

# Coastal gardens

A planting guide



# Healthy and attractive coastal landscapes

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This guide provides simple yet inspiring garden advice for people living in the coastal suburbs of Adelaide and beyond. Water-wise local native plants are attractive replacements for introduced plants that are harmful to our local coastal landscapes.

*Coastal gardens – a planting guide* is part of a series of gardening guides produced by Green Adelaide and funded by the landscape levy.

The other guides are:

- *Adelaide gardens – a planting guide*
- *Creating a wildlife friendly garden.*

They are available from [greenadelaide.sa.gov.au](http://greenadelaide.sa.gov.au).

# Using this planting guide

## Getting started

Our gardens are challenged with long hot-dry summers, drought, water restrictions, and a changing climate. As a coastal resident you may also have to tackle salt spray, sand blasting, sandy or saline soils.

However, there is good news! You can have a garden that copes with our tough climate without compromising on style, by using resilient, local native coastal plants.

This guide shows you how to utilise the fantastic variety of native plants available to create a stunning garden. Taking you through step by step, you will learn what plants work best for a given area or need, how to incorporate them in different landscaping styles, how to maintain them, and where to buy.

You will learn about plants to avoid, which are known for becoming serious weeds in natural coastal environments. When buying future plants, you will be prepared to consider local native plants for the benefits they provide. You may also identify invasive plants growing in your garden and decide to replace them with recommended alternatives.

Using local native plants in your coastal garden benefits your wallet. It's an easy, rewarding way to look after our environment. We hope you enjoy discovering local coastal plants. Happy gardening!



Cushion Fanflower  
*Scaevola crassifolia*

# Discovering local native plants

## What is a local native plant?

Local plants are a great option for residents of coastal areas. They have adapted to survive the harsh conditions of sand and salt blasting, prolonged sun exposure, nutrient-deprived soils, and limited water availability. They are the best plants for your neighbourhood and the environment.

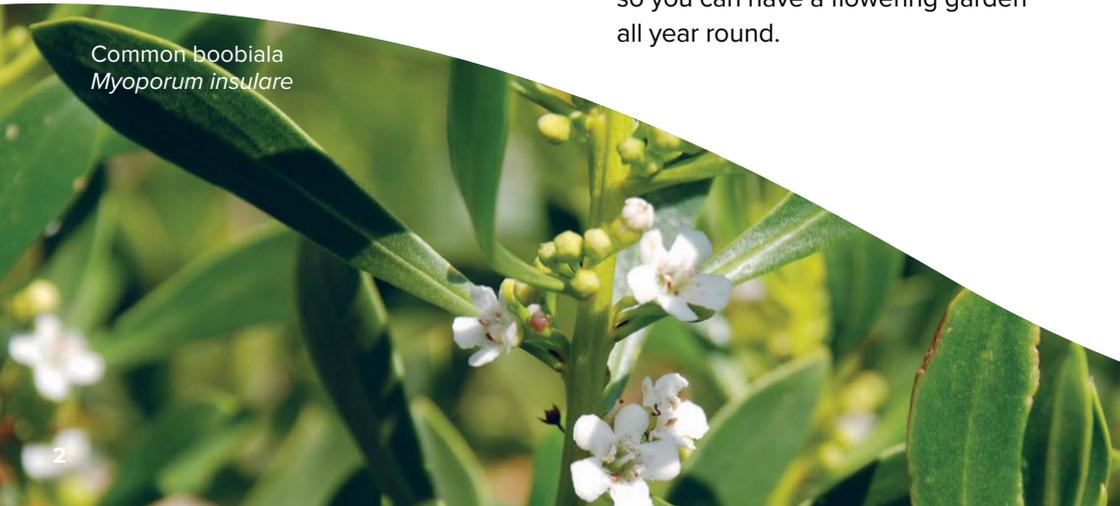
Local plants are species that would naturally occur in your neighbourhood so they have evolved to suit local conditions. They are also called 'indigenous plants'.

## Why use local native plants?

Local native plants have a huge range of benefits. They:

- are low maintenance
- are drought tolerant
- save you money and time
- require minimal watering, conserving our water supplies
- don't need fertilisers or pesticides
- provide habitat, food and shelter for local fauna such as birds, butterflies and small lizards
- are adaptable for various landscaping styles, producing striking results
- flower at different times of the year so you can have a flowering garden all year round.

Common boobiala  
*Myoporum insulare*



# How to use local native plants

Local native plants can be incorporated into your garden the same way as exotic plants. They are suited to all landscaping styles, from formal to Japanese, contemporary to natural cottage, to courtyards and pots.

As you will discover throughout this guide, there is a local coastal plant for most garden situations. Plants featured include striking groundcovers, low shrubs, structured sedges and grasses, flowering creepers and trailers, bird-attracting shrubs and screening trees.

To make it easy to choose which plants best suit your garden, the local native plant section (pages 7-17) includes highlighting the attributes and uses below.

This guide also shows you which local species to use for particular effects, and makes friendlier recommendations for replacing plants known to become invasive coastal weeds.

Information on caring for local plants is provided on pages 26-27.



Attracts native birds



Attracts butterflies and/or native insects



Suitable for pots

Austral Trefoil  
*Lotus australis*

# Garden escapes



## Are you harbouring known villains?

Weeds are plants growing where they aren't wanted, and they aren't just sour sobs and thistles! Some plants escape from gardens and become serious environmental weeds, posing a major threat to the health and value of our natural environments.

