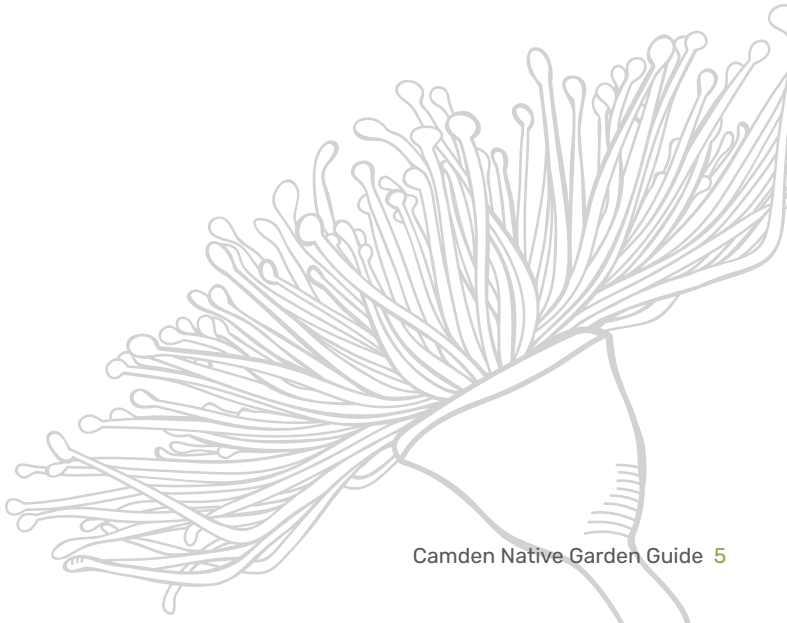
The Camden area is a unique place to live with its mix of rural and urban lifestyles. We are lucky enough to have over 684 hectares of native reserves and bushland – this means that most of us only live a stone's throw away from native Australian bushland.

Our bushland reserves provide food and shelter for a myriad of native Australian animals as well as being home to endangered plant species like the Camden White Gum and Spiked Rice-flower. Cumberland Plain Woodland, River-flat Eucalypt Forest and Elderslie Banksia Scrub Forest are Endangered Ecological Communities which are exclusively found in some of our bushland areas and are under increasing threat due to development to accommodate our rapidly growing population.

Purpose of this guide

This native garden guide has been developed to help residents improve the existing biodiversity in their garden, or to design a native garden from scratch.

This guide will help you select native plants adapted to the climate of Camden that are suitable in your garden, and that are available from local native nurseries.




Photographed by Elaine Recchia

What is a native garden?

A native garden is made up of plants and wildflowers found in Australia. Despite common perceptions, native gardens do not have to be dull. You can create vibrant, colourful gardens with amazing colours, shapes and scents.

Advantages of a native garden

- The plants are adapted to survive in the local climate, require less or even no watering and are frost tolerant.
- They also require less fertiliser when being planted and often no fertiliser once established; which helps support healthy natural waterways.
- Native gardens provide food and shelter for local wildlife. By carefully choosing plants, you can create a garden that attracts native animals such as birds, butterflies, frogs or mammals.
- Your native garden can act as a biodiversity corridor or 'stepping stone' to allow wildlife to move between patches of existing bushland.
- Some species of native animals will reduce garden pests such as snails and caterpillars helping to protect fruit and vegetables that you are growing. Attracting native birds can also help deter invasive pests such as Indian Myna birds.

Creating a native garden is easier than you think!

Considerations before planting your native garden...

Make a plan

Before you get started, it is a good idea to make a plan which considers the size of your yard, slope of the site, watering requirements of species, existing plants and trees and your budget. Some of these important factors that will influence your native garden are discussed below in more detail.

Microclimate

Different areas of a garden will provide different amounts of sun and likely have a variation in soil type. Southern sides tend to be colder and moister, whereas the north and west sides are likely to be hotter and drier. Some plants prefer as much sun as they can get, while others will be stressed if they are placed in too much sun.

Watering

Native plants require much less water than exotic plants and once established should not require watering. While establishing however, your plants should be thoroughly watered at well-spaced intervals. This thorough watering encourages deeper root growth making your plants more resilient. It is best to conduct watering in the cooler parts of the day, preferably early morning.

Don't forget that if there are water restrictions, you will need to comply with these!

Existing Plants

It is important to consider how different plants will interact. Some species will grow well together, whilst others may inhibit the growth of natives that you install in your garden. For example, the native She-Oak (Casuarina/Allocasuarina spp.) and exotic pine trees release allelopathic chemicals into the soil which inhibits the germination, growth and survival of other plants.

