Nursery & Garden Industry Northern Territory

A Guide for Gardeners in Northern Territory

grow me instead™

The Nursery Industry - Protecting Our Environment

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia

Acknowledgements

The 'Grow Me Instead' project was first initiated by the Nursery and Garden Industry of NSW & ACT (NGINA) as a voluntary partnership with its member nurseries to encourage the removal from production and sale of plants known to be invasive in the natural environment.

This Northern Territory 'Grow Me Instead' has been produced by NGIA in conjunction with the Australian Government.

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- Additional text by Noelle Weatherley.
- The Nursery & Garden Industry Australia through it's National GMI Committee – Delwyn Thomas (Project Manager), Robert Prince (Chief Executive Officer NGIA) Tracey Wigg (National PR and communications manager), Anthony Kachenko (National Environmental and Technical Policy Manager) and Robert Chin (NGIV)
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2) Introduction from the Ministers

The nursery and gardening industry has joined with the Australian Government in the fight against invasive garden plants. In championing this initiative, Nursery and Gardening Industry Australia (NGIA) is taking a significant step forward in tackling one of the nation's most serious environmental problems – the spread of weeds.

The Grow Me Instead campaign is a great industry-driven initiative providing relevant local information to nursery operators and gardeners about plants which are potential weeds in their area and less invasive plants for gardeners to use.

This cooperation between the horticulture and nursery industries, the Australian Government and weed management bodies will help ensure horticulturalists and gardeners receive the information they need to combat the spread of weeds.

It is estimated that weeds cost the Australian agricultural industry around $4 billion a year. The real cost of weeds to the environment is difficult to calculate, however it is likely to be at least equal to the cost to agriculture.

Of the almost 3000 introduced plant species now known to be established in the Australian environment, 65% are 'escaped' garden plants. An important step in preventing the spread of weeds is public education to help change attitudes and behaviours that contribute to the weed problem.

The Government is committed to investing in initiatives that have real on-ground benefits for the environment and for industry. We commend this initiative to you.

The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP

Minister for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

The Hon Tony Burke MP

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

3) Introduction

The Nursery and Garden Industry in Australia employs about 45,000 people in some 22,000 businesses across the country. For many years the Industry has been conscious of their environmental responsibilities and they have been proactive in furthering educational programs, including those concerning invasive garden plants. Garden escapes are not a new issue: weeds have been around since the first settlers brought along reminders of 'home' to help them settle into a new and strange land. How strange the Australian landscape must have seemed then, and how natural it would have been for the settlers to want only the tried and true familiar garden plants of the British Isles. Despite the difficulties of creating a garden in the Antipodes, it took many years for the average Australian to appreciate the native flora of this great land.

Then, there were the early 'acclimatisation societies' who thought it a good idea to introduce plants and animals from the old country and also to spread Australian native plants from state to state.

Although great damage to the environment has occurred as a result of these indiscriminate introductions, this has not been solely the fault of the horticultural industry: certainly other industries have contributed. Graziers have imported new grasses and fodder crops and there were 'accidental' imports that came about unwittingly through inappropriate packaging, movement of plant and machinery, as seed in fodder and in ships' ballast.

However, the weed issue and who is actually responsible should not become a 'blame game'. Together we must seek to repair what damage we can and to work together as a community to prevent similar damage occurring in the future.

The Nursery & Garden Industry is actively participating in lessening the availability of invasive plants in Australia by preventing their production and sale. The Industry has recently established a greater understanding and cooperation with both State and Federal Governments, culminating in this important 'Grow Me Instead' booklet.

Greater awareness and education of the home gardener is a major part of the answer to this problem. By using the information in the 'Grow Me Instead' booklet as a guide and consulting with your local garden centre or plant nursery, you can help to minimise garden escapes and create a better environmental future for following generations of gardeners.

4) What is Grow Me Instead?

The original 'Grow Me Instead' booklet developed by the Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT (NGINA) has now been extended as a national program by the Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA), in partnership with the Federal Government, to reduce the numbers and impact of invasive plants in Australia.

'An environmentally invasive plant' is just another term for a weed. Quite simply, a weed is any plant that poses a threat to the environment, adversely impacts human or animal health, or causes crop or stock losses. For most gardeners, many of the characteristics we most desire in garden plants are the same as those that make them weedy: i.e. plants that are fast growing and disease resilient and those which reproduce easily by the distribution of seeds or plant parts.

A modern definition of a weed is "a plant that requires some form of action to reduce its effect on the economy, the environment, human health and amenity".

Many of the plants that are now considered to be 'environmental weeds' were introduced by early settlers, or by gardeners and farmers who had little or no knowledge of their future impact on the native environment. It is only in recent years that this threat has become apparent.

Weediness is not confined to introductions from overseas. Some Australian native plants introduced from other regions may impact adversely on the natural environment. Non-indigenous (i.e. not local) species may invade and displace species natural to that area or they may cross pollinate to produce new species which may in time alter regional biodiversity. Cootamundra Wattle (*Acacia baileyana*) is a good example of the former, while many eucalypts are known to interbreed.

Introduced species may sometimes be controlled in a foreign climate by various vectors such as small animals, insects, diseases or climatic conditions such as frost, thus reducing potential invasiveness.

To gardeners, farmers or botanists, the term 'weed' may mean different things. Pasture weeds reduce the productivity of agricultural land and may also have negative effects on human and animal health. Environmental weeds cause various problems in natural areas and ecosystems and the cost of control for both farmers and government is estimated at billions of dollars per annum.

The purpose of this Grow Me Instead booklet...

is to identify common garden plants that have now become environmental weeds in your local area, and to suggest better, alternative plants that benefit garden diversity while lessening their potential to become weeds of the future.

Apart from nurseries, garden centres or the resources of the local botanic gardens, valuable information may be provided by the Bushcare division of your local council or shire or you may wish to check out their websites. Here you will find lists of declared weeds for the local area and contact details should you need further information regarding invasive plant identification and approved methods of disposal.

It is important to reduce the spread of environmental weeds because...

better and more effective management of invasive plants will help to reduce the high cost of chemical control, and to reduce the amount of time and energy lost in management of weeds in productive land for food crops, grazing land, cut flowers and forestry. Weed management in public spaces and on natural heritage land is costly, laborious and at times seems overwhelming.

Invasive plants are defined and grouped as follows.

1. **Noxious weeds -** are those legally declared as noxious plants by the various State or Territory Governments. The declaration of noxious weeds will vary from state to state and from region to region within a state. In general, most state legislation will say that declared noxious plants cannot be grown, sold or transported or transposed, and removal is required.
2. **Weeds of National Significance ('WoNS') -** are some of the most significant weeds in Australia. All WoNS have been declared illegal for sale in each state of Australia.
3. **Environmental weeds -** plants that are or have the potential to impact the natural environment by destroying habitat or over-running indigenous species and altering local biodiversity. Many of our worst environmental weeds are garden escapes.
4. **Agricultural & Horticultural weeds -** are those plants that have a negative effect on crop or animal production. This may be through the infiltration of weed seed in grain crops, burrs in wool production or weeds which make animals sick or cause death. In the horticultural industry, weeds within cut flower, fruit and vegetable crops can harbour pests and diseases which reduce productivity.

5) Establishing the criteria for Grow Me Instead

It has been very important to establish a set of consistent criteria which could be adhered to across all regions and states.

A) The Invasive Plants

The Nursery & Garden Industry Northern Territory, in consultation with its members, State and Federal Governments, and interested environmental groups has developed a list of 27 invasive garden plants. There are several weed lists in existence provided by a variety of environmental and conservation organisations that often include species which are problems only in their local area. As such, including all garden escapes in a national list was considered inappropriate. Therefore, the 'weediness' criteria for inclusion in 'Grow Me Instead' were determined as follows.

1. The plant must be shown to be invasive across more than one area or part of the state.
2. It can be either an Australian native or imported (exotic) species.
3. The plant must be shown to or have potential to damage the environment, human or animal health or create stock or crop losses.
4. The plant must be proven to have naturalised in bushland to the detriment of the natural environment.

This 'Grow Me Instead' list is not definitive for each area or region of Northern Territory. There may be other problem plants in your locality, most of these being included in lists prepared by your council or shire. In addition to the plants listed in 'Grow Me Instead', you should also be aware of your local problem plants.

B) The Alternatives

Not all of the alternatives would be suitable across the broad range of soils and climates of Northern Territory. Therefore, consideration of these differences and adaptation to your local area or region will be necessary.

For this booklet to be of benefit in helping you select 'good' garden plants, it should be used as a guide to plant selection. In addition to the listed alternatives, there will be many other plant selections available to you at your local nursery or garden centre. Together with their help, expertise and guidance, you needn't have any fear that your garden will become an environmental hazard in the future.

Selection criteria for the 'non-weedy plants' included:

- Must be recognised as **non-invasive**.
- Must be readily available to the gardening public.
- Must be reliable garden plants.

We have endeavoured to recommend at least one Australian native plant alternative for all of the invasive species listed in the booklet.

The role of the nursery industry

In more recent years, the Nursery & Garden Industry has been environmentally responsible by encouraging the production of non-invasive plants that do not require copious amounts of reticulated water, fertiliser or other chemicals to thrive in the garden.

The Nursery & Garden Industry in Australia instigates accreditation programs among its members, and it continually strives to establish standards of excellence in plant production in order to provide trustworthy products.

The Nursery & Garden Industry provides information not only through publications such as the 'Grow Me Instead' booklet, but also through its education programs. Many educational and self-help programs are also offered by local nursery or garden centres.