## Environmental weeds are trouble!

They:

- threaten our local native plants and environment
- can reduce habitat, shelter and food for native fauna
- can alter soil conditions
- clog up waterways and effect water quality entering the gulf
- harbour pest animals such as foxes, feral cats and rats which prey on native wildlife
- can alter coastal dune shape
- garden escapes are very costly to control and take resources away from other important issues.

Plants that cause problems often originate from regions with similar climates, such as the Mediterranean and South Africa. Thriving in similar conditions, they outcompete local native plants as they don't have the pests and diseases that controlled them in their original environment.

## Declared plants and Weeds of National Significance (WoNS)



Declared plant in SA



Weed of National Significance

Landowners and managers have a legal responsibility to control declared plants and WoNS. Weed species, including local requirements for control, vary between regions. For information on these types of plants contact your local landscape board or environment centres.

To make it easier to see which weeds are priorities for control, the 'don't plant me' sections (pages 6-17) include icons highlighting declared and WoNs plants.

# You can help!



## How do garden plants become coastal invaders?

You might not realise you're harbouring garden escapes, or might not know they 'jump the fence' to become problems.

Garden plants can escape into natural environments naturally, accidentally and deliberately.

They can spread by:

- seeds transported by birds and other animals; wind and water (including stormwater); humans (on clothing, shoes etc.); and on machinery such as lawn mowers
- being dumped in garden waste (seeds or plant cuttings can establish up to several months later)
- sometimes being deliberately planted by people in our natural environments
- growing through garden fences into our coastal landscape.

Have a good look through this guide to check which common garden plants are nasties in the coastal environment. You might like to remove any you have and replace them with the indigenous plants suggested. Take this guide with you when you are making new plant purchases and don't buy plants which are known to be a problem.

Here are some other easy things you can do:

- use local native species in your garden
- dispose of garden waste responsibly
- check with your local council before you plant into natural coastal environments
- join a local coastal community group to learn more about our coast and lend a hand!

Call Green Adelaide on 8463 3733 or go to [www.greenadelaide.sa.gov.au](http://www.greenadelaide.sa.gov.au) for information on how to get involved.



Rolling spinifex  
*Spinifex hirsutus*

# Don't plant me



**Western Coastal Wattle** *Acacia cyclops*

(Far west coast of SA)  
 Flowers: early spring to late autumn  
 Reproduces: seed pod



**Century Plant** *Agave americana*

(Origin unknown)  
 Flowers: summer  
 Reproduces: seed, vegetative production



**Coast Tea-tree** *Leptospermum laevigatum* ▲

(East coast Australia and Tasmania)  
 Flowers: August to November  
 Reproduces: seed (woody capsule)



**Mirror-bush** *Coprosma repens* ▲

(New Zealand)  
 Flowers: summer  
 Reproduces: orange-red berries autumn to winter (seed)



**White Weeping Broom** *Retama raetam* ▲

(Mediterranean)  
 Flowers: winter/late spring  
 Reproduces: seed pods shed late spring to early summer



**Italian Buckthorn / Blowfly Bush** *Rhamnus alaternus* ▲

(Mediterranean)  
 Flowers: winter to early spring. Reproduces: fleshy black fruits, will reshoot from base if damaged



**Olive** *Olea europaea* ▲

(Mediterranean)  
 Flowers: spring  
 Reproduces: dark purple fruit autumn-winter (seed)



**Gorse** *Ulex europaeus* ▲  
 ✕

(Western Europe)  
 Flowers: autumn to spring  
 Reproduces: seed

# Grow me instead



## Drooping Sheoak *Allocasuarina verticillata*

Tree growing between 5–8m. Long weeping branchlets, grey-green. Interesting cone-like fruit. Well suited to Japanese gardens. Use as feature tree or for screening. Birds such as parrots and cockatoos are attracted to fruit. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Common Boobialla *Myoporum insulare*

Large shrub to small tree, grows 2–5m. Thick light green fleshy leaves, white flowers winter to spring, purple berry fruit. Good screening qualities. Attracts birds and butterflies. Full-sun.



## Mallee Box *Eucalyptus porosa*

Tree to 10m, usually single stemmed. Bright green 'gum' leaves, white flowers from October to March. Use in natural cottage garden setting. Great plant for wildlife, provides food, shelter and nesting sites. Minimum 3.5m set-back from property and sewage pipes. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Sticky Hop-bush *Dodonaea viscosa ssp. spatulata*

Erect shrub to 3m, bright green sticky leaves. Green flowers in winter turn to striking red seed pods in spring. Great for hedging or screening. Responds to pruning. Attracts butterflies in summer. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Southern Cypress-pine *Callitris gracilis* (formerly *Callitris preissii*)

Cylindrical-shaped tree to 5m. Green foliage. Fruit is a dark brown cone. Great for formal gardens. Attractive foliage. Use as a replacement plant for conifers, as singular feature plant, line driveway or for screening. Responds well to pruning. Attracts birds. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Silver Banksia *Banksia marginata*

Feature tree grows 3–5m. Leaves green on top, silver under. Large yellow flowers spring to autumn. Interesting foliage and seed pods. Attracts birds and butterflies. Full-sun. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



