



**Free Plants Day**  
**Care Instructions**

Written by: Environmental Services Department

## Free Plants Project

The purpose of the Free Plants Day project is to encourage the use of indigenous and waterwise plants by individuals and businesses within the community as per Priority Action 1.06 of Mount Isa City Council's Environmental Management Plan. This project is funded by the separate Environmental Charge which is included with the annual rates for Mount Isa and Camooweal properties.





## Benefits of Planting Native and Waterwise Plants For Your Home

- **Supporting native wildlife**

- Native plants and animals evolved together in a symbiotic relationship. Native plants attract wildlife and create habitat areas and sources of food for wildlife, while the wildlife assist plants by dispersing seeds.

- **Native plants are resilient and increase biodiversity**

- Native waterwise plants are hardy and well adapted to the environmental conditions of Australia. Native species generally involve less care than exotic varieties and require less water.

- Native plants increase biodiversity and assist the natural cycles of the environment. Whereas exotic plants can decrease biodiversity by becoming weeds, and out competing native plants.

- **Health benefits**

- Unvegetated areas can cause soil to become airborne (dust). Native plants living in the soil significantly reduce the risk of airborne dust by binding the soil together with their root systems and stabilising the area.

- Native plants improve air quality by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>.

- A variety of mental, physical and social benefits can be experienced from increasing green spaces.

## Plant Care Information

### Wattles- *Acacia conferta* & *Acacia simsii*



Wattles are the national floral emblem of Australia. Wattles will grow to be beautifully flowering shrubs. Wattles should be planted in full sun and will grow in nearly any type of soil but prefer well-drained. Although drought-tolerant, once established they will grow better with reliable summer moisture. Adding compost manure to your planting hole will encourage growth. Wattles live for 7-15 years. If potting native species, ensure a native blend potting mix is used.



**Dry**



**Full Sun**

### Fraser Island Apple- *Acronychia imperforata*

Fraser Island apple is a tree that has edible fruit with a sweet and tart flavour. Fraser Island apples will fruit from three years of age. Try turning the fruits into jam, or adding them to cereal. Fraser Island apples are suitable to plant in full sun or part shade. Once established they will tolerate drought. During the spring/summer months keep well-mulched and moist. Fertilise once a year using a slow-release native fertiliser. This tree is butterfly and bird attracting.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



**Part Sun**



EDIBLE



## Plant Care Information



### **Midgem berries– Austromyrtus Copper Tops**

Midgem berries are a shrub/hedging plant that responds well to pruning which encourages denser growth. Once established it is drought tolerant. The edible grey and white berries are produced in autumn. Prefers well drained soil and can be planted in full sun or part shaded spot. If your soil is rich in clay add gypsum. Apply a slow release native fertiliser in spring.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



**Part Sun**



EDIBLE

### **Banksia– Banksia integrifolia**

Banksias are a shrub/tree that have large cone like flowers. Banksias are slow growing plants. Plant in a well drained sunny location. Feed with a slow release native fertiliser in spring. The fertiliser phosphorus loading should be below 3%.



**Full Sun**



**Dry**



<https://davesgarden.com/guides/pf/showimage/419474/>

## Plant Care Information



### Queensland Bottle Tree-

#### Brachychiton rupestris

Queensland bottle trees are one of Australia's most interesting trees. Queensland bottle trees prefer well-drained soil. This plant grows to be a large tree but can also grow in pots as a smaller version. Queensland bottle trees are great wind breaks, and should be planted in full sun. They are semi-deciduous which means they will lose their leaves for short periods and new growth will occur. A reliable source of water is required for Queensland bottle trees in summer.



### Bottle brush– Callistemon varieties

Bottlebrush are a beautiful shrub/small tree with red, white, or pink flowers. Bottlebrushes prefer well drained soils and require fertilising annually with a native fertiliser. When planting use a layer of mulch over the root zone to slow the evaporation of water and help prevent weeds. Regular watering is required while the plant is young.