Already thriving plants in your garden could also give suggestion as to your soil type and give indication of what plants you can grow in your garden. If you want to plant species that require shade, consider planting a few trees first to establish a shady area and then plant shade-loving species underneath.

Layout

Choose plants that will give you the desired look you want and are suitable for the size of your yard. Certain native species are fast growing and are good plants to screen out neighbouring properties. You should also be careful when planting large trees as these could impact overhead powerlines or underground plumbing in the future.

Soil Type:

Most plants prefer a particular soil type in order to flourish, however some can be planted in a variety of soil types. There are four soil types that can be found in the Camden area, each suitable for different plants. Determining the soil type will allow you to pick suitable plants that should suit your garden.

- **Clay** – very tiny particles, fine texture, holds water well, rich in nutrients. Prone to compaction which results in water-logging.
- **Sandy** – large coarse particles, doesn't hold much water, low in nutrients, well aerated.
- **Silt/Loam** – in-between clay and sandy soil types. Contains small pebbles and rocks that are smaller than sand but larger than clay. Some Silt/Loam soils have properties similar to clay and others closer to sandy soils.
- **Alluvial** – fine grained fertile soil that has been deposited by water i.e. creeks and rivers. This soil type is likely if you live close to a creek or river.

Clay

Sand

Silt/Loam

Alluvial

How do I find out what type of soil is in my garden?

Pick up a marble-sized chunk of moist soil and roll it between your thumb, forefinger and middle finger, attempting to form a ball.

If you:

- were successful in rolling a ball and it stayed together you have a predominantly clay soil.
- had some success forming a ball shape but it fell apart once you stopped applying pressure to it, you have Silt/Loamy soil.
- had no success and the soil was constantly falling apart, you have sandy soil.

Mulching

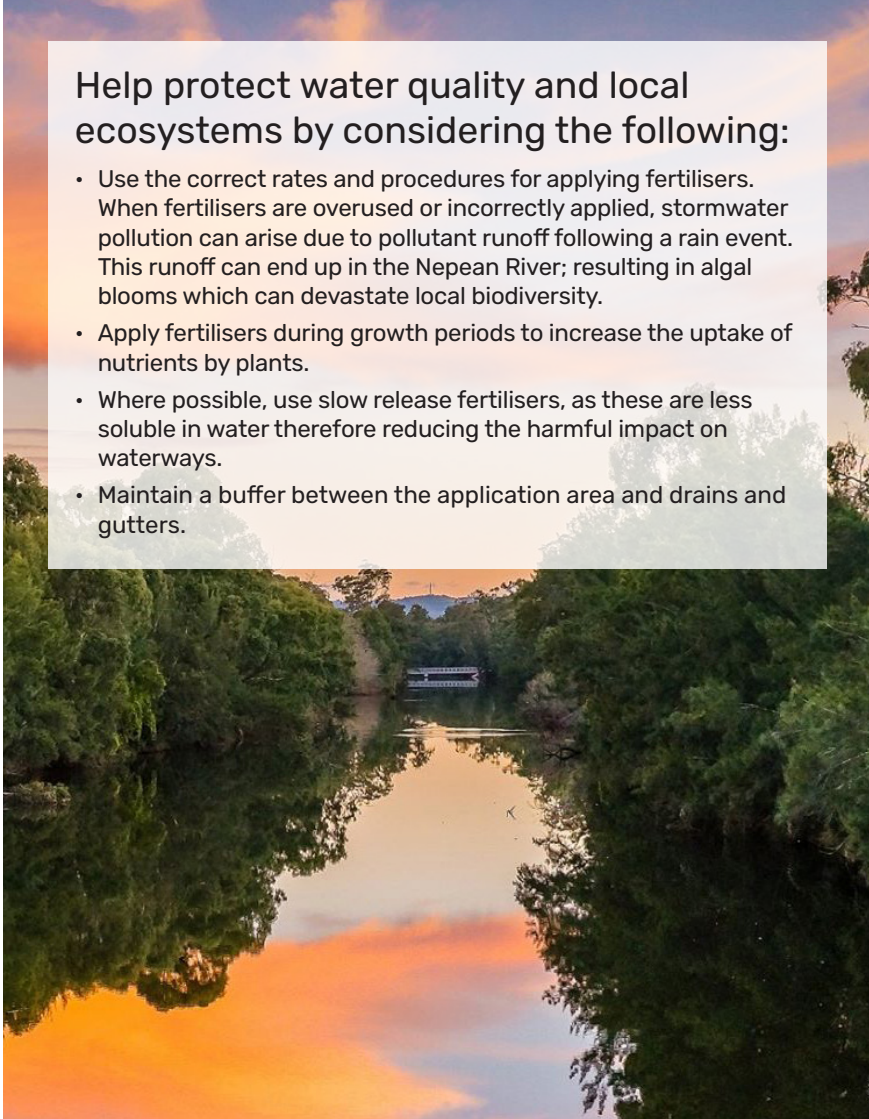
Mulching makes a garden look neat and will help your plants become established by supressing weeds that would otherwise act as competition. Additionally, the extra layer improves the water retention of the soil and encourages micro-organism activity. Be sure to use quality mulch that doesn't contain weed seeds. Also remember not to place mulch too close to the stem/trunk of your plants, as this can encourage fungus and insect damage to your plants.