# Don't plant me



**Teneriffe Daisy** *Argyranthemum frutescens*  
*ssp. foeniculaceum*

(Canary Islands)  
Flowers: spring  
Reproduces: seed



**Myrtle-leaf Milkwort** *Polygala myrtifolia*

(South Africa)  
Flowers: spring  
Reproduces: seed



**Boneseed** *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* *ssp. monilifera*

(South Africa)  
Flowers: late autumn to winter  
Reproduces: fleshy fruit (seed)



**Succulents** E.g. *Agave* / *Kniphofia* / *Opuntia* spp.

(Tropical and sub-tropical dry regions)  
Flowers: various  
Reproduces: mostly vegetative growth, some set seed



# Grow me instead



## Coast Daisy Bush *Olearia axillaris*

Shrub to 3m. Leaves dark blue-green above, white below. White, daisy-like flowers occur along stems in summer and autumn. Benefits from pruning. Screening plant, foliage contrast. Full-sun to semi-shade.



## Small-leaved Blue-bush *Maireana brevifolia*

Shrub to waist high. Succulent, small green-red leaves. Fruit has five paper-like wings. Food source for birds and small lizards. Great colour contrast. Tolerates saline conditions, but not direct coastal exposure.



## Lavender Grevillea *Grevillea lavandulacea*

Variable shrub to 1m high. Grey-green foliage resembles lavender, pink to red flowers produced winter to spring. Suitable for small gardens. Attracts birds. Well-drained soil. Full-sun to shade. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Cushion Fanflower *Scaevola crassifolia*

Spreading robust shrub to 1.5m high, 2m wide. Bright green slightly serrated leaves, flowers bright blue to pale purple, fan-shaped, occur spring to early summer. Attractive flowers. Full-sun.



## Round-leaf Wattle *Acacia acinacea*

Shrub to 2m. Small rounded green leaves (phyllodes). Bright yellow wattle flowers from May to September. Provides burst of colour over winter. Weeping habit, well suited to Japanese style garden. Lives 8–10 years. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



# Don't plant me



## **Beach Daisy** *Arctotheca populifolia*

(South Africa)  
Flowers: winter to summer  
Reproduces: seed



## **Gazania** *Gazania* spp.

(South Africa) ▲  
Flowers: most of year, mainly spring to autumn  
Reproduces: seed, vegetatively



## **Hottentot Fig / Sea Fig**

*Carpobrotus edulis* / *C. aequilaterus* / *C. chilensis*  
(South Africa)  
Flowers: late summer to winter  
Reproduces: fleshy fruit in summer, vegetatively



## **White Arctotis** *Arctotis stoechadifolia*

(South Africa)  
Flowers: spring to summer  
Reproduces: seed

# Grow me instead



## Austral Trefoil *Lotus australis*

Spreading herb to 30cm. Pale green leaves, white to pink pea flowers occur in clusters, spring to summer. Pretty plant, suits cottage garden. Prune after flowering. Full sun to semi shade.



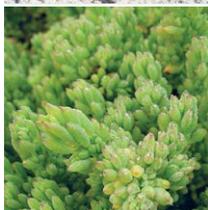
## Native Bluebell *Wahlenbergia* spp.

Delicate herb to 30cm, pretty blue flowers in winter and spring. Dies back over summer. Very pretty, delicate plant. Suitable pot plant. Great in cottage gardens. Can plant in drifts. Responds well to pruning.



## Native Pigface *Carpobrotus rossii*

Thick, fleshy groundcover. Green leaves triangular in cross-section, large bright pink flowers occur in spring. Attractive groundcover, soil stabiliser. Suitable as trailing plant for pots or down walls. Ripe fruits are edible.



## Coast Bonefruit *Threlkeldia diffusa*

Small shrub or groundcover to 20cm high, 1m wide. Small fleshy leaves, green with purple tinge. Soil stabiliser. Tolerates saline conditions, clay. Full sun.



## Creeping Boobialla *Myoporum parvifolium*

Ground runner growing shin high to 5m wide. Small green leaves, dainty white or pale purple flowers in spring or summer. Good soil stabiliser. Space filler. Trail down rock walls. Lawn replacement (where no foot traffic). Attracts butterflies, provides shelter for small lizards. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



# Grow me instead



## Muntries *Kunzea pomifera*

Ground-hugging shrub with branches extending over several metres. Thick bright green leaves, showy white fluffy flowers in spring and early summer. Purple berries. Space filler. Suitable for pots and hanging baskets. Full sun to semi shade. Ripe fruits are edible.



## Cushion Bush *Leucophyta brownii*

Compact, rounded shrub to 1m. Silver-grey foliage, pale yellow ball-shaped flowers in summer. Great structural form, colour contrast. Responds well to regular pruning. Full sun.



## Native Pelargonium *Pelargonium australe*

Herb to knee high. Large green velvety leaves, pale pink flowers with purple stripe occur spring to summer. Pretty plant, great in cottage garden. Prune after flowering. Full sun to semi shade.