## Plant Care Information



### Casuarina Cousin IT

Casuarina Cousin IT is a groundcover or shrub and is perfect for rockeries, spilling down embankments or over the side of pots. Casuarina Cousin IT acts as a living mulch by preventing weeds. Grows well in most soils but prefers moist, well-drained soils. Plant in full sun. Fertilise with a slow release fertiliser in spring.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**

### Lemon scented gum- *Corymbia citriodora*

Lemon scented gums are an attractive, smooth-barked gum tree. They are large trees that can grow to be 30m tall. The leaves are edible and can be ground down and added to citrus dishes. Lemon scented gums are great habitat trees for birds, bees and other fauna. Plant in full sun. Provide regular water while young. Once established is drought tolerant. Prefers well drained soil. They should be planted slightly away from buildings and fences due to their strong root systems.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



**EDIBLE**



## Plant Care Information



### Red River Gum– *Eucalyptus camuldensis*

Red river gums are widespread along all rivers of continental Australia. This species prefers clayey soil but will grow in most soil types. Best positioned in full sunlight. Red river gums are moderately drought tolerant once established. Plant a suitable distance from infrastructure due to dropping branches.



Wet



Full Sun



Moist

### Queensland Blue Gum– *Eucalyptus tereticornis*

Queensland blue gums are tall trees that can grow to 35m and prefer well drained soil. This species prefers full sun. It has good drought tolerance and seasonal flooding tolerance. QLD blue gums have a long history of being used for rehabilitating degraded land such as old copper mining land.



Full Sun



Dry





## Plant Care Information



### Glennie River- *Gardenia psidiodes*

Glennie river is an attractive ground cover in a cascading form that has a nice scent and attractive shaped flowers. Plant in free draining well mulched soil in full sun or part shade. Feed with a native slow release fertiliser in spring. Can be planted on banks, slopes, as groundcover, in pots or window boxes.



### Brown silky oak– *Grevillea baileyana*

Brown silky oak is a small tree that has cream flowers in summer. They can be grown in the ground or in pots. Brown silky oak can be planted in full sun or part shade, in well drained soil.



## Plant Care Information



### *Grevillia Superb*

Grevillia Superb is a shrub that has big bright red/orange flowers. Flowering all throughout the year. Drought tolerant once established. Plant in a sunny position in well drained soil. Fertilise with a native fertiliser that has phosphorous levels below 0.5%.

 **Full Sun**  **Moist**  **Part Sun**

### *Tulipwood– Harpullia pendula*

Tulipwood is a small interesting looking tree species that has orange berries with jet black centres. Plant in any well drained soil in full sun. Drought tolerant. Mulch and water regularly for the first 3 months.

 **Full Sun**

 **Moist**



## Plant Care Information



<https://antzplants.com.au/shop/melaleuca-linariifolia-claret-top-honey>

### Honey myrtle– *Melaleuca linariifolia*

Honey myrtle is a great foliage plant and screen cover which can grow in containers or in the ground. Grows in most soils but prefers well drained ones. Add compost cow manure to planting holes. Can be planted in full sun or partly shaded. Drought resistant once established.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



**Part Sun**

### Weeping paperbark– *Melaleuca leucadendra*

Weeping paperbarks are an attractive tree with thick papery bark and they suit most soil types. They are drought hardy and can also handle flooded conditions. Weeping paperbarks prefer full sun positions.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



<https://caretransplanters.com.au/index.php/tree-sourcing/tree-sourcing-service/17-tree-sourcing/advanced-natives-street-trees/47-melaleuca-leucadendra>

## Plant Care Information



### Evodia– Melicope rubra

Evodia is an attractive large shrub/small tree. With its bright pink flowers that sprout from the stems it makes a popular garden plant. Evodia grows well in full sun or part shade. It makes a great potted plant. Evodia flowers in summer. Mulch when planting and water regularly until established. Fertilise with a slow release native fertiliser in spring.



Part Sun



Moist



Full Sun

### Spanish cherry– Mimusops elengi

Spanish cherry is an elegant large shade tree. It grows best in a sunny position but can be planted in part shade. It prefers nutrient rich soil but can be planted in most soil types. Spanish cherry produces edible fruit . The flowers are very aromatic.



Full Sun



Moist



FIRI F



Part Sun



## Plant Care Information



### Yellow flame tree– *Peltophorum pterocarpum*

Yellow flame trees have a dense umbrella shaped crown making for a great shade tree with startling yellow flowers. These trees can grow in large pots and in the ground. Will grow in most soils but prefer well drained. Fertilise in spring with a slow release native fertiliser. Plant in full sun.



**Moist**



**Full Sun**

### Burdekin plum– *Pleiogynium timorensis*

Burdekin plum is an edible fruit tree that has tasty plums similar to common supermarket plums. Fruits should be harvested when they start ripening then stored for a few days. Do not eat until fully ripe. Plant in full sun. Mulch and water well in the warmer spring/summer months. Suitable to plant in pots. Apply a slow release native fertiliser in Spring.