Fertilisers

Native plant species have adapted to soils low in nutrients and fertility found throughout Australia. However, if fertilisers are to be used in your garden, it is best to consider fertiliser that is formulated for Australian native plants.

Time to Plant

Generally, early spring is the best time to plant, as this allows the plant time to become established, before it is exposed to the high temperatures of summer and the cold temperatures and frosts experienced during winter in the Camden area.



Help protect water quality and local ecosystems by considering the following:

- Use the correct rates and procedures for applying fertilisers. When fertilisers are overused or incorrectly applied, stormwater pollution can arise due to pollutant runoff following a rain event. This runoff can end up in the Nepean River; resulting in algal blooms which can devastate local biodiversity.
- Apply fertilisers during growth periods to increase the uptake of nutrients by plants.
- Where possible, use slow release fertilisers, as these are less soluble in water therefore reducing the harmful impact on waterways.
- Maintain a buffer between the application area and drains and gutters.

Creating a habitat garden

You can design your native garden to provide habitat for local wildlife. Most plants will attract some wildlife, but certain types of plants and set ups can be selected to encourage certain animals. Below are tips to help attract the different types of wildlife.

Birds

- Plant spikey shrubs and thick bushes for nesting of small birds.
- Put in plants that produce seeds, fruit, nectar or attract insects to act as a food source.
- Trees provide perches for insectivorous birds (such as Kookaburras) to spot food from and can also be used for nesting.
- Include a bird bath with fresh water for drinking and bathing.

Don't have the bird bath overly exposed, or birds will be fearful of predators.

Lizards

- Provide rocks to allow lizards a sunbaking spot, as well as logs and larger rocks for hiding.

Frogs

- Include a pond in your garden with semi-submerged rocks or logs to allow frogs to climb in and out of the water.

Don't put fish in the pond, as this will deter native frogs from using the space as a habitat.

Mammals

- Provide nest boxes that animals such as possums and sugar gliders can use. These may become inhabited by unwanted species and should be monitored if possible. Possums are forced to nest in roofs due to a lack of available nesting sites.
- Plant eucalyptus species to provide a food source for native mammals.

Native pollinators

- Plant flowering natives which produce lots of pollen and nectar for native bees and wasps, for example acacia, banksia, callistemon and melaleuca.