## Native Fuchsia *Correa reflexa*

Small shrub with dark green leaves, pink bell flowers in winter and spring. Attractive flowers, great in formal, cottage garden settings. Attracts birds. Full sun to shade. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Common Everlasting *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* (formerly *Helichrysum apiculatum*)

Herb to knee high. Silver-grey leaves, clusters of bright yellow daisy flowers, October to January. Works well in natural cottage and contemporary gardens. Long-lasting flower, looks great as a cut flower, can also be dried. Butterfly food source. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



# Grow me instead



## Woolly New Holland Daisy *Vittadinia gracilis*



Perennial daisy to 30cm high. Purple, pink or white daisy flowers mainly in spring, turn to fluffy seed heads. Pretty flowering plant. Suits small cottage gardens. Attracts butterflies. Full sun to semi shade.



## Round-leaf Pigface *Disphyma crassifolium*

Succulent ground-running plant. Green leaves round in cross section, bright pink flowers in spring. Attractive groundcover, soil stabiliser. Trail over rock walls. Tolerates saline soils. Full sun to shade.



## Ruby Saltbush *Enchylaena tomentosa*



Low shrub to 1m. Leaves small, blue-green, fleshy. Yellow to red fleshy fruits produced throughout the year. Attracts native wildlife. Responds well to pruning (can prune seasonally if starts to dominate garden bed). Full sun to semi shade. Ripe fruits are edible.



## Running Postman *Kennedia prostrata*



Prostrate runner to 2m. Leaves pale green, bright red pea-flowers winter to summer. Eye-catching flowers, use as an attractive groundcover or plant in small to large garden pots (looks great in a feature urn). Light shade preferred.

# Don't plant me



## Couch Grass *Cynodon dactylon*

(tropics world-wide)

Flowers: late spring to early summer

Reproduces: sets seed in summer, also spreads vegetatively (including lawn clippings)



## Fountain Grass *Pennisetum setaceum*



(East Africa and Middle East)

Flowers: summer to autumn

Reproduces: seed



## Kikuyu *Pennisetum clandestinum*

(East Asia)

Flowers: summer to autumn

Reproduces: vegetative reproduction (e.g. lawn clippings)



## African Feathergrass / African Lovegrass



*Cenchrus macrourus, Eragrostis curvula*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to autumn

Reproduces: seed, vegetatively (rhizomes)



## Wild Iris / African Iris *Dietes* spp.

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to early summer

Reproduces: seed pods

# Grow me instead



## Coast Spear-grass *Austrostipa* spp.

Tussock grass species of varying heights, with flowering stems to 1m. Use coastal species *A. flavescens* (tall) and *A. elegantissima* (small and compact). Plant in clumps, suitable for mass plantings. Showy when in flower. Fill in spaces or border plantings. Attracts butterflies.



## Wallaby Grass *Austrodanthonia* spp.

Clumping grass to knee high, fluffy white seed heads in summer. Plant in clumps, good in bush garden setting. Attracts wildlife including butterflies. Can plant in pots.



## Short-stem Flax-lily *Dianella brevicaulis*

Small clumping plant to knee high. Leaves strappy and stiff, dark green. Blue flowers produced on narrow stalks within foliage line, spring. Flowers above the foliage line on wiry stalks to 1m (does not tolerate direct coastal exposure). Great for borders, large or small group plantings, pots and indoors. Full sun to shade.



## Knobby Club-rush *Ficinia nodosa* (formerly *Isolepis nodosa*)

Attractive evergreen clumping plant to 1m high. Leaves dark-green, cylindrical and up-right. Flower heads brown ball-shaped, occur all year. Versatile plant. Use as accent, group plantings, pot plants, around ponds. Tolerates salt spray and wet zones. Full-sun to semi-shade.



## Flat-sedge *Cyperus vaginatus*

Clumped sedge to 1.5m high. Bright green stems with brown flower spikes at the tip. Elegant plant. Plant in pond or wet areas, can tolerate dry conditions for several seasons. Looks great in clumps or solitary. Suits Japanese style gardens. Does not tolerate direct coastal exposure.



## Sword Sedge *Lepidosperma gladiatum*

Sedge to 1m high with wide, flat leaves (like a gladiator's sword!) Brown flower heads present winter to summer. Plant in large or small clumps. Good accent plant, use in borders, foliage contrast.



## Coast Tussock-grass *Poa poiformis*

Tussock grass growing to knee high. Thin blue-green leaves, brown-yellow flower heads. Tight foliage. Great in small or large group plantings, also rockeries, borders. Good table pot plant. Full-sun.



# Don't plant me



**Bridal Creeper** *Asparagus asparagoides*

(South Africa)

Flowers: spring

Reproduces: red berries late spring, also spreading underground root system rhizomes



**Lavatory Creeper** *Dipogon lignosus*

(South Africa)

Flowers: spring

Reproduces: seed pods in summer, rhizomes



**Bridal Veil** *Asparagus declinatus*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: winter

Reproduces: green/blue berries late winter/early spring, also spreading underground root system rhizomes



**Blue-bell Creeper / Sollya** *Billardiera heterophylla*  
(formerly *Sollya heterophylla*)

(Western Australia)

Flowers: spring and summer

Reproduces: seed



**Asparagus Fern** *Asparagus scandens*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to winter

Reproduces: berries spread by birds, underground root system rhizomes



**Blue Morning Glory** *Ipomoea indica*

(Tropics world-wide)

Flowers: most of the year

Reproduces: seed, vegetatively

# Grow me instead



## Coastal Lignum *Muehlenbeckia gunnii*

Robust perennial twining plant. Green, lance-shaped leaves. Small pale yellow flowers most of the year. Prune as required. Don't plant under powerlines. Good habitat for birds to hide in. Shade tolerant.



## Climbing Saltbush *Einadia nutans*

Climber or groundcover. Herbaceous or woody stems spreading to 1m diameter. Small pointed fleshy leaves. Tiny yellow flowers and attractive bright red or yellow fruit, most of the year. Use as a ground cover, creeper, or hanging baskets. Moist, well-drained soil.



## Native Lilac *Hardenbergia violacea*

Attractive climber or shrub with trailing and twining stems. Dark green leaves, clumps of bright purple pea flowers, winter. Uses: climber, small shrub, feature pot plant. Sheltered positions.



## Old Man's Beard *Clematis decipiens* (formerly *C. microphylla*)

Climber reaching several meters with support, or plant as groundcover. Masses of pale green/white flowers, winter to early spring. Female flowers turn to fluffy seeds, late spring. Prune annually. Well-drained soils.



## Sweet Apple-berry *Billardiera cymosa*

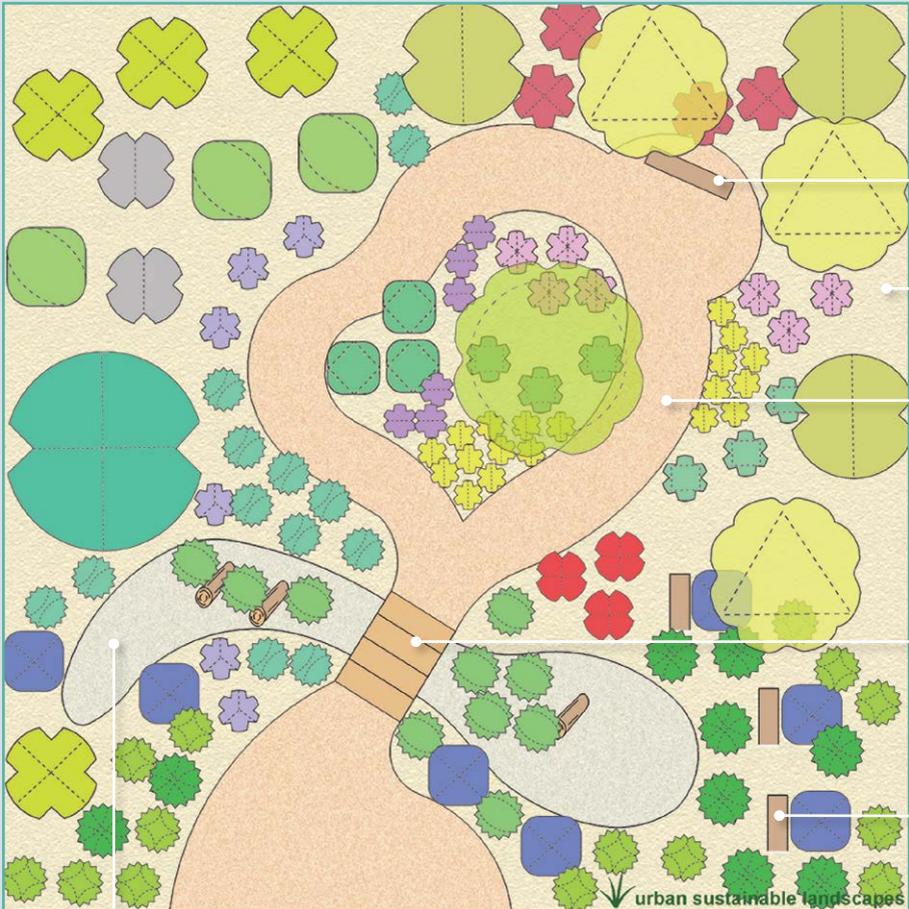
Climber or small shrub to shin high. Dark green leaves, striking purple to blue flowers in spring. Red / purple berries, summer.



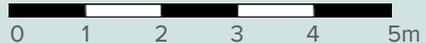
# Natural cottage

A natural cottage garden is easy to achieve with local coastal plants as many species flower in winter, providing a colourful garden year-

round. These gardens are relaxed and flowing, and are a wonderful place for local wildlife. To achieve a natural cottage garden, mimic the flow and



Swale with 14mm quartzite gravel and habitat logs



mix of plant species in natural coastal areas. Allow plants to cascade over paths and lace through one another. Utilise weaving paths and rustic

furniture. Add bird-baths, hollow logs, and nesting boxes to attract and support local wildlife.

- Bench
- Mulch
- White wash sustainable pebble
- Flat sleepers set in gravel to give boardwalk appearance
- Recycled hardwood timber post, upright 2m high

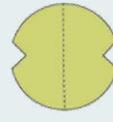
Trees and tall shrubs



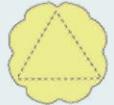
Mallee Box



Common Boobialla



Sticky Hop-bush



Silver Banksia

Medium shrubs



Coast Daisy-bush



Lavender Grevillia

Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Cushion Bush



Native Fuchsia



Austral Trefoil



Native Pelargonium



Common Everlasting



Ruby Saltbush



Muntries



Woolly New Holland Daisy



Native Bluebell

Grasses and sedges



Wallaby Grass



Short-stem Flax-lily



Coast Spear-grass



Knobby Club-rush

Climbers

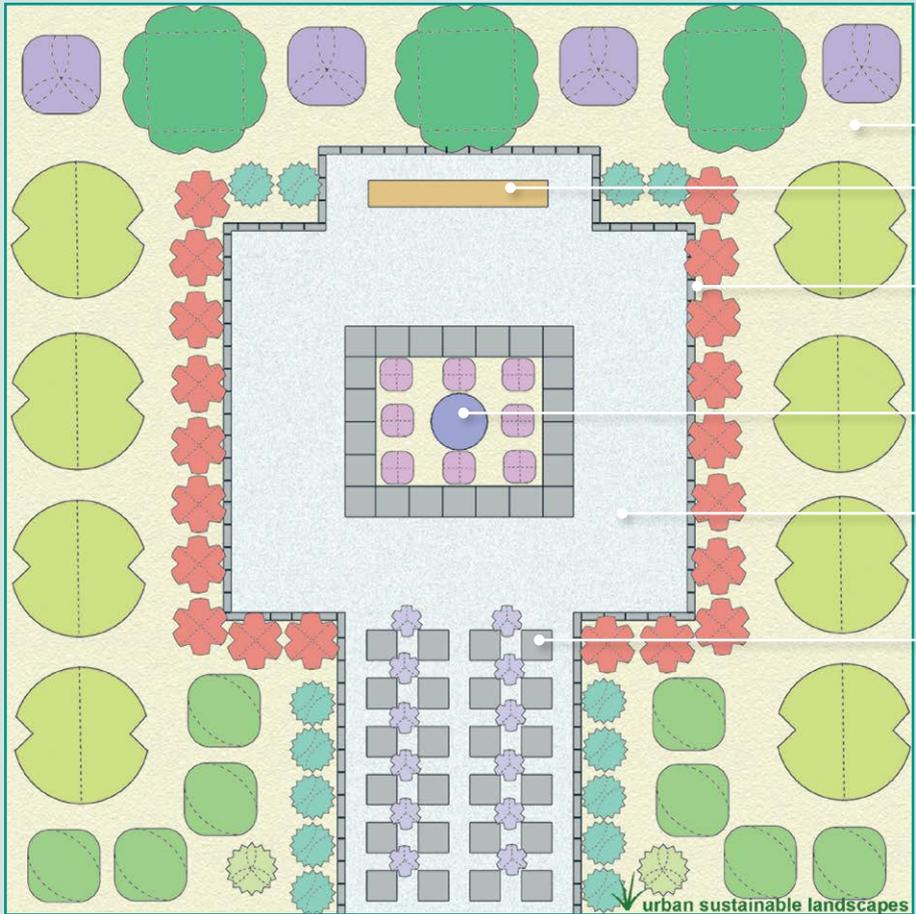


Native Lilac

# Formal

A number of local coastal plants can be grown into clipped hedges or shapes to form the basis of the formal garden. Sedges and grasses

can be used in mass plantings and accent borders. Use local climbers or trailing plants in a feature urn, terrace or retaining wall. To achieve



a formal garden style, emphasise symmetry and borders and use gravel or sustainable pebbles to create and highlight landscaping features.