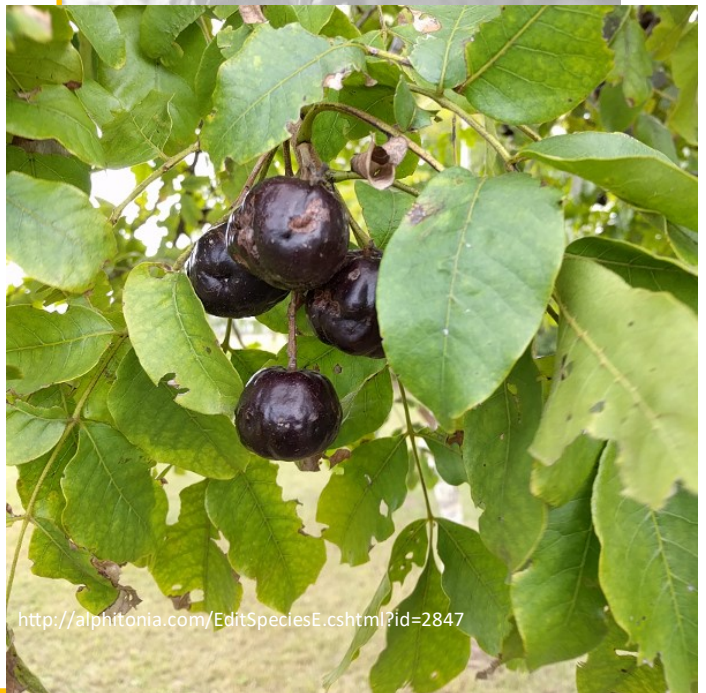
**Full Sun**



**Moist**



**EDIBLE**



## Plant Care Information



### Lilli pillies– Syzygium

Lilli pillies produce edible pink, red or purple fruits. Lilli pillie fruit is best made into jams or preserves. They are trees or hedges. Pruning encourages thick glossy foliage. Plant in part shade or full sun. Lilli pillies require regular watering, and prefer soils with good drainage.



### Australian red cedar– Toona ciliata

Australian red cedar should be planted in a large area because they can grow to be 30-60m tall and have large buttress roots. Australian red cedars can be potted as bonsai. These trees should be planted in a full sun position and watered regularly until established, add cow manure to planting holes. These trees lose their leaves during winter. They are impressive, stately trees.

**Moist****Full Sun**

## Plant Care Information



### Coast Rosemary– *Westringia zena*

Coastal rosemary is an excellent shrub, hedging or groundcover plant. Drought hardy once established. It has elegant slender leaves and white/pale mauve flower in summer. Prune lightly when young to encourage growth. Mulch over the root zone and water regularly when young and use a native slow release fertiliser in spring. Prefers full sun.



**Moist**



**Full Sun**



**Part Sun**

### Golden Penda- *Xanthostemon chrysanthus*

Golden penda is a small ornamental tree that has large glossy leaves. Has beautiful large yellow flowers in autumn and summer. It can be pruned to shrub size if desired. Needs regular watering and should be planted in a sunny position or a part sun position. Suitable as an indoor plant. Mulching and regular feeding with a slow release native fertiliser is recommended.



**Moist**



**Full Sun**



**Part Sun**



## Plant Care Information



<https://www.territorynativeplants.com.au/corymbia->

### Swamp bloodwood- *Corymbia ptychocarpa*

Swamp bloodwood is a small tree that has large masses of lovely pink/red flowers and large gumnuts. Plant in well-drained soil in a sunny position. This tree will take over five years to flower. Water often. Drought tolerant once established.



**Full Sun**



**Moist**



## General Tips for Native Gardens

- Always use potting mix specifically for native plants.
- Always use fertiliser specifically for native plants.
- If the plant requires fertilisation do so in spring.
- When using manure use cow or sheep manure rather than chicken because its lower in phosphorous and native species are phosphorous sensitive.
- Mulching will reduce the need to water your plants as often by maintaining soil moisture. Mulching also reduces weed growth. Don't put mulch too close to the trunk as it can encourage fungal growth.
- If planting in a pot make sure the plant has sufficient drainage holes.
- Many species benefit from pruning to keep them compact and dense.
- If your soil is a clay based soil try digging in gypsum, compost or manure and raise the soil level by 30cm which will encourage drainage.
- Try adding grass clippings and/or fallen leaf litter as mulch on garden beds to increase organic matter levels.
- Try not to use sprays and chemicals unless really necessary.