Your **local** nursery or garden centre can assist you by:

- Helping with identification of suspected 'weedy' plants;
- Providing information concerning local invasive plants;
- Offering alternatives and environmentally friendly plants;
- Providing information concerning good weed management, disposal of unwanted plant material, further preventing the spread in your garden and neighbourhood.

On a broader scale the Nursery & Garden Industry can assist by:

- Increasing public awareness through education programs;
- Promoting the sale of superior, alternative plants thereby reducing the number of invasive plants grown and sold;
- Working with government, with research organisations, the media and other key stakeholders to help reduce the distribution and sale of undesirable plants.

6) What you can do!

By checking the plants in your garden with the help of the 'Grow Me Instead' booklet you may identify plants you should replace, while at the same time find others you may enjoy growing more!

Your **local** nursery or garden centre plant specialists will have additional suggestions of plants proven to be successful in your area. Plants purchased in another region, no matter how lovely they are, may not always prove hardy in yours. Furthermore, by purchasing plants from another region you may unwittingly introduce another environmental weed!

It is also a good idea to consider your garden setting and to then make a list of the plants to fill your specific house and garden needs. For example, aspects of the house exposed to hot western sun will benefit from a deciduous tree to provide summer shade and will allow penetration of winter sun, while privacy from neighbours can be provided by carefully chosen hedging plants. Or you may simply want to create beds or borders of colourful flowers and dramatic foliages to enhance your home décor. All of these wishes and needs are valid and they will vary between gardeners.

Garden plants provide many useful purposes, and in time they will become an integral part of your environment, chosen to suit the architecture of both your home and your personal lifestyle. Good garden cultivation is your contribution to establishing a special microclimate and will help to protect and preserve the local environment.

In recent times, many new plant varieties have been introduced through modern production methods and the work of plant breeders, resulting in plants which are attractive and hardy but which are non-invasive. These may be plants which are sterile or rarely produce seed. Many new varieties have low water needs or are tolerant of the air pollution found in the urban environment. In this way the Nursery Industry is contributing to the elimination of damaging or invasive species.

Purchasing plants from markets and other sources such as 'car boot sales', as well as plant swapping and trading between friends may also result in inadvertent movement of declared or noxious weeds.

Are you creating a weed problem in your area?

Are your garden plants 'jumping the fence'? Garden escapes are said to be one of the main sources of environmental weeds. Homeowners have a responsibility to protect natural resources.

Here are some simple ways to enjoy gardening without creating problems outside the garden fence.

- Recognise and remove plants known to be 'weedy' and destroy them responsibly, according to local council or shire regulations.
- Replace problem plants with non-invasive alternatives, as suggested by the 'Grow Me Instead' booklet or by your local nursery or garden centre. They will help identify any suspect invasive plants.
- When purchasing new plants for the garden read labels to establish good characteristics such as drought tolerance and non-weedy habit.
- Good gardening practices include removal of spent flowers that can set seed within your garden or spread to bushland.
- Do not dump green garden waste in neighbouring or public space as many plants can regenerate to become a nuisance.
- Do not dump spent cut flowers into the garden or on to adjoining property. Florists often use seed heads, vines and other plant parts that may establish in your garden.
- Never tip the water or plants from your aquarium into ponds, rivers or waterways. There are numerous, serious aquatic plants threatening rivers and waterways because of the thoughtless actions of some people.
- There are many good sources of information in regard to weeds and their control. See the back cover for a list.
- Think global – act local. Consider plants local to your area. Your local council or shire will be able to provide a list of indigenous plants for your garden.
- Encourage friends and neighbours to become involved as custodians of their environment by following the same guidelines.

Native plants or imported species?

One of the most commonly asked questions at nurseries and garden centres is whether one should use native or exotic plants in the garden. There has long been discussion about this in gardening circles, and more recently the topic of using only locally indigenous or local area natives has become topical. The primary concern of most horticulturists is that gardeners should know the difference so that they may make informed choices.

Natives are, as the name suggests, those plants that occur naturally within Australia. Quite properly, they should be referred to as Australian native plants. Grevilleas, Eucalypts and Acacias are all examples. Of course, Australia is a big continent, so what is native to one area or region, may be very different to those found in another. Think for example, of native plants from the dry soils of Western Australia and compare them to the tropical rainforest plants native to Queensland – all Australian natives – but very different plants, with different growing requirements.

In recent years, plant breeders have hybridised many or been able to choose better or 'select' forms that have been sourced from plants growing naturally in the wild. Both hybrids and select forms will have improved characteristics to the parent species. It may be they flower more often or earlier in the season, they may produce better fruit, be disease resistant or they may have a longer life span.

Imported or so called 'exotic' plants are those originating elsewhere, not necessarily the 'exotic tropics' as some people may think.

Indigenous plants are plants that grow naturally in your local area. They are naturally occurring plants of the region and can be seen in local parklands, as remnant plants on roadsides or riverbanks and in local bushland.

Some Australian native plants become 'naturalised' or take over in an area where they would not normally occur such as Cootamundra Wattle (*Acacia baileyana*), Bluebell Creeper (*Billardiera heterophylla*) and Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*).

Of concern to some conservationists and indigenous plant enthusiasts is the possibility that some introductions may interbreed with local or indigenous plants, thus impacting on the local gene pool.

Most invasive plants are imported or introduced plants. One needs to be informed about these plant species which are the basis of the 'Grow Me Instead' program. However, it is fact that there are a far greater number of well behaved, imported garden plants that are not invasive.

Working on the known statistic that 27,000 plants have been imported into Australia and some 2,700 of these are listed as environmental weeds, it is estimated that approximately 10% of the imported plants in our gardens are invasive.

In modern horticulture, plants are bred, developed or selected for desirable traits such as hardiness, drought tolerance, long flowering season, larger flowers or fruits, their disease resistance and general appeal.

Of primary importance in selecting plant material for your garden is sourcing accurate information about the plant. We suggest that you ask for advice at your local nursery or garden centre.

Consult your local council or shire weeds officer if still in doubt!

Australian native plants have greater appeal today than in the past; they generally grow better because of the improvements made in their selection.

Indigenous species should be grown from seed sourced locally to be of best benefit in your locality.

Australian gardens today have become an eclectic mix of both native and imported plants, and can be complimentary to one another. Choosing one or the other is not the question; ultimately it is the gardeners choice!

Any plant should be acceptable to the Australian gardener so long as it is non-invasive and does not require copious amounts of water, fertilisers and other chemicals to survive.

Gardeners' Notes and Checklists

Use this page to make notes, plant lists or questions to ask gardening experts.

Using herbicides

Many of the weed control techniques suggested on this and the following pages involve the use of herbicides. Herbicides are poisons, and should be handled with the greatest respect. They can be absorbed very easily through the skin, by breathing the vapours, and by ingestion (eating or drinking).

By law, herbicides must be used strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's label. They should be kept well out of the reach of children, preferably secured in a locked cabinet. They should always be stored in the original labelled container.

USE OF HERBICIDE: SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Read the label before opening the container and follow the instructions.
- Wear protective clothing: long sleeves, long pants, sturdy shoes, gloves, eye protection.
- Always wear waterproof gloves. A respirator is advised when mixing or pouring the liquid.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while using herbicide. Keep children and pets away.
- Wash skin and equipment afterwards. Wash contaminated clothing separately.
- Clean up any spills with large amounts of water; shovel up contaminated soil, dispose of it at the tip.

Bushcare Officers take no risks

Types of herbicide

There are two widely used herbicides licensed for use at home: Glyphosate, sold under various trade names, including Roundup® and Zero® (which have different concentrations), and Triclopyr, sold as Tree, Blackberry and Woody Weed Killer (etc.).

How herbicides work

Glyphosate is a systemic, non-selective herbicide. It inhibits the action of an enzyme, preventing the production of an amino acid essential to plant life and growth. It must be applied to green leaves, or directly to the plant's sapwood, which lies under the bark.

Triclopyr is a selective systemic herbicide for woody and broadleaf plants. It is a growth inhibitor which moves to the plant's roots, stops growth, and eventually leads to the death of the plant. Triclopyr can be applied to green leaves and to bark.

Herbicides, waterways and steep land

Some of the chemicals which are added to herbicides are not safe to use near waterways. They have the potential to seriously affect the quality of aquatic ecosystems. If you need to remove weeds, particularly trees, within 20 m of any kind of watercourse, even a drain that runs only when it is raining, you should seek advice and assistance from your local council's environmental management department.

Control of woody weeds

CUT AND PAINT

Suitable for small to medium sized woody shrubs up to 10 cm in diameter (or larger if using a chain saw). See below for trees.

- Clear around the base of the plant.
- Cut the stem horizontally as close to the ground as possible, using secateurs, loppers, or a saw. Make sure there is no soil on the cut.
- Apply herbicide to the cut stem immediately. Squeeze, not squirt if using an applicator.
- Ensure there is no runoff of poison.
- Use as little herbicide as possible.

Clear ground and cut low: loppers & secateurs give the cleanest cut.

Apply the herbicide within seconds of cutting.

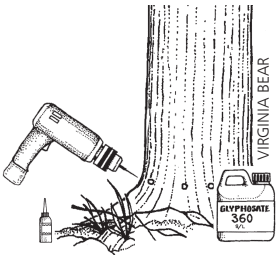
TIPS

- Make cuts horizontal to prevent herbicide from running off the stump. Sharp angled cuts are hazardous.
- Apply herbicide immediately after cutting - within a few seconds, before plant cells close and translocation of herbicide ceases.
- If plants resprout, cut and paint the shoots after sufficient regrowth has occurred.
- Stem scraping can be very effective on certain woody weeds, e.g. Japanese Honeysuckle, Blackberry, vines and rhizomatous plants.

STEM INJECTION

A method for weedy trees and large shrubs

- Use a cordless drill (9 mm bit), hammer and chisel, or brace and bit.
- Below any branches, drill or chisel holes round the base of the tree, into the sapwood, angled down at 45°, and at 5 cm intervals.
- Make the holes about 40 mm deep.
- Within a few seconds of drilling each hole, fill it with herbicide.
- Use this method only when falling branches, as the tree dies, will not be a safety hazard.



HAND REMOVAL OF WEEDS

Suitable for seedlings, herbaceous weeds, many grass species.

- Before starting work, remove and bag seeds and fruit, and place in bin.
- If the weed has a tap root, push a narrow trowel or long knife deep into the ground beside the root. Loosen the soil. Work round the root and then work the plant out gently.
- Many plants which will not regrow from their roots (e.g. many grasses) can be crowned: see diagram to the right. Hold leaves and stems together, and use a knife to cut through all the roots below the 'crown'.

crowning

- Plants with bulbs, corms or tubers (e.g. Watsonia) may need deep digging to ensure complete removal. Bag bulbs, corms and tubers and send to the tip; do not compost.

STEM & LEAF WIPING

This method is suitable for plants with bulbs, tubers, corms or rhizomes, e.g. Watsonia.

- Remove and bag any seed or fruit.
- Using a weed wiper, start at the base and wipe all the stems and/or leaves with a dilute mix of herbicide.
- If leaves have soil on them, wipers must be regularly washed out.

leaf wiping

Take great care when wiping: do not allow the herbicide to touch your skin or to run off into the soil, or to get on a non-target plant.

There are many control methods which are specific to certain weeds – e.g. large infestations where spraying, or covering to exclude light may be options. Contact your local nursery for up to date techniques.

WHEN TO TREAT WITH HERBICIDE

- Apply herbicide when the plant is actively growing.
- Do not apply herbicide when the plant is under stress: extreme heat or cold, drought, waterlogging, or disease.
- Choose early morning or late afternoon in summer.
- Do not apply when wet or windy weather is anticipated.
- For many plants, especially bulbous plants and those which sucker, the best time is from summer to autumn.
- Treat deciduous plants in late spring or summer, when in full leaf.

Control of ground covers, vines & scramblers

SCRAPE AND PAINT

This method is suitable for vines and scramblers with woody stems.

- Using a knife, and starting from the base, scrape 20 to 100 cm of leafy stem to expose the sapwood below the bark.
- Within seconds, apply herbicide to the scraped area.

scrape and paint

TIPS

- Do not ringbark the stem: scrape about one third of the diameter.
- Stems larger than 1 cm in diameter can be scraped on both sides.
- Vine curtains can be cut at chest level, then again at about 30 cm. Scrape or cut and paint these stumps.
- Blackberry can be cut back to 1 m if there are plenty of leaves; then scrape and paint the cut stems.
- Pulling vines (especially twiners) out of trees and shrubs may do a lot of damage. They can be left hanging to die.

By Law

Herbicides must be used according to the label, or according to Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) permits. If the plant on which you wish to use the herbicide is not named on the label, contact APVMA for permit information (www.apvma.gov.au).

THE DIG OPTION

On previous pages you will find advice on using herbicides to control weedy plants: often this causes minimal disturbance and less germination of seedlings.

However, if you have the energy and want to minimise herbicide use, you can often take the dig option, making absolutely sure that you remove all the parts of the plant from which it can regrow.

TIPS

- Seedlings and small plants may be pulled by hand when the soil is moist.
- Try to stager weed removal. Large areas of exposed soil are an open invitation to weed invasion and erosion, carrying weed seed into the bush.
- Mulch bare soil, and stabilise it by planting bush-friendly plants into it as soon as possible.

Darwin

African Tulip Tree

Spathodea campanulata

A tall tree to 20 m grown widely in tropical and sub-tropical areas for its spectacular flowers. When mature the trunk develops characteristic buttresses. The attractive buds open to reveal brilliant flame-scarlet cup-shaped blooms. Unfortunately this tree has 'escaped' from gardens in Northern Australia and has naturalised.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

HOW I T SPREADS

- A very invasive plant that is susceptible to dieback. In the tropics the seeds germinate readily and it can sucker easily from damaged roots.
- The large amounts of nectar produced in the flowers is very attractive to birds and increases potential spread.
- The woody fruit of the African Tulip Tree is poisonous.

Firewheel Tree, Wheel of Fire, White Oak

Stenocarpus sinuatus

A spectacular Australian rainforest tree that grows naturally to 30 m but in gardens it usually doesn't exceed 10 m high by 2 m wide. It is very impressive in flower when the bright red, whorled flowers cover the canopy during summer. It also has very attractive, large, lobed glossy green leaves which have a tinge of maroon when juvenile. Grows in a range of soils and conditions including dry periods.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Cordia, Tou, Kou

Cordia subcordata

A tree native to Asia, North Australia and the Pacific Islands (Pantropic). Grown for both its flowers and attractive foliage. In tropical gardens it will quickly grow to 10 m. The showy orange tubular flowers grow to 5 cm in diameter and are borne in clusters. It also has attractive large evergreen leaves. This tree will tolerate a wide range of growing conditions and soil types.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Swamp Bloodwood

Corymbia ptychocarpa

Occurring naturally in the Top End this is a member of the Mytraceae family that includes the gum trees. Medium sized (6 – 15 m high) tree with very long leaves and spectacular flower displays in the wet season preceded by attractive flower buds. Many clusters of flowers in white, pink or red are colourful and particularly attractive to local birdlife. Flowers are followed by large urn-shaped seed pods or gum-nuts. A good local alternative.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Clustered Fishtail Palm

Caryota mitis

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A widely grown palm in tropical and subtropical regions, it forms closely clustered stems and crowns and may reach 5 m or more in height. Easily distinguished by its fishtail-like leaflets. It is long-lived and capable of flowering on each stem which, when it dies, is replaced by new suckers from the base. Its fruits should be handled carefully as they contain stinging acid crystals which are extremely irritating and very dangerous to children. Not recommended for urban or school plantings.

HOW I T SPREADS

- *Caryoya mitis* is a prolific producer of fruit which is spread by birds into surrounding gardens and bushland. It also readily germinates in wet areas and has few natural predators. An environmental weed in the making.

Sour Palm

Hydriastele wendlandiana

Photo: Tim West

An attractive feather-leaved, clumping palm that may eventually reach a height of up to 15 m. Its habit is very slender usually with one major trunk ranging between 6 and 10 cm in diameter, one or two lesser trunks and basal suckers but these are never troublesome. It produces flowers from the trunks and these are followed by attractive bright red fruits. It is endemic to coastal and near-coastal areas of northern NT and north-east Qld from Cape York to south of Tully. A very ornamental species well suited to tropical garden culture. Durable indoor or patio palm.

Redneck, Triangle, Golden Cane

Dypsis spp.

Originating from Madagascar, where many of this Genus (*Dypsis*) are endangered in the wild, these beautiful medium-sized, solitary and clumping feather palms are widely cultivated around the World. Many are available in Darwin garden centres and are well adapted to our climate. They have not shown any weedy tendencies as they do not seed well in the Top End and their seed is predated upon by native insects and rodents.

Photo: Just Big Canes

Bentham's Fan Palm

Livistona benthamii

Occurring naturally in monsoon forest areas and creeklines of the Top End, this highly ornamental palm is best suited to tropical regions although it can also be successfully grown in the warm regions of the subtropics. It is a tall, fan-leaved palm with a crown of bright, shiny green, deeply divided and prominently folded leaves that have a thin texture. It prefers protection from full-sun during its early years and needs to be kept well watered during dry periods. It also makes an excellent container specimen for patios and verandas. It deserves to be more widely grown as it is indeed a showy specimen.

Photo: Tim West

Golden Rain Tree, Golden Shower Tree

Cassia fistula

A highly attractive ornamental tree that typifies the tropics in many respects. Known by a number of common names, including Indian Laburnum, it is native to south-east Asia and is a medium to large tree to 8 m that produces masses of bright golden flowers in clusters on almost every branch. Unfortunately it has become a major weed threat in many areas.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

HOW I T SPREADS

- Following its prolific flowering, this tree produces an abundance of fertile seeds carried in brown pods. These are readily spread beyond the garden fence by birds. Seeds germinate readily wherever they are dropped, making it highly invasive.

Yellow Flame Tree

Peltophorum pterocarpum

A coastal native species that is prominent throughout Asia (Pantropic). Frequently planted as a shade tree in urban landscapes as well as gardens. A large tree to 10–15 m or more with a slightly flattened top, it has dark green leaves and terminal, branched clusters of brilliant yellow flowers (August - January) that stand well clear of the foliage. These are followed by highly decorative coppery-bronze seed pods. Its bark is used to produce yellow-brown dye for batik in S.E. Asia.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Weeping Rosewood

Pterocarpus indicus 'Pendula'

Photo: Tim West

A weeping or pendulous form of the Indian Rosewood, this deciduous tree has a spreading habit especially if pruned occasionally. This beautiful ornamental tree produces glossy green pinnate leaves with up to nine leaflets on arching branches. The profuse, small, yellow pea-shaped flowers with crumpled petals generally cover the entire tree from October - December and make it an attractive addition to any tropical garden. As its common name suggests, its wood is highly fragrant and, when used in an infusion, is said to fluoresce. The bark yields a red dye and a sticky, oily gum. A very hardy tree well adapted to dry conditions.

Tuckeroo

Cupaniopsis anacardioides

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A very hardy native tree growing to a height of about 8 m by 5 m wide. It will perform well in even quite harsh conditions including poor soils, salt wind exposure, and air pollution. It has leathery leaves and produces small creamy-yellow to green-yellow flower clusters on the ends of branches, followed by orange-yellow berries each containing one black seed. It is an excellent tree for screening and street planting and is also a known host for at least eight species of native butterflies.

Mother-in-law's Tongue

Sansevieria trifasciata

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A clump-forming extremely hardy perennial succulent that grows to about 1 m high, its leaves are upright and strap-like, varying in width to about 9 cm and with a sharply pointed tip. Distinguished by stolons (underground stems), its leaves are usually deep green with grey, light green or yellow bands and reddish, yellow or light green leaf margins. Its flowers are not highly significant but its berries are, especially to birds as they are a bright orange-red when ripe.

HOW I T SPREADS

- Considered highly invasive, it is spread by seed and stolons. A true garden escapee, it has become a weed in many parts of northern Australia.

Dwarf Pandanus, Pygmy Pandanus

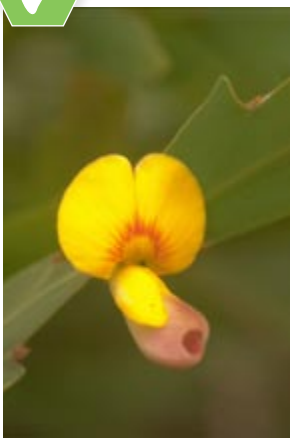
Pandanus pygmaeus

Photo: Tim West

A highly ornamental, dwarf form of Pandanus that generally grows to only about 0.5 m. It has attractive, long, narrow grass-like leaves edged with clear yellow. and will form a dense cover. It requires very little maintenance. Its one drawback is that the leaf edges have sharp prickles, so it should not be planted close to paths and walkways. To develop full foliage colouration, it should be planted in full-sun; in shady locations the leaves may revert to all green. It is easily propagated by lifting and dividing clumps.

Holly-leaved Pea Flower

Bossiaea bossiaeoides



An unusual plant endemic to northern areas of WA and parts of the NT. Its appearance is rather cactus or succulent-like in that it has no distinctive stems or leaves but rather flattened, leaf-like stems (called cladodes) from which bright yellow, pea flowers are produced. The common name is derived from the holly-like shape of these cladodes. Depending on growing conditions, it may vary in height from 0.5 to 2 m.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Yucca

Yucca spp.

An evergreen group of plants that are native to Northern and Central America. These extremely hardy plants are adaptable to most soils and positions and are drought resistant. Some species can attain a height of 4 m (Joshua Tree) but most are around 1.5–2 m. They provide a variety of leaf shapes and colours ranging form dark green to grey. The spectacular bell-shaped flowers are predominately white and are borne on erect terminal spikes. This Genus has become an increasingly popular landscape plant in the drought affected areas of Australia.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Poinciana, Flame Tree

Delonix regia

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Originally from Madagascar, this large, spreading tree is now commonly found throughout tropical Australia. It can grow as tall as 18–20 m and has smooth, grey bark and feathery, fern-like foliage which droop during the dry season. It flowers profusely, carrying showy red-orange blooms that appear around the same time as the new leaves. It produces long, leathery pods that split to reveal a number of seeds.

HOW IT SPREADS

- Free-seeding, this tree is highly invasive and has escaped into bushland in tropical and subtropical areas. Its seeds are attractive to birds and germinate readily wherever they fall.

Yellow Flame Tree

Peltophorum pterocarpum

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A coastal native species that is prominent throughout Asia (Pantropic). Frequently planted as a shade tree in urban landscapes as well as gardens. A large tree to 10–15 m or more with a slightly flattened top, it has dark green leaves and terminal, branched clusters of brilliant yellow flowers (August-January) that stand well clear of the foliage. These are followed by highly decorative coppery-bronze seed pods. Its bark is used to produce yellow-brown dye for batik in S.E. Asia.

Rain Tree

Samanea saman

Occurring naturally in tropical America, this popular shade tree may reach a height of approximately 24 m, making it unsuitable for small gardens. When mature, it forms a flat-topped crown with spreading branches so is ideal in a larger garden where shade is required. Freely flowering, its blooms are masses of pink stamens followed by dark brown seed pods. An intriguing attribute is that its leaves fold up at night or when it rains. There is also a gold-leafed form which is highly attractive.

Photo: Tim West

Indian Beech

Millettia pinnata (Syn. Pongamia pinnata)

A very hardy, fast-growing coastal native tree that is found naturally throughout Asia (Pantropic). The Pongamia is long-lived and thrives in wet and dry tropical areas and will even grow with its roots in saline water of river estuaries. In India it has been cultivated for over 3000 years as a useful source of lamp oil (biofuel) and a natural medicine. It produces terminal clusters of pink flowers that stand well clear of the broad, glossy green leaves. Useful as a shade tree, it may reach a height of about 15 m, with a similar spread and is suitable for small to medium-sized gardens.

Photo: Tim West

Yellow Oleander

Cascabela thevetia (Syn. Thevetia peruviana)

Photo: Colin Wilson

Closely related to the common Oleander and with a very similar growth habit, it may develop into a small tree in many gardens where conditions are favourable. Its leaves are similar to those of the Oleander and it flowers regularly, producing funnel-shaped yellow flowers. There are also other colour forms available. Flowers are followed by small green fruit. Both the fruit and the white, rubbery sap that is exuded when the bark is cut are extremely poisonous.

HOW IT SPREADS

- Seeds are generally slow to germinate but it has become invasive and threatens native vegetation. It is a declared weed in Qld where its sale is prohibited. Its toxicity is also a major concern.

Yellow Kapok, Kapok Bush

Cochlospermum fraseri

Photo: Colin Wilson

Native to tropical Northern Australia, the Yellow Kapok is a deciduous small tree, losing its leaves in the dry season. Growing to a height of about 6 m, it produces masses of large yellow, star-shaped flowers before the new leaves appear. Flowers are followed by oval-shaped green pods which, when mature and dried out, are filled with cotton- or kapok-like material, hence the common name. Occurring naturally in many areas of the NT, this tree is quite hardy and performs well under varying conditions.

Fern-leaved Grevillea

Grevillea pteridifolia

Photo: Colin Wilson

A widespread and adaptable species with a number of different forms, this grevillea is also the parent of several popular hybrids including *Grevillea* 'Sandra Gordon' and *Grevillea* 'Honey Gem'. Generally, the plant is considered a large shrub or small tree which has grey-green, divided foliage and large racemes of orange flowers borne in the late Dry season. The flowers are rich in nectar, an important food source for birds and animals, and will attract them into the garden. Its branches can be brittle and damaged in strong wind but overall it is a splendid garden plant.

Murraya, Orange Jessamine

Murraya paniculata

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

An attractive, hardy shrub that can grow to a height of about 3 m if not pruned. It is a pantropic species occurring naturally across Northern Australia. Its habit is globular with pale green leaves maturing to dark, glossy green. Its orange blossom-like flowers are white, sweetly perfumed and appear periodically, followed by orange to red berries. These are bird-attracting. An excellent garden plant that is very popular in Top End gardens.

Note: Avoid buying seed grown plants of *Murraya paniculata*

African Mahogany

Khaya senegalensis

Photo: Tim West

Hailing from central and west Africa, this tree has a smooth grey trunk. It is distinguished from the true mahogany (*Swietenia*) by the different shape of its leaves and its smaller globular fruit, which have a similar woody capsule but only 8 cm long and of a different shape. Its flowers, in clusters, are creamy yellow. It has been widely used in the tropics as a street tree and in Forestry. However, it is blown over by strong winds as it produces an enormous, heavy canopy making it quite dangerous in urban environments.

HOW IT SPREADS

- Evidence suggests that it has spread into bushland via seeds, which germinate readily in the Wet/Dry Tropics.

Tamarind

Tamarindus indica

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A slow-growing, long-lived tree that may reach 24 to 30 m when mature. The Tamarind has dark grey, rough bark and branches that tend to droop at the ends. Evergreen under normal conditions, it may lose some leaves briefly during extended hot, dry periods. Its yellow flowers, sometimes streaked with orange or red, are fairly inconspicuous. They are followed by bean-like, irregularly curved and bulging pods borne abundantly along new branches. They may be from 5 to 15 cm long. This tree is the source of tamarind pulp and paste, used for culinary purposes (curries, chutneys, etc).

Beauty Leaf

Calophyllum inophyllum

Photo: Tim West

A large, evergreen tree widely grown in tropical regions for its decorative leaves, fragrant flowers and spreading crown. Originally from east Africa and tropical Asia, it is a popular garden specimen for its low branching and slow growth. It will not take over but will provide useful shade as it matures to its eventual height of some 8 to 15 m. Its small, white flowers are dominated by brilliant yellow stamens and are produced twice a year. Its fruits are between 2 and 4 cm in diameter and ripen to an attractive deep orange/ reddish brown. They yield an oil useful for medicinal and cosmetic purposes.

Allosyncarpia

Allosyncarpia ternata

Photo: Tim West

A large, evergreen tree growing to some 30 m or so that is endemic to the Kakadu and Arnhem Land Plateau regions of the NT. It dominates the tree canopy in a wide variety of habitats, including rainforest on valley floors, open forest on cliffs, screes and sandy areas, and open woodland on ridges and hilltops. Its spreading habit and glossy foliage make it a most attractive specimen tree. It is widely used in street plantings in Darwin and environs. It has creamy-white flowers in clusters and is an ideal alternative to the African Mahogany.

Singapore Daisy

Sphagneticola trilobata

Photo: Colin Wilson

A mat-forming herbaceous perennial growing to a height of about 0.7 m and producing stems to 2 m or more in length. Its oval leaves are dark green on the upper surface and paler beneath with toothed margins. The plant is distinguished by spreading stems that root at nodes. Its yellow, daisy-like flowers are some 3.5 cm wide and it seeds freely. Singapore Daisy was introduced as a garden plant and has been extensively planted for road and rail embankment stabilisation in various northern regions of Australia. It is a serious competitor to native ground covers.

HOW IT SPREADS

- Singapore Daisy is highly invasive and is rapidly spread both by seed dissemination and by means of its spreading above-ground stems that form roots at every node.

Coastal Morning Glory, Goat's Foot Convolvulus

Ipomoea pes-caprae

Photo: Colin Wilson

A popular native creeping vine of the tropics that is one of the most common and most widely distributed of all salt tolerant plants. Its sprawling runners spread out from a woody rootstock and have sparse, heart-shaped to rounded leaves. Flowers are purple, 2–5 cm long and freely produced. It is hardy and thrives in harsh environments. A good local alternative.

Creeping Vitex

Vitex rotundifolia

A sprawling native prostrate shrub that will cover some 2 m or more in area under coastal/ harsh conditions. It may spread to a diameter of 4 m or so in a protected, well watered area. It has round, grey-green to silvery foliage, which also has a quite noticeable spicy fragrance. Its 2–3 cm orchid-like flowers are a rich blue-purple and produced in clusters at the tips of branches throughout the year and adapts well to garden planting.

Photo: Tim West

Dwarf Morning Glory

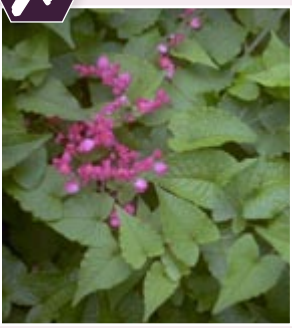
Evolvulus alsinoides
(Syn. Convolvulus alsinoides)

Native to Zimbabwe and other regions of east Africa, this ground-covering perennial may be somewhat trailing or it may develop into a small shrub up to about 0.2 m high. Its wiry stems, branches and calyces are covered in long silvery hairs. Flowers are a bright, clear blue with white centres and are carried singly along the stems. In the garden it will often reach a height of 40 cm especially when regularly watered and fertilised.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Coral Vine

Antigonon leptopus



A fast-growing, evergreen twining plant that thrives in warm, humid climates. It is capable of strangling the plants it uses for support and, if allowed to escape in bushland, will quickly overcome native flora. Its twining stems or tendrils have been known to reach up to 15 m in length. It has attractive heart-shaped leaves and clusters of pink flowers so it is easy to understand why it has been a popular garden plant.

Photo: Colin Wilson

HOW I T SPREADS

- Coral Vine produces underground tubers (known to be edible) which, when disposed of indiscriminately, will allow its rapid spread through bushland. It also seeds freely and will spread with the aid of birds.

Native Hoya

Hoya australis

An Australian climber that is an ideal alternative to Coral Vine in tropical and subtropical regions. Preferring a warm to hot and reasonably humid climate to perform at its best, its thick, almost succulent-like leaves and circular heads of small, star-shaped white to pale pink flowers are very appealing. Like most Hoyas, it is highly perfumed and produces abundant nectar that attracts pollinating insects and birds into the garden.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Bower of Beauty

Pandorea jasminoides

Three of the six species in the genus Pandorea are native to Australia, including *P. jasminoides* (Bower of Beauty). There are several named varieties of *P. jasminoides* commonly available in cultivation such as 'Alba' (pure white), 'Lady Di' (white with a creamy-yellow to orange throat) and 'Rosea Superba' (deep pink). Pandoreas are vigorous, hardy twining plants that flower predominantly in spring through to summer.

Photo: BotBln

Bush Yam

Ipomoea abrupta
(Syn. Convolvulus abrupta)

A native of the coastal regions of Northern Australia, Bush Yam is a woody climbing plant that can be quite vigorous in the garden where it receives adequate water and food. Its large, mauve-pink Morning Glory-like flowers, produced freely from November to March, are an important source of nectar for bees, butterflies, small birds, and small reptiles. A vine or two in the garden will ensure regular visitors!

Photo: Colin Wilson

Creeping Lantana

Lantana montevidensis (Syn. L. sellowiana)

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

An evergreen trailing shrub with dark green foliage that is roughly toothed. It produces dense clusters of small, rosy-mauve/lilac flowers, each with a bright yellow throat. Flowers are slightly fragrant and carried throughout the year. There is also a white form 'Alba'.

HOW I T SPREADS

- After flowering, berries are produced, which are particularly attractive to birds. Spread into bushland is predominantly by seed but indiscriminate dumping of prunings also contributes.

Canavalia, Beach Bean

Canavalia rosea

Photo: Colin Wilson

Widespread throughout the tropics, this creeping shoreline perennial is often used in dune stabilisation programs. Its leaves, which have a semi-succulent appearance, are three-lobed - the leaflets fold up in the hot sun. It has purple-pink pea-shaped flowers that are borne on upright stems throughout the summer months. Hardy and adaptable, it will grow and flower well in garden situations.

Mt Brockman Grevillea

Grevillea formosa

Occurring naturally in the Kakadu National Park area of the NT, this species and its varietal forms ('Golden Lyre' among them), are frost tender. It thrives in warmer, coastal locations and prefers a well-drained soil, although it does require regular watering until well established. 'Golden Lyre' is a spectacular golden-flowered form - there are very few true yellow grevilleas, so this is one to look out for. Like all grevilleas, *Grevillea formosa* and its hybrids are nectar-producing so will attract birds and butterflies to the garden.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Dwarf Allamanda, Dwarf Yellow Allamanda

Allamanda cathartica 'Sunee'

'Sunee' is a particularly handsome variety of Golden Trumpet, a vigorous climber with glossy bright green, leathery leaves. Unlike the true species, 'Sunee' is more shrub-like but will still climb if given the opportunity. It produces brilliant yellow, trumpet-shaped flowers up to 14 cm across throughout summer.

Photo: Tim West

Thunbergia, Blue Trumpet Vine, Sky Flower

Thunbergia grandiflora

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A fast-growing, vigorous evergreen creeper that may reach up to 15 m in height. It has been a popular garden plant for its drooping clusters of large, clear blue to deep violet trumpet-shaped flowers and its large, heart-shaped leaves. Some variants may have white flowers.

HOW IT SPREADS

- This plant sets viable seeds that germinate readily, especially when spread into bushland by birds.
- It is also capable of growing from root fragments and these are usually spread by indiscriminate disposal of plants by individuals.

Yellow Passionfruit

Passiflora edulis var. flavicarpa

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A vigorous, woody, climbing vine, the yellow passion fruit grows well in a wide range of soils, but does best on fertile well-drained types. The vines, which should be trained on a wire trellis or fence, produce flowers the second year after planting (seed) and set fruit continuously from June to November. The vines produce for many years, require little attention other than occasional pruning and fertilising, and are not affected by any serious diseases or insect pests. An attractive garden plant with the added benefit of edible fruits! Cultivars called Panama Gold Panama Red are available at local garden centres.

Garlic Vine

Pseudocalymma alliaceum

A reasonably large woody climber that may reach a height of 15 m or more when well supported. Its common name is derived from the garlic-like aroma emitted when the leaves are crushed. However, this should not be allowed to detract from this otherwise appealing plant. Its mauve flowers are also scented, but not strong enough to be offensive. This climber prefers to be grown over a supporting structure like a pergola, arch or fence.

Photo: Tim West

Orange Trumpet Vine, Flame Vine

Pyrostegia ignea (Syn. Pyrostegia venusta)

An evergreen, fast-growing climber that is well suited to the Top End. Its leaves are oval, mid-green and flowers are borne in profusions during late winter to early spring. Flowers are orange and tubular in shape and grow best in full-sun in fertile well-drained soil. This showy climber requires support.

Photo: Terry Inkson

Turnera, Morning Star

Turnera subulata

A perennial ground cover that may reach 0.3 m high by 0.6 m wide. It has strongly ridged, pointed leaves and dark-centred cream flowers that open in the very early morning and close up before noon, hence its common name.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Native Lasiandra

Melastoma malabathricum

This small, erect native shrub that may reach about 2.5 m high by 1.5 m wide. It is widely appreciated for its veined, velvety leaves and large purple flowers with yellow protruding stamens. Its appearance is not unlike that of the Tibouchinas and like them, it responds well to light pruning occasionally to promote growth and flowering.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Wickham's Wattle

Acacia wickhamii

A erect, low shrub to about 2.5 m in height which usually branches from or near its base. It produces oblong, typical wattle-type flowers of yellow to bright yellow or golden to orange-yellow. Its leaves are normally green to bright green but may on occasion become grey-green. It occurs naturally in the Kimberley region of WA and extends into the NT as far as Willaroo. Like most wattles, it is bird attracting.

Photo: Tim West

Bougainvillea 'Bambino'

Bougainvillea 'Bambino'

The 'Bambino' Bougainvilleas have been selected for their restricted growth and free-flowering characteristics. There are several named varieties in the collection and they range in colour from white through creamy-yellow to burnt orange, crimson, purple and cerise. Ideal for pots or in the garden, they will remain compact, reaching a mature height of no more than about 1.75 m. Like their larger relatives, they do have thorns but these are nowhere near as sharp. Bambinos respond well to pruning and will certainly add a splash of tropical colour to any garden.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Mango

Mangifera indica

The Mango is one of the oldest known cultivated fruits, having been found in Indian texts written some 4000 years ago. It is still in cultivation, although most commercial plantations are these days comprised of hybrids bred for their fruit quality. Mango grows into a large tree to 30 m and, when the fruits ripen, they are devoured by birds and animals (fruit bats, possums and gliders).

Photo: W.A. Djatmiko

HOW I T SPREADS

- Birds and animals distribute seeds randomly. It is a known host to pests and diseases which, if introduced into plantations/ orchards, could spread.

Green Plum

Buchanania obovata

Another native tree that bears fruits rich in vitamin C. It is a medium-sized tree with large, thick leathery leaves. After late winter to early spring flowering, bunches of green, grape-sized plums appear from October to December. They are said to be some of the best 'bush tucker' around. Green Plum will attract insects and fruit eating birds as well as butterflies and small mammals to the garden.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Kakadu Plum, Billygoat Plum

Terminalia ferdinandiana

Photo: Colin Wilson

Said to be the world's richest source of vitamin C, the Kakadu Plum is a well known provider of 'bush tucker'. It is a small to medium sized deciduous tree that has cream-grey, flaky bark and light green, very large, oval-shaped leaves. They are normally shed from July to August and are quickly replaced with new growth. Its flowers are small, creamy-white, perfumed, and borne towards the ends of the branches from September to December. They are followed by yellow-green, almond-sized fruits, which ripen from March onwards. These consist of a hard, woody seed covered by a layer of flesh - it is the flesh that is edible and very high in vitamin C. While they may be eaten raw, they are better suited to jam making.

Mimusops, Red Coondoo

Mimusops elengi

Photo: Tim West

A large spreading tree ranging in height from 2 to 16 m that is endemic to northern regions of Australia including the NT. It has a dark fissured trunk and medium-sized glossy green leaves. It produces white flowers from January to September, which later develop into edible, fleshy orange-red fruits. In the garden, it will develop into a large shade tree.

Metal Weed, Joy Weed, Alternanthera

Alternanthera dentata 'Rubra'

A frost tender plant grown for its dark reddish-purple foliage. Often planted as a low hedge or border. Its rich colour only fully develops in open, sunny positions. Often clipped or pruned to maintain its compact shape. It produces small flowers that are fairly insignificant - it is the foliage coloration that is its main attraction.

Photo: Colin Wilson

HOW I T SPREADS

- Alternantheras grow readily from cuttings so it is essential that prunings are disposed of thoughtfully. Stem sections thrown over the fence will form roots in no time!

Creeping Vitex

Vitex rotundifolia

A sprawling native prostrate shrub that will cover some 2 m or more in area under coastal/ harsh conditions. It may spread to a diameter of 4 m or so in a protected, well watered area. It has round, grey-green to silvery foliage, which also has a quite noticeable spicy fragrance. Its 2–3 cm orchid-like flowers are a rich blue-purple and produced in clusters at the tips of branches throughout the year and it adapts well to garden planting.

Photo: Tim West

Dryander's Grevillea

Grevillea dryandri

Spreading low woody shrub that flowers from January to May, producing numerous long, brush-like red terminal flowers. Its foliage, like that of many grevilleas, is almost fern-like. As well as the more common red or pink forms, a white flowering variety is also available. This shrub will attract nectar and insectivorous birds, butterflies and nectar feeding small reptiles (lizards) into the garden.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Coastal Morning Glory, Goat's Foot Convolvulus

Ipomoea pes-caprae

A popular creeping vine of the tropics that is one of the most common and most widely distributed of all salt tolerant plants. Its sprawling runners spread out from a woody rootstock and have sparse, heart-shaped to rounded leaves. Flowers are purple, 2–5 cm long and freely produced. It is hardy and thrives in harsh environments.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Ardisia

Ardisia humilis

An erect shrub to 5 m tall often with red tinged branches. Its leaves are glossy dark green and borne on short reddish stems. Its flowers are white to pink and are followed by fleshy, globular (grape-like) fruits that are blackish red in colour. Commonly grown in Darwin gardens, it has now escaped and become naturalised in bushland in the Darwin region.

Photo: Colin Wilson

HOW I T SPREADS

- Seed is spread by birds who eat the fleshy fruits and expel the seeds elsewhere. Seeds germinate readily and seedlings are often found around the bases of intentionally planted specimens.

Pink Euodia

Melicope elleryana (Syn. Euodia elleryana)

An attractive small to medium sized tree that occurs naturally in New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and also widely distributed in Northern Australia. It commonly grows in moist rainforests close to streams. Its pink flowers, borne in dense clusters, are very pretty and will attract birds and insects to your garden. They are particularly attractive to butterflies. Reasonably fast-growing, it needs a well-drained soil and responds favourably to fertiliser and watering during dry periods.

Photo: Cheryl Robertson

Murraya, Orange Jessamine

Murraya paniculata

An attractive, hardy shrub that can grow to a height of about 3 m if not pruned. It is a pantropic species occurring naturally across Northern Australia. Its habit is globular with pale green leaves maturing to dark, glossy green. Its orange blossom-like flowers are white, sweetly perfumed and appear periodically, followed by orange to red berries. These are bird-attracting. An excellent garden plant that is very popular in Top End gardens.

Note: Avoid buying seed grown plants of *Murraya paniculata*

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Frangipani

Plumeria spp.

A small genus of 7–8 species native to the tropical and subtropical Americas. The genus consists of mainly deciduous trees. From Mexico and Central America, Frangipani has spread to all tropical areas of the world, especially Hawaii, where it grows so abundantly that many people think it is endemic to there. Frangipani varieties are widely available at garden centres in the Top End.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Curry Leaf

Murraya koenigii

This evergreen tree of some 4.5 m hailing from Asia it has been a popular garden specimen because it is the source of curry leaves used for culinary purposes. They are highly aromatic with a distinctive curry flavour. Its flowers are white to yellow (also fragrant), borne in heads on the tips of branches and followed by blue-black berries.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

HOW I T SPREADS

- Its berries provide food for birds, who then indiscriminately drop seeds, often in bushland.

Micromelum

Micromelum minutum

An appealing shrub varying in height to about 7 m that is capable of bearing flowers and berries at the same time. Its sweetly-perfumed, white flowers are carried in large clusters, and these are followed by masses of multicoloured berries in shades of lime-green, orange and red. The flowers and fruits attract birds and butterflies into the garden. A showy plant deserving of wider planting in tropical climates.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Native Ixora

Ixora timorensis (Syn. Ixora klanderiana)

This fairly common native shrub in the northern coastal regions of Australia is perhaps best known for its handsome flowers, which are produced in large, loose panicles at the terminals of the branches. Standing well clear of the foliage, the white flowers change to cream as they age. They are characterised by a strong, sweet perfume, which lingers heavily in the air in the early morning and evening.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Murraya, Orange Jessamine

Murraya paniculata

An attractive, hardy shrub that can grow to a height of about 3 m if not pruned. It is a pantropic species occurring naturally across Northern Australia. Its habit is globular with pale green leaves maturing to dark, glossy green. Its orange blossom-like flowers are white, sweetly perfumed and appear periodically, followed by orange to red berries. These are bird-attracting. An excellent garden plant that is very popular in Top End gardens.

Note: Avoid buying seed grown plants of *Murraya paniculata*

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Rangoon Creeper

Quisqualis indica

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A fast-growing, often rampant, creeper that is widely grown in tropical gardens. It has woody stems and soft, light green leaves. It is free-flowering, occasionally all year round, and carries drooping clusters of perfumed flowers that open white and change to pink or crimson as they age. Often, all three shades are present at the same time. It is showing a tendency to weediness, especially in neglected or abandoned gardens.

HOW I T SPREADS

- It has the potential to spread by means of suckers, which it produces freely, and prunings (cuttings) indiscriminately disposed of.

Bush Yam

Ipomoea abrupta
(Syn. Convolvulus abrupta)

Photo: Colin Wilson

A native of coastal regions of Northern Australia, Bush Yam is a woody climbing plant that can be quite vigorous in the garden where it receives adequate water and food. Its large, mauve-pink Morning Glory-like flowers, produced freely from November to March, are an important source of nectar for bees, butterflies, small birds, and small reptiles. A vine or two in the garden will ensure regular visitors!

Yellow Passionfruit

Passiflora edulis var. flavicarpa

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A vigorous, woody, climbing vine, the yellow passion fruit grows well in a wide range of soils, but does best on fertile well-drained types. The vines, which should be trained on a wire trellis or fence, produce flowers the second year after planting (seed) and set fruit continuously from June to November. The vines produce for many years, require little attention other than occasional pruning and fertilising, and are not affected by any serious diseases or insect pests. An attractive garden plant with the added benefit of edible fruits! Cultivars called Panama Gold and Panama Red are available at local garden centres.

Garlic Vine

Pseudocalymma alliaceum

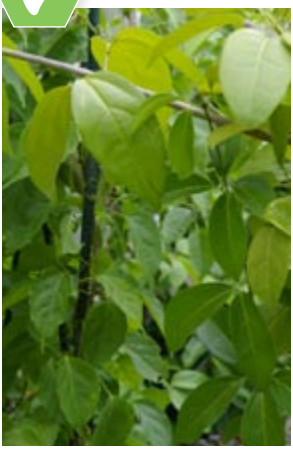


Photo: Tim West

A reasonably large woody climber that may reach a height of 15 m or more when well supported. Its common name is derived from the garlic-like aroma emitted when the leaves are crushed. However, this should not be allowed to detract from this otherwise appealing plant. Its mauve flowers are also scented by not strong enough to be offensive. This climber prefers to be grown over a supporting structure like a pergola or arch.

Yellow Sweet Potato

Ipomoea batatas

A fast-growing vine that grows readily in tropical and subtropical regions. It has clear golden-yellow, smooth, heart-shaped veined leaves that are quite appealing and its tubers are edible. However, its underground stems and tubers are a source of suckers and these will assist it to spread over quite large areas if not controlled.

Photo: Tim West

HOW I T SPREADS

- By tubers and underground stems as well as by cuttings - pieces broken off will form roots rapidly.

Coastal Morning Glory, Goat's Foot Convolvulus

Ipomoea pes-caprae

A popular creeping vine of the tropics that is one of the most common and most widely distributed of all salt tolerant plants. Its sprawling runners spread out from a woody rootstock and have sparse, heart-shaped to rounded leaves. Flowers are purple, 2–5 cm long and freely produced. It is hardy and thrives in harsh environments.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Canavalia Beach Bean

Canavalia rosea

Widespread throughout the tropics, this creeping shoreline perennial is often used in dune stabilisation programs. Its leaves, which have a semi-succulent appearance, are three-lobed - the leaflets fold up in the hot sun. It has purple-pink pea-shaped flowers that are borne on upright stems throughout the summer months. Hardy and adaptable, it will grow and flower well in garden situations.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Creeping Vitex

Vitex rotundifolia

A sprawling native prostrate shrub that will cover some 2 m or more in area under coastal/harsh conditions. It may spread to a diameter of 4 m or so in a protected, well watered area. It has round, grey-green to silvery foliage, which also has a quite noticeable spicy fragrance. Its 2–3 cm orchid-like flowers are a rich blue-purple and produced in clusters at the tips of branches throughout the year and adapts well to garden planting.

Photo: Tim West

Neem Tree

Azadirachta indica
(Syn. Melia azadirachta)

Photo: Colin Wilson

A large evergreen tree to some 30 m with perfumed cream flowers. Native to coastal areas of India, Burma and Sri Lanka, it is the source of Neem Oil, said to have insecticidal qualities. It is widely grown and has been planted as a street tree in Darwin. While it does not currently appear to be naturalising in Australia, it has the potential to do so.

HOW IT SPREADS

- It suckers freely if the roots are damaged or cut and also produces seeds.
- Prunings disposed of indiscriminately will generally form roots fairly quickly.

Ganophyllum, Scaly Ash

Ganophyllum falcatum

Photo: Tim West

This graceful, medium-sized, coastal shade tree to 10–25 m high has a dense spreading canopy and shiny dark green pinnate leaves. Numerous tiny greenish-white flowers appear on large panicles followed by smooth, ovoid, edible orange-red fleshy fruits from December through to February. It prefers ample moisture and is ideal for street and park plantings, larger blocks and rural properties. It is a noted indigenous calendar plant with flowering signalling the onset of the wet season. A pantropic species, it also has many indigenous uses in the tropical regions.

Milkwood

Alstonia actinophylla

An iconic, evergreen, native tree that is prominent in bushland around Darwin. It is moderately fast-growing and can reach 10–15 m in height. It has narrow leaves with an attractive corky bark and an open spreading crown. Its light green leaves are arranged in whorls from which long stalks of small cream-green, sweetly scented flowers are produced. This handsome, hardy, stable shade tree is ideal for street or avenue planting, parks, larger blocks and rural properties. It has several indigenous uses including medicinal.

Photo: Tim West

Mimusops, Red Coondoo

Mimusops elengi

A large spreading tree ranging in height from 2 to 16 m that is endemic to northern regions of Australia including the NT. It has a dark fissured trunk and medium-sized glossy green leaves. It produces white flowers from January to September, which later develop into edible, fleshy orange-red fruits. In the garden, it will develop into a large shade tree.

Photo: J.M.Garg

Alice Springs

Bombay Blackwood, Indian Rosewood

Dalbergia sissoo

Photo: Colin Wilson

This medium to large, fast-growing deciduous tree, grows to 30 m in height under favourable conditions, with a wide spreading and sparse crown. Its bark is grey, longitudinally furrowed and comes away in narrow strips. The tree develops a long taproot from an early age, and numerous lateral stabilising roots. Its small flowers are pale white to dull yellow in clusters and these are followed by pods containing kidney-shaped seeds. The pods hang on trees for several months before splitting to release the seeds.

HOW IT SPREADS

- Seeds are dispersed by wind and water and germinate fairly readily wherever they end up. Seedlings rarely occur under existing trees.

Chinese Elm

Ulmus parvifolia

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

A beautiful spreading tree to 21 m high by 9 m wide and is near evergreen in mild regions. It has a rounded crown, smooth flaking bark and fine sculptured branches in an almost weeping habit. There are many named varieties available, including 'Catlin', 'Frosty' (with whitish variegation on the leaves), 'Hansen', 'Pendens' (weeping branches) and 'True Green' (reliably evergreen in mild to warm climates).

Bean Tree, Batswing Coral Tree

Erythrina vespertilio

A small, straggly tree, 6–10 m high, with thorns on the trunk and branches, and it is semi deciduous during the dry season. The bark is creamy-grey, deeply furrowed and corky. It produces showy scarlet to orange-red pea flowers in loose clusters at the tips of branches throughout August to September. Its bean-like seeds are orange to dark yellow in colour and are borne in pods 6–12 cm long. It will grow in a wide range of soils provided drainage is good and it has plenty of sun.

Photo: Colin Wilson

White Wood

Atalaya hemiglauca

Ornamental greyish–green small shade tree growing to about 9 m that is well suited to Alice Springs' gardens. It produces white flowers in summer and readily self–seeds. It is frost sensitive when young so should be given some protection, but it does re–shoot freely if it does suffer damage.

Photo: K&C Benz

Pepper Tree

Schinus areira (Syn. Schinus molle var. areira)

Spreading, evergreen tree originally from South America widely planted in the early years of settlement as a shade tree. Semi-weeping in habit, it has willow-like leaves and small yellow-white flowers in spring that are followed by clusters of pea-sized pinkish-red berries. These are 'bird candy'.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

HOW I T SPREADS

- Seeds are highly delectable to birds and are dispersed by them. Seeds germinate freely and this tree has become a pest plant in many areas of Australia, along with the species form, *S. molle*.

Cooba

Acacia salicina

Fast–growing small tree with drooping branches that occurs naturally in the Alice Springs area. Its height will vary from 4 to 12 m depending on soil type and availability of water. It may sucker to form a copse but this is not problematic in the garden - suckers can be removed if not required. It produces pale yellow flowers after rainfall in the wild, but may be more free-flowering in a garden situation. It is frost tolerant.

Photo: NSW Coastcare

Ironwood

Acacia estrophiolata

A slow-growing, graceful, pendulous tree that may reach an eventual height of 16 m and a spread of 10 m. It is an ideal shade tree for the Alice Spring region. Like many Acacias, it has both juvenile and mature leaves that are distinctly different. Its young foliage is quite spiky. leaved. It produces pale yellow wattle flowers after winter rains in the wild but may be more free-flowering in garden situations. It is both frost tolerant and drought tolerant.

Photo: D. Greig, ANBG

Coral Gum

Eucalyptus torquata

A fast-growing, ornamental black–trunked shade tree with a mature height of between 6 and 10 m and a canopy spread of 5–8 m. It has typical gum tree blue–grey leaves and and produces pinkish–red flowers in summer. It can be frost tender when young so some protection should be provided in the first couple of years after planting. It is reasonably drought tolerant.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Cape Hop Bush, Kapok Bush

Aerva javanica

Photo: K&C Benz

This plant was originally introduced to assist with the revegetation of degraded soils in various parts of Australia, however it has since spread and naturalised across vast regions of northern Australia. The plant is an erect, multi-stemmed, soft-wooded, perennial herb to 1.6 m high. It has broad leaves that are densely covered in short, branched hairs, giving it a grayish appearance. Flowers and fruits for most of the year.

HOW I T SPREADS

- The plant is an alien introduction. The many seeds from this plant germinate easily.
- The Kapok bush is cultivated and utilised by the indigenous peoples.

Silky Eremophila

Eremophila nivea

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

An appealing soft, grey foliaged shrub that has a medium growth rate and may reach 2 m high by 0.5m wide when mature. It produces attractive lilac flowers throughout the spring and summer months and dislikes wet soils, so is best watered sparingly. It is frost tender so should be planted in a spot that receives protection in the colder months.

Silver Ball

Eremophila glabra

A pretty, compact and low-growing shrub to 1m by 1m wide. It has grey foliage and attractive red flowers. Its foliage colour forms an excellent contrast, especially when it is mass planted as a border along pathways with taller, green plants behind. It does best in full-sun to light shade positions and will tolerate frost and drought conditions.

Photo: Gary Dinham

Pearl Bluebush

Maireana sedifolia

Highly attractive, slow to medium growing small shrub that will do well in the garden or in a rockery. It may reach a height of a little over a metre when mature, but it will spread up to 2 m if allowed. Endemic to the Alice Springs area, it prefers dry conditions and care should be taken not to over-water it. It is frost tolerant. Although local in origin, it may be hard to obtain through garden centres.

Photo: Stan Shebs

Purple Verbena

Verbena rigida

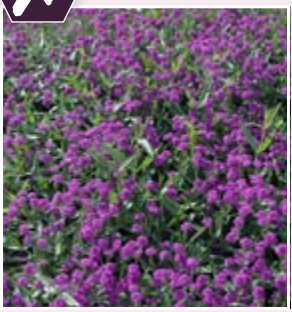


Photo: Robert Chin

A herbaceous perennial that is a troublesome garden escapee in many parts of Australia. Originating from South America, it is widely planted as it has attractive pale lilac to violet-blue flowers that appear for several months from mid-spring and is an effective ground cover. However, it has underground stems and rhizomes that persist even after bushfires and is capable of resprouting in a very short time.

HOW I T SPREADS

- It spreads by means of persistent rhizomes that will take hold readily if plants are disposed of indiscriminately.
- It will also seed freely and this may be carried by wind or wildlife into bushland.

Blue Periwinkle, Tropical Speedwell

Evolvulus alsinoides (Syn. E. decumbens)

Photo: Colin Wilson

A herbaceous perennial or sub-shrub, with erect or ascending branches to about 0.4 m that are typically hairy. It has blue to deep purple typical convolvulus-shaped flowers and is endemic to Alice Springs area. It prefers a well-drained soil and will tolerate dry periods but will perform better if watered regularly. To flower well it should be planted in full-sun. It is quite hardy in garden situations.

Ruby Salt bush

Enchylaena tomentosa var. tomentosa
Enchylaena tomentosa var. glabra

Very hardy and fast-growing grey leaved succulents that may reach a height of about 1 m but will spread to a diameter of 2 m or more. Plants readily self-seed in Alice Springs' gardens. Their yellow or red berries are edible. They are frost and drought tolerant.

Photo: Sustainable Landscapes Project

Native Dessert Petunia

Dipteracanthus australasicus

A well proportioned, rounded shrub to 0.6 m high by 0.3 m wide. It has very appealing large lilac-purple flowers that appear after rain in the wild. In gardens it is likely to be more free-flowering if water is available throughout the year. To keep plants neat and compact, prune lightly after flowering. It is frost tolerant and survives dry periods well.

Photo: Gary Dinham

Mother of Millions

Bryophyllum delagoense

A perennial herb that grows about 1 m high. Its leaves are succulent, notched near the tips and up to 15 cm in length. Its drooping, tubular flowers are orange-red to scarlet, produced in a flat-topped cluster and appear mainly from winter into spring. Its fruits contain many seeds.

Photo: Delwyn Thomas

HOW IT SPREADS

- Seeds are dispersed by birds. It may also spread by plantlets produced in notches on the margin of the cylindrical leaves. It is a common roadside escapee in northern NSW and Qld and has the potential to become weedy in Central Australia.

Broad Leaved Parakeelya

Calandrinia balonensis

An Australian member of the portulaca family, it is a prostrate to erect, succulent perennial herb. Its flowering stems, usually leafy towards the base, may be up to 0.6 m long, while the flowers are bright pink with yellow centres. To grow and flower well it requires a hot, sunny situation. It thrives in poor sandy soil but also does well in garden situations with improved soils. It is frost and drought tolerant.

Photo: Colin Wilson

Pigface

Carpobrotus glaucescens

A prostrate, creeping succulent occurring naturally in sand dunes along the NSW and Qld coasts. It has long trailing stems, which root at nodes along the stems. From these, upright leafy branches appear. It has thick, fleshy, smooth leaves, triangular in cross-section and it forms a ground cover that can extend over a large area. Its flowers are large, striking, deep pink-purple and daisy-like and appear from October to January, however it can also sporadically flower throughout the year. Pigface prefers a well-drained position in either full-sun or part-shade and is extremely drought tolerant.

Sustainable Landscapes Project

Prickly/Bristly Sea Heath

Frankenia serpyllifolia

An attractive, grey-leaved plant occurring naturally in Central Australia to 0.3 m by 0.4 m wide. It is an ideal rockery subject but also does well in the open garden. It produces masses of pink flowers throughout the year. Tolerant of frosts, it is quite hardy and also appears to flourish in quite salty soils.

Photo: Gary Dinham

White Cedar, Persian Lilac

Melia azedarach

Photo: Colin Wilson

A fast-growing tree that may reach a height of 9–10 m and spreading to a width of 8 m, it has pointed mid-green leaves and fragrant, lilac flowers in loose clusters in summer. These are followed by yellow, bead-like fruits that are poisonous to animals and young children, but not to birds, which feast on them. Although it has naturalised in many Asian countries, it has not done so in Australia and is still widely available from nurseries and garden centres. It has been promoted as a street tree in Darwin.

HOW I T SPREADS

- Seeds are disseminated by birds but there is no evidence it has become a pest in this country as yet.

Desert Bloodwood

Corymbia opaca
(Syn. Eucalyptus opaca)

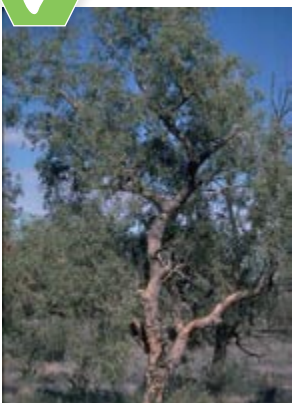
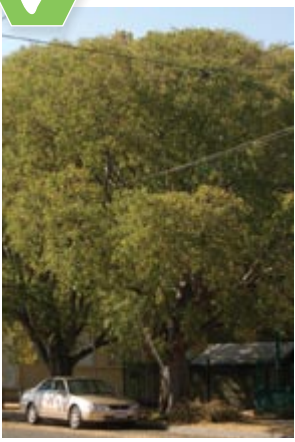


Photo: Gary Dinham

Slow to medium growing small tree to about 6 m that is endemic to the Alice Springs area. It is quite hardy, tolerating frost and drought conditions well. It bears clusters of pale yellow flowers in the cooler months. It does quite well in gardens and will attract native birds.

Nettle Tree

Celtis australis



Contrary to what its scientific name may imply, this tree is not native to Australia but rather to southern Europe. It is a deciduous tree with a smooth, grey trunk. Its leaves are toothed and hairy beneath, unlike those of the common nettle after which it is named. Its flowers are inconspicuous however are followed by bright orange to dark brown berries in summer, which are very attractive to birds. A good shade tree in summer and quite hardy.

Photo: Fleming's Nursery

Burdekin Plum

Pleiogynium timorense
(Syn. Pleiogynium solanderi)

Large and shapely tree to 20 m or more under good conditions, or a stunted shrub under harsh conditions. This close relative of the Mango is a native tropical rainforest tree. The deep purple fleshy plum-like fruits need to be held for some days to soften and mellow. The fruit can be eaten raw, or used in wines, jams and jellies. The burdekin plum is exceptionally hardy and can cope with long dry periods once established. It does however prefer free draining soil and lots of sunshine to perform well. The Burdekin Plum has a dark grey trunk and glossy, compound leaves.

Photo: www.wettropics.gov.au

Fountain Grass

Pennisetum setaceum

A tall perennial grass, forming tufts to 1 m high. Arching, thin, leathery leaves 20–30 cm long with prominent veins running lengthways. Flowers are small and occur in pink or purple, bristly, upright spikes at the ends of bamboo-like canes. Fruit are small and dry with long, showy bristles.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

HOW I T SPREADS

- Seeds are readily spread by humans, wind, animals and water. This species is commonly seen along roadsides, displace natives and increases fire risk.

Native Lemon Grass

Cymbopogon ambiguus

A fast-growing, highly ornamental grass with blue-grey leaves and fluffy silvery flowerheads. Clumps to 0.8 m high by 0.4 m wide. This grass has lemon-scented foliage and the fragrance is released when brushed against. Once established, it will self-seed but it is not invasive. It is frost tolerant and requires little additional water to thrive.

Photo: K&C Benz

Purple Plume Grass

Triraphis mollis

A slender, tufted grass that produces purplish flower spikes that fade to gold. It readily self-seeds in gardens and is hardy and frost tolerant. It will reach a height of 30–60 cm and cover an area of 20 cm. Its flower spikes are highly ornamental.

Photo: D. Greig - ANBG

Kangaroo Grass

Themeda triandra
(Syn. Themeda australis)

Occurring naturally in Central Australia, this appealing dense tussock grass has very distinctive pendulous green and golden–brown flowerheads. It may reach a height of between 0.6 and 1.3 m and clumps may cover an area of 40 cm when established. To encourage new growth and more prolific flowering, cut the grass down as the flower heads dry off.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

White Lantana

Lantana camara

Photo: Robert Chin

This plant is a weed of national significance as it has the potential to threaten heritage-listed parks across all regions of Australia. It is widely grown in gardens and is considered a major weed in many areas because of its ability to seed and regenerate in bushland. There are various coloured forms available with flowers from white through yellow to red. Species forms are invasive colonisers. There are sterile cultivars available that do not set viable seed but these can easily be confused with naturally occurring varieties. It is safest not to grow any form of this plant in the garden.

HOW IT SPREADS

- By seeds disseminated by birds who ingest the berry-like fruits.
- By indiscriminate dumping of plants and prunings.

Twiggy Emu Bush, Flowering Lignum

Eremophila polyclada

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

An appealing, sprawling, ornamental shrub that produces large white flowers in profusion over the hotter months. It is an excellent low screening plant, to 2.5 high by 1.5–3 m wide. While it is quite hardy and drought tolerant when established, it may suffer from frosts when young, so some protection in early years is advisable. When grown in poorly drained soils, it may develop some yellowing of the foliage. This can be overcome by improving drainage or planting into raised beds. Pruning will keep it shapely and compact.

Summertime Blue, Lipstick Bush

Eremophila maculata var. brevifolia

A medium to fast-growing attractive rounded shