



## Fact sheet - Creating your Flora for Fauna Garden

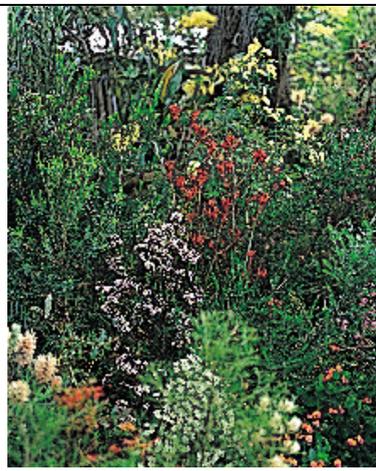
### Planting and maintaining a native garden.

Information courtesy of: *Kuranga Native Nursery, 393 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood*

Every species of Australian plant has a different set of requirements for maximum growth.

- ▶ Some tolerate extremely dry sites; other wet or boggy site
- ▶ Some grow well in the shade; others filtered light or full sun
- ▶ Some grow well in clay soils; others prefer loamy soils or sand.

It is important to select the appropriate plants suitable for your requirements and the above need to taken into consideration for good growth. Select appropriately, using plant lists or reference books, such Handbook of Australian Plants



### Soil preparation

While many Australian plants will grow quite well with little or no soil preparation, the more preparation you put into the planting site, the better growth you will achieve from your plants.





Most Australian plants prefer good drainage, meaning soil which is open and well-aerated so that water flows freely through the soil and will not lie around for extended periods, causing rotting of root systems.

Such areas can be achieved by mounding up plant beds a minimum of 30 cm above surrounding areas. The soil for these mounds can be purchased from garden centres or excavated from other areas of your garden where you may wish to create ponds, sunken bog gardens, or pathways/walkways.

If the soil has high clay content, add a liberal amount of gypsum or liquid ground breaker or Gyp-flo. Planting can take place immediately after application.

If the soil is very sandy, add some humus to help retain moisture. (See also Soil preparation.)

## **Planting Procedure**

As long as you are able to water over the summer months, planting can take place all year round.

Plant your shrubs as soon as possible after purchase. Plants are difficult to look after in the nursery pots and it is easy to lose a plant from being over- or under watered once it has left the nursery.

Dig your planting hole much bigger than the size of the pot – say at least twice as deep and three times the diameter. This is particularly important when planting into an old established garden bed where soil preparation is often minimal.

Sprinkle a light dressing of native plant fertiliser (such as Kuranga's Two-in-One) over the excavated soil, then backfill the hole with some of the fertilised soil.





Remove the plant from its pot by tipping it upside down and placing a hand over the soil. With your free hand, give the rim of the pot a sharp upwards tap and the pot should come away easily.

Gently tease out the roots only if the roots are tightly coiled and form a solid mass around the outside edge of the pot.

Plant the shrub so that the top of the soil ball is level with the surrounding garden bed. Don't put your soil up around the stem of the plant as this will cause rotting of the stem. Backfill around the shrub with the remaining soil and gently firm in by hand.

Immediately water in the plant with a bucketful (10 litres) of water.

### **After Care**

While most established plants will survive over summer with little or no watering, you will achieve considerably better growth with regular waterings over dry periods until plants establish themselves. Water deeply at weekly or fortnightly intervals in preference to shallow daily waterings.

Mulching your plants will assist in conserving soil moisture as well as keeping weeds at bay. A wide variety of mulches are available from garden centres and are all useful. Fine gravel and coarse river sand are both excellent mulches and have an advantage over organic mulches in that they do not break down.

When applying mulch, do not place close to the stem of the plant as the plant may rot.

Feeding of Australian plants is generally not required once they are fully established, although sandy soils often benefit from a regular light application of a phosphorus-free fertiliser such as Kuranga's Two-in-One'. Many Australian plants object to fertilisers with high levels of phosphorous, so use such fertilisers with extreme caution.





Pruning is always most safely conducted immediately after flowering when a light prune will help to prevent woodiness and should increase the number of flowers for the following year. It is important to prune plants from an early age rather than trying to prune a plant that has been in the garden for a few years and is already woody.

#### **Further Information**

- ▶ Ask at your local flora for Fauna Nursery for advice about planting and caring for your Native Garden.
- ▶ Go to our links page for web site links and helpful information.