Natural vegetation plant layers

Groundcover layer

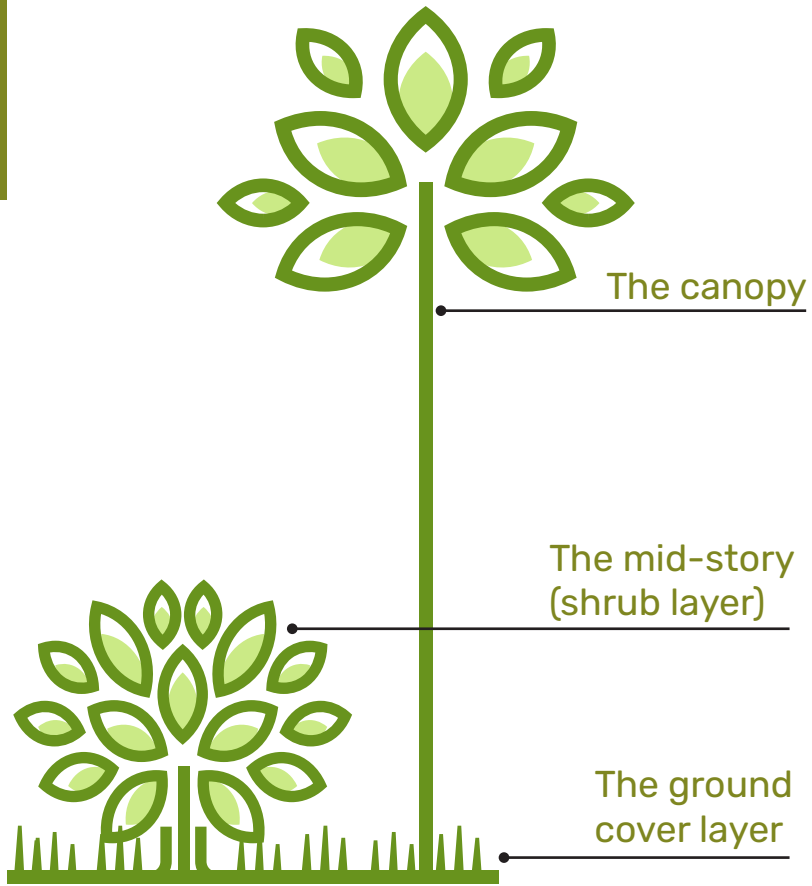
The groundcover layer is made up of low spreading plants such as herbs, climbers and grasses. Herbs and climbers have flexible green stems growing from the base. Grasses are a groundcover layer plant that consists of a tuft of leaves arising from a stem that elongates at flowering time e.g. Ivy-leafed violet, kangaroo grass, kidney weed.

Mid-storey layer

The mid-storey layer is made up of shrubs which is a woody plant less than eight metres in height and usually with many stems e.g. banksia, wattle, grevillea.

Canopy layer

The canopy layer is made up of large shrubs and trees. Trees usually have a single trunk at the base and are tall e.g. eucalypts, she-oaks.



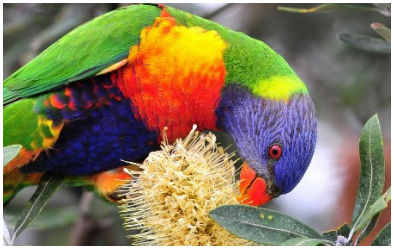
Native plants suitable for your garden....

Bird attracting plants

Camden is home to many colourful birds such as the Eastern Rosella and Red-rumped parrot. By planting species to attract birds to your yard, you'll be creating a safe place for them to eat and nest and you'll enjoy their company and songs.

King Parrot
(Alisterus scapularis)

Superb Fairy-wren
(Malurus cyneus)



Rainbow Lorikeet
(Trichoglossus moluccanus)

Grasses, herbs & groundcovers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Black-anther Flax Lilly	*Dianella revoluta*	Hardy tufted plant. Growing in spreading clumps: 1m x 2m. Pale blue flowers then dark blue berries.	Sandy
Pale Flax Lilly	*Dianella longifolia*	Hardy and long-lived. A tufted plant 50cm x 70cm. Pale blue and yellow flowers, blue berries.	Sandy
Spiny-headed Mat-rush	*Lomandra longifolia*	Very hardy tufted plant 1m x 1m with unusual spike of lightly scented flowers.	Clay
Tussock Grass	*Poa labillardieri*	Strong tufted grass 80cm high with plume-like heads of flowers.	Sandy
Kangaroo Grass	*Themeda triandra*	Tussock grass, 1m x 60cm, with bunched reddish/purple flowers heads.	Sandy
Stout Bamboo Grass	*Austrostipa ramosissima*	Grows up to 2.5m tall. Has feathery, elegant seed heads.	Sandy
Winter Apple	*Eremophila debilis*	Trailing woody plant with white or blue star shaped flowers with purplish berries	Clay

Climbers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Traveller's Joy	*Clematis aristata*	Vigorous creeper or climber with white star like flowers and feathery fruits.	Sandy
Purple Twining Pea	*Hardenbergia violacea*	A great climber with masses of purple pea flowers in winter.	Clay
Wonga Wonga Vine	*Pandorea pandorana*	Hardy, fast-growing with clusters of white tubular flowers with maroon throats.	Clay

Shrubs

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Blackthorn	*Bursaria spinosa*	An erect, prickly shrub to about 3m-4m tall. The flowers are creamy-white, sweetly scented and usually seen in mid-summer.	Sandy
Tick Bush	*Kunzea ambigua*	Hardy fast-growing up to 4m. Masses of scented white flowers.	Sandy
Yellow Tea-tree	*Leptospermum polygalifolium*	Medium shrub up to 3m with yellow tea tree flowers	Sandy
Thyme Honey-myrtle	*Melaleuca thymifolia*	Adaptable and attractive small shrub, 1m x 1m with purple flowers for long periods.	Sandy
Rough-fruited Pittosporum	*Pittosporum revolutum*	Produces clusters of yellow flowers in spring followed by orange/ red fruits in summer.	Sandy

Blackthorn
(Bursaria spinosa)

Willow Bottlebrush
(Callistemon salignus)

Yellow Tea Tree
(Leptospermum polygalifolium)

Mugga Ironbark
(Eucalyptus sideroxylon)

Galah
(Eolophus roseicapilla)
Photographed by
James Whitfield

Forest Red Gum
(Eucalyptus tereticornis)

Trees

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Hickory Wattle	*Acacia implexa*	Small to medium-sized up to 12m high. Displays cream ball-shaped flowers in summer.	Sandy
Coastal Banksia	*Banksia integrifolia*	Frost and drought tolerant. Leathery dark green leaves. Large yellow flowers are produced from autumn to spring.	Sandy
Green Wattle	*Acacia decurrens*	Medium sized up to 12m high with a grey trunk and fine feathery leaves. Masses of golden yellow ball shaped flowers occur during spring.	Clay
Rough-barked Apple	*Angophora floribunda*	Can grow up to 30m. An evergreen tree with a large light-green coloured crown.	Clay
Willow Bottlebrush	*Callistemon salignus*	Grows up to 4m - 5m. Papery bark. Cream to yellow bottle brushes.	Alluvial
Grey Box	*Eucalyptus moluccana*	Medium-sized with rough, persistent bark on the lower trunk. Leaves are glossy green and flat.	Clay
Mugga Ironbark	*Eucalyptus sideroxylon*	Grows up to 20m, dark red furrowed bark with grey foliage and spectacular pink flowers.	Clay
Forest Red Gum	*Eucalyptus tereticornis*	Grows up to 20m – 30m. Great for shade.	Clay
Cabbage Gum	*Eucalyptus amplifolia*	A moderate sized tree with smooth often blotchy, white and cream. Flower clusters of 7 to about 20 flowers.	Clay

Native pollinator attracting plants

When people think of pollinators, they often think of bees, but pollinators also include butterflies, wasps, ants, flies and some birds. Many Australian native pollinators are stingless and are great additions to your garden.
Encouraging native pollinators to your garden discourages introduced pests from your garden as they act as predators for garden snails and slugs.
Nectar providing plants attract butterflies and bees which are useful for pollinating your plants and veggies you may be growing.

pollinators also include butterflies, wasps, ants, flies and some birds.

Monarch Butterfly
(Danaus plexippus)

Dainty Swallowtail
(Papilio anactus)

Toothed Guinea Flower
(Hibbertia dentata)

Pale Flax Lilly
(Dianella revoluta)

Grasses and groundcovers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Small-flower Wallaby Grass	*Austrodanthonia racemosa*	Slender to densely tufting or spreading perennial grass with fine light green leaves and spikey flowerheads.	Sandy
Tall Sedge	*Carex appressa*	Tussock plant up to 60cm high.	Sandy
Yellow Buttons	*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*	Adaptable groundcover with bright yellow flower heads for long periods.	Sandy or clay
Blue Flax Lilly	*Dianella revoluta*	A hardy tufted plant with pale blue flowers then dark blue berries.	Sandy
Paroo Lilly	*Dianella caerulea*	Tufting plant, with blue and yellow flowers.	Clay
Pale Flax Lilly	*Dianella longifolia*	Hardy and long-lived. A tufted plant 50cm x 70cm. Pale blue and yellow flowers, blue berries.	Sandy
Hop Goodenia	*Goodenia ovata*	Grows up to 1m high (occasionally higher). The yellow flowers occur in spring.	Sandy
Weeping Meadow Grass	*Microlaena stipoides*	Good grass for an informal, light traffic lawn.	Sandy
Shorthair Plume Grass	*Dichelachne micrantha*	Sparse open tufted perennial grass with spiked flowerheads growing up to 15cm tall.	Sandy or clay
Tussock Grass	*Poa labillardieri*	Strong tufting grass 80cm high with plume-like heads of flowers.	Sandy
Kangaroo Grass	*Themeda triandra*	Tussock grass, 1m x 60cm, with bunched reddish/purple flowers heads.	Sandy

Toothed Guinea Flower	*Hibbertia dentata*	Grows up to 1m to 2m in length. Leaves are dark green with bronze or purple highlights. Bright yellow flowers from late winter to late spring.	Sandy or clay

Shrubs

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Blackthorn	*Bursaria spinosa*	An erect, prickly shrub to about 3m-4m metres tall. The flowers are creamy-white, sweetly scented and usually seen in mid-summer.	Sandy
Tick Bush	*Kunzea ambigua*	Hardy fast growing up to 3m-4m. Masses of scented white flowers.	Sandy
Native Indigo	*Indigofera australis*	Attractive matting plant with white and purple flowers most of the year.	Sandy

Climbers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Purple Twining Pea	*Hardenbergia violacea*	Vigorous climber with masses of purple pea flowers in winter	Sandy
Wonga Wonga Vine	*Pandorea pandorana*	Hardy fast-growing climber with clusters of white tubular flowers with maroon throats; for fence or trellis	Clay
Traveller's Joy	*Clematis aristata*	Vigorous creeper or climber with white star like flowers and feathery fruits.	Sandy
Old Man's Beard	*Clematis glycinoides*	Vigourous creeper or climber, with white star-like flowers and feathery fruits.	Sandy

Trees

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Rough-barked Apple	*Angophora floribunda*	Can grow up to 30m. An evergreen tree with a large light-green coloured crown.	Clay
Willow Bottlebrush	*Callistemon salignus*	Grows up to 4m-5m. Papery bark. Cream to yellow bottle brushes.	Alluvial

Tick Bush
(*Kunzea ambigua)*

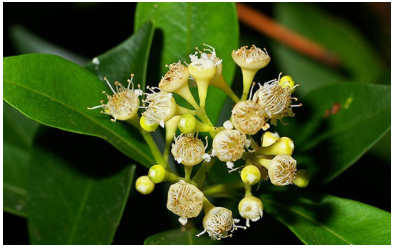
Purple Twining Pea
(Hardenbergia violacea)

Native Indigo
(Indigofera australis)

Screening plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Lilly Pilly	*Acmena smithii*	Grows up to 12m which produces white to purple berries.	Sandy or clay
Blackthorn	*Bursaria spinosa*	An erect, prickly shrub to about 3m-4m tall. The flowers are creamy-white, sweetly scented and usually seen in mid-summer.	Sandy
Sticky Hop Bush	*Dodonaea viscosa*	Compact hop bush with wedge-shaped leaves; small red or green fruits.	Sandy, clay, loam
Purple Twining Pea	*Hardenbergia violacea*	A great climber with masses of purple pea flowers in winter.	Clay
Old Man's Beard	*Clematis aristata*	Vigorous creeper or climber with white star like flowers and feathery fruits.	Sandy
Headache Vine	*Clematis glycinoides*	A vigourous creeper or climber, with white star-like flowers and feathery fruits.	Sandy

Old Man's Beard
(Clematis aristata)



Lilly Pilly
(Acmena smithii)

Drought and frost tolerant plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Stout Bamboo Grass	*Austrostipa ramosissima*	A tall grass that grows up to 2.5m tall. Has feathery, elegant seed heads.	Sandy
Yellow Buttons	*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*	Adaptable groundcover with bright yellow flower heads for long periods.	Sandy or clay
Pale Flax Lilly	*Dianella longifolia*	Hardy and long-lived. A tufted plant 50cm x 70cm. Pale blue and yellow flowers, blue berries.	Sandy
Spiny-headed Mat-rush	*Lomandra longifolia*	Very hardy tufted plant up to 1m, with unusual spike of lightly scented flowers.	Clay
Tussock Grass	*Poa labillardieri*	Strong tufting grass 80cm high with plume-like heads of flowers.	Sandy

Yellow Buttons
(Chrysocephalum apiculatum)

Stout Bamboo Grass
(Austrostipa ramosissima)

Spiny-headed Mat-rush
(Lomandra longifolia)

Plants that require some shade

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Weeping Meadow Grass	*Microlaena stipoides*	Grass with soft weeping habit, 30cm x 50cm.	Sandy
Ivy-leafed Violet	*Viola hederacea*	Attractive matting plant with white and purple flowers most of the year.	Sandy
Paroo Lilly	*Dianella caerulea*	Tufting plant with blue and yellow flowers, blue bird-attracting berries	Clay
Black-anther Flax Lilly	*Dianella revoluta*	A hardy tufted plant growing in spreading clumps. Pale blue flowers then dark blue berries.	Sandy
Native Indigo	*Indigofera australis*	Attractive matting plant with white and purple flowers most of the year.	Sandy

Ivy-leafed Violet
(Viola hederacea)

Native Indigo
(Indigofera australis)

Vibrant flowering plants

Climbers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Dusky Coral Pea	*Kennedia rubicunda*	Adaptable vigorous climber or creeper; nectar can be sucked from dull red pea flowers.	Clay
Purple Twining Pea	*Hardenbergia violacea*	Vigorous climber with masses of purple pea flowers in winter	Clay
Wonga Wonga Vine	*Pandorea pandorana*	Hardy fast-growing climber with clusters of white tubular flowers with maroon throats; for fence or trellis	Clay

Shrubs

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Sydney Golden Wattle	*Acacia longifolia*	Hardy, fast growing up to 6m with golden flower spikes.	Sandy
Native Indigo	*Indigofera australis*	Attractive matting plant with white and purple flowers most of the year.	Sandy
Wedding Bush	*Ricinocarpus pinifolius*	A small to medium shrub with pure white flowers. The flowers are followed by rough, globular fruit.	Sandy
Lilly Pilly	*Acmena smithii*	Grows up to 12m which produces white to purple berries.	Sandy or Clay

Wonga Wonga Vine
(Pandorea pandorana)

Dusky Coral Pea
(Kennedia rubicunda)

Sydney Golden Wattle
(Acacia longifolia)

Groundcovers

Common Name	Scientific Name	Characteristics	Soil Type
Ivy-leafed Violet	*Viola hederacea*	Attractive matting plant for garden or container with white and purple flowers most of the year.	Sandy
Hop Goodenia	*Goodenia ovata*	Grows up to 1m high (occasionally higher). The yellow flowers occur in spring.	Sandy
Yellow Buttons	*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*	Adaptable groundcover or container plant with bright yellow flower heads for long periods.	Sandy or clay
Tall Bluebell	*Wahlenbergia gracilis*	An erect to sprawling perennial herb with many branches from a few stems.	Clay

Tall Bluebell
(Wahlenbergia gracilis)

Hop Goodenia
(Goodenia ovata)

Don’t have a big backyard – what else can you do?

Even if you don’t have a big backyard, every little bit you can do will benefit local wildlife and improve the biodiversity of Camden.

- **Create a small habitat garden** - Planting even just a small garden with native plant species can help our native wildlife, by creating stepping stones within the landscape which link patches of bushland with surrounding areas.
- **Install small habitats** such as rock gardens for reptiles or installing birdbaths, is also a great way to improve the biodiversity of your garden and help the local wildlife.
- **Remove weeds** and avoid planting known environmental weeds.
- **Avoid planting attractive exotic plants and known common garden escapes** i.e. Agapanthus, Cocos Palm and White Arum Lily.

Garden escapes can be very harmful to the delicate natural balance of plants and animals, as certain pest animals love exotic plants e.g. Indian Myna birds roost in Cocos Palms creating competition for native birds and can also be a health risk to you and your family.

- **Bushcare** is always recruiting new members in your local area and there are currently seven active groups in the Camden area.
- **Keep pet cats and dogs from roaming freely in bushland and nature reserves**, as weeds can easily be transferred by pets when the seeds stick to their fur.
- **Keep your cat in at night when they hunt the most,** cats can roam up to 3km each night and are very damaging to our native wildlife, including birds and small mammals.

Become a Bushcare Volunteer

camden council bushcare

Are you interested in helping to improve the biodiversity of Camden's bushland and learn about native flora and fauna?

Why not join one of Camden's Bushcare groups.

It's a great way to help our native bushland, keep fit and meet like-minded people.

Bushcare groups currently operate in the following locations from 9am to 12pm:

- **Harrington Forest.** Scanlon Crescent, Harrington Park, third Sunday of the month.
- **Hayter Reserve.** Wire Lane, Camden South, first Friday of the month.
- **Kings Bush Reserve.** Chellaston Street, Camden, every Tuesday and first Sunday of the month.
- **Parrotts Farm.** Richardson Road (next to RFS), Narellan, second Friday of the month.
- **Ron Dine Reserve.** McCrae Drive (and Cowper Drive), Camden South, third Friday of the month.
- **Sickles Creek Reserve.** Sickles Drive, Grasmere, last Sunday of the month.
- **Spring Farm Bush Corridor.** Hampshire Boulevard, Spring Farm, second Saturday of the month.

For more information or to register your interest in Bushcare, email bushcare@camden.nsw.gov.au

You could also consider installing a nest box or insect hotel

Wildlife Nest Box

Tree hollows are important nesting habitat for many animals including birds, squirrel gliders, possums and microbats. These hollows take up to 100 years to develop and with increasing development, many of these mature trees are being lost by housing. A way to supplement this loss of tree hollows is installing a wildlife nest box in your garden. Birds such as Red-rumped Parrots (pictured), Rosellas, Pardalotes could all call your yard their home.

Nest boxes are designed to act as artificial tree hollows. If you are wanting to install a nest box, you need to ensure that you have a suitable place to put the nest box – a large tree, situated away from the road and other disturbances such as street lights.

Wildlife are very fussy about where they live, so it is important to consider their needs before designing a nest box. Greater Sydney Local Land Services has developed a great guide to building different types of nest boxes. Refer to the references page at the end of this guide about where to get more information.

Eastern Rosella

Tips for building and installing nest boxes:

- Don't use treated wood varieties, as the chemicals in it can harm the animals if they chew it.
- You can tailor the nest box to a certain type of animal by carefully selecting the size of your entrance holes.
- Include drainage holes at the bottom to allow any water to leak out.
- Boxes should be hung at least 3m above the ground and in sheltered areas, to minimise exposure to rain and strong winds.
- Boxes should be installed in late winter or early spring as this is the time of year native species tend to start looking for nesting locations.
- Nest boxes should be checked periodically to ensure they aren't being used by invasive pest species such as Indian Myna birds.
- Make sure the box is strongly secured, you don't want to give your new feathered and furry friends a fright.
- Include a small perch just inside and outside of the entrance hole so animals can easily get in and out.

Red-rumped Parrot

Native stingless bee
(Tetragonula carbonaria)

Blue-banded Bee
(Amegilla cingulata)

Insect Hotel

Insect hotels help attract native pollinators to your garden such as butterflies, hoverflies, bees and wasps. There are benefits of having insect pollinators in your garden such as pollinating your fruit trees or vegetable garden.

Insect hotels are much simpler to make than nest boxes and provide habitat for native pollinators, such as the Blue-banded Bee *(Amegilla cingulata)*.

- Insect hotels can be created using common objects around you garden such as:
  - Cut logs (don't use chemically treated wood)
  - Bricks with holes in them
  - Cement breeze blocks
  - Lengths of bamboo
  - Empty plastic pots

The main requirements for a successful insect hotel are:

- There needs to be an entrance hole large enough for a bee to fit.
- The hole should be about 15cm–20cm deep into the material to protect the bees and their eggs from the elements.
- The hotel should be arranged so the holes run horizontally into the material.
- The side opposite to the entrances should be sealed.
- It is set up somewhere where it won't be disturbed by people, pets, etc.

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Photographs

ANBG: Bursaria spinosa (p19), **J & P Edwards:** Callistemon salignus (p19), **B. Walters:** Leptospermum polygalifolium (p19), **B. Walters:** Eucalyptus sideroxylon (p19), **J. Whitfield:** Galah (p19), **L. von Richter:** Eucalyptus tereticornis (p19); **K. Coppin:** Monarch Butterfly (p21), **M. Jefferies:** Dainty Swallowtail (p21), **T.M. Tame:** Hibbertia dentata (p21), **Australian National Herbarium:** Dianella revoluta (p21); **B. Walters:** Kunzea ambigua (p24), **B. Walters:** Hardenbergia violacea (p24), **Coomoora Woodland Reserve:** Indigofera australis (p24); **M. Fagg:** Clematis aristate (p25), **B. Walters:** Acmena smithii (p25); **M. Cosgrove:** Chrysocephalum apiculatum) (p26), **Australian National Herbarium:** Austrostipa ramosissima (p26), **T. Rodd:** Lomandra longifolia (p26); **B. Saunders:** Viola hederacea (p27), **B. Walters:** Indigofera australis (p27); **J. Tann:** Pandorea pandorana (p29), **W & G Sheather:** Kennedia rubicunda (p29), **T. Lenz Sep:** Acacia longifolia (p29), **C. Totterdell:** Wahlenbergia gracilis (p29), **B. Walters:** Goodenia ovata (p29); **Arbor Ecological:** Eastern rosella using nest box (p34); **K Vang and W Dabrowka:** Red-rumped Parrot (p35), **D. Clarke:** Native stingless bee (p35), **A. Chapman:** Blue-banded bee (p35).

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