Mulch

Bench

110mm x 220mm  
linear paver divider

Birdbath feature

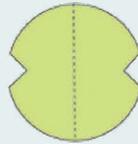
14mm dolomite  
gravel

500mm x 500mm  
charcoal pavers

### Trees and tall shrubs



Southern  
Cypress-pine



Sticky  
Hop-bush

### Medium shrubs



Cushion  
Fanflower

### Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Ruby  
Saltbush



Native  
Fuchsia



Native  
Pelargonium



Native  
Pigface

### Grasses and sedges



Sword Sedge

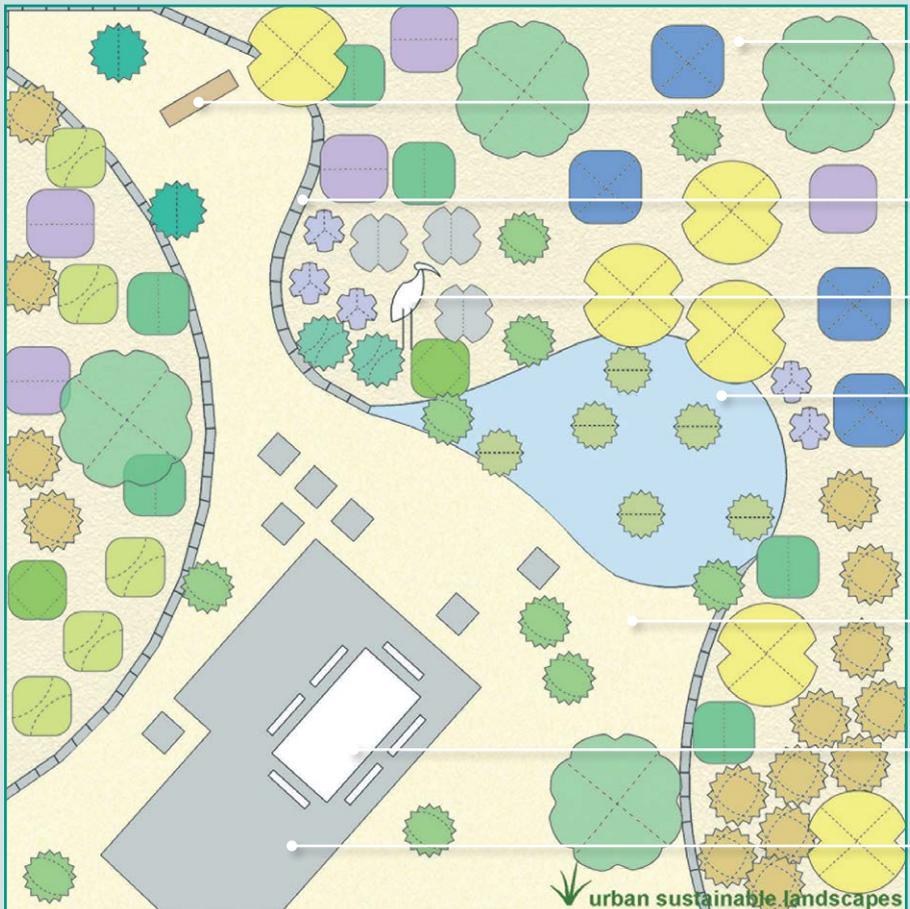


Short-stem  
Flax-lily

# Japanese style

Local coastal plants are well suited to the minimalist style and reflective feeling of Japanese gardens. Aim to create a garden that mimics the

natural balance and flow of nature. Clumps of local grasses can be used to compliment raked gravel areas. Incorporate natural elements such



as plants with graceful habit, water features, stepping stones and gravel areas to achieve your Japanese-style garden.

Mulch

Recycled wooden bench

110mm x 220mm linear paver divider

Feature sculpture

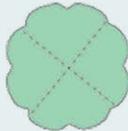
Clay or plastic lined wet/dry stormwater fed pond coated with quartzite gravel at a maximum of 200mm depth

14mm quartzite gravel

Table and chairs

400mm x 400mm charcoal pavers

### Trees and tall shrubs



Drooping Sheoak

### Medium shrubs



Round-leaf Wattle

### Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Native Pelargonium



Cushion bush



Muntries



Round-leaf Pigface



Creeping Boobialla

### Grasses and sedges



Flat Sedge



Knobby Club-rush



Short-stem Flax-lily



Sword Sedge



Coast Tussock-grass

### Climbers



Sweet Apple-berry

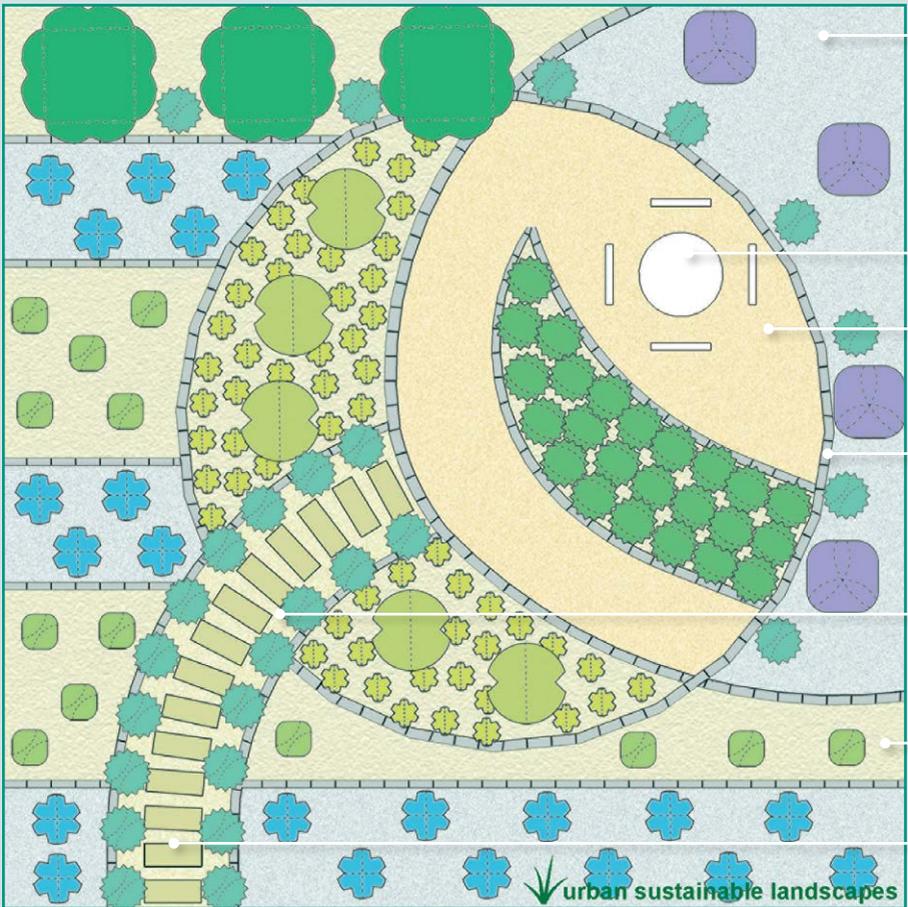


Native Lilac

# Contemporary

Contemporary gardens feature bold modern designs, with an emphasis on contrasts of colour, texture and form. Many local coastal plants offer

excellent colour and texture for these bold designs. To develop your own contemporary garden, create interesting garden bed shapes using



a mix of plants and landscaping materials that provide strong contrasts.  
 A simple outdoor setting suits the contemporary garden design.

Dolomite gravel

Trees and tall shrubs



Southern Cypress-pine



Sticky Hop-bush

Table and chairs

White wash sustainable pebble

Medium shrubs



Cushion Fanflower



Small-leaved Bluebush

110mm x 220mm linear paver divider

Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Common Everlasting



Round-leaf Pigface

14mm quartzite gravel

Grasses and sedges



Short-stem Flax-lily



Knobby Club-rush

Mulch

800mm x 300mm paver stepping stones

# Growing and maintaining local coastal plants

## When to plant

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

## Watering

Water-in your new plants. Over the first two summers give your plants a deep watering once a week to help them establish deep roots. After this, they should be able to cope on rainfall alone; however, depending on variations in seasons and to keep your garden thriving, give your plants a deep water as required. Be mindful of current water restrictions and any prescribed times allocated to gardeners for watering.

Your aim is to establish strong, deep root systems which are robust and can survive during periods of low rainfall and minimal watering. However, take care as over-watering leaches nutrients

from the soil, creates excessive growth, and results in less flowering and shorter-lived plants.

## Mulch and gravels

A layer of mulch added to your garden can reduce evaporative water loss by more than 70 per cent! Organic mulch keeps soil temperatures down, which benefits root density, suppresses weed growth, and helps to promote good soil structure and productivity.

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

## Fertilising

Fertilisers aren't usually needed with local native plants. If you decide to fertilise, seek advice from your local nursery, as products with high levels of phosphorus can harm some local native plants. You'll want to avoid rapid growth that makes your local plants leggy, weak and short-lived.

## Pruning

Pruning is beneficial for many local 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. Replace old plants that die or become straggly.

## Pot plants

Potted local plants need a little more care than those planted out in gardens. Water your pot plants more regularly in summer, and apply a low phosphorus fertiliser in spring and summer (check with your local nursery which product is best). Don't over apply fertiliser as it can harm local native plants. Some plants may need re-potting in the future.

## Sustainable landscaping

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

## More information

For further information on establishing local native plants and how you can create habitat for native fauna, such as birds and butterflies, visit the 'Useful resources' listing on page 32.



# Sourcing local native coastal plants

Unfortunately, not all Adelaide nurseries stock local native coastal plants. Native plant nurseries can be found at [greenadelaide.sa.gov.au](http://greenadelaide.sa.gov.au).

Alternatively, contact your local council's Environmental Officer or phone Green Adelaide on 8463 3733.

Ask your local plant nursery for plants that are of 'local provenance' meaning plants grown from seeds or cuttings collected from your local area, catchment or neighbourhood. These plants have adapted to local conditions, so are the best plants for your garden.

You can often place orders in advance with local nurseries in late spring – early summer to collect for late autumn planting. Advance orders are recommended if you want larger quantities of plants, or don't want to substitute if species aren't available. Many growers are also able to supply plants for commercial orders such as councils, schools, other nurseries, industries and landscapers.

Keep an eye out for local plant giveaways which are sometimes run by councils in winter – these will be advertised on your local council website and are extremely popular!



# Where to now?

So you've had a read of this guide and want to tackle garden escapes lurking in your yard or you want to try gardening with local native species. Here are some of the next steps you can take:

- research and create a vision
- decide on your garden's scale, theme and look
- consider what you already have in your garden – what's staying and what's going?
- put your plan to paper – sketch the main features, e.g. paths, seating, ponds, garden beds
- use your list on pages 30-31 to help you plan your plant order
- create a timeline – do you need to order in advance, how long will it take to prepare the garden beds, what weeds will need to be controlled?
- follow the growing and maintenance tips in this guide – and remember, local native gardens are low maintenance, not no maintenance!

Use the table on the next page to plan your new garden. There's plenty of space to write your favourite species from this guide and how you plan to use them.

Plant category	Notes (e.g. quantity, uses, location)
Trees and tall shrubs	
Medium shrubs	
Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs	
Grasses and sedges	
Climbers	



# Useful resources

These resources are complementary to this guide. From inspiring images to more in-depth gardening resource material, they may provide further inspiration and information. Happy planting!

- Green Adelaide  
[greenadelaide.sa.gov.au](http://greenadelaide.sa.gov.au)
- Your local council's website
- Weeds in Australia  
[www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds](http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds)
- Sustainable Gardening Australia  
[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)
- The native plants of Adelaide (2010)  
Phil Bagust and Lynda Tout-Smith, Wakefield Press
- Weed control handbook for declared plants in South Australia  
[www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm\\_biosecurity/weeds](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm_biosecurity/weeds)





Text by Claire Lock, Rural Solutions SA.

Green Adelaide gratefully acknowledges the photographers who donated their images for this guide: Ron Sandercock, Rata Luckens, Doug Fotheringham, Nick Fewster, Ben Moulton, Caroline Taylor, Tony Flaherty, Sharn Lucas and Bill Doyle.

This planting guide is funded from the landscape levy.

Printed on 100% recycled Australian-made paper.

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Nursery & Garden Industry  
South Australia



urban sustainable landscapes  
design construction management

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Green Adelaide was established by the South Australian Government to help manage urban densification and climate change impacts on metropolitan Adelaide. Green Adelaide will work to create a cooler, greener, wilder and climate-resilient city by partnering, funding and supporting aligned organisations and communities, as well as delivering on-ground iconic projects to establish Adelaide as Australia's first National Park City.

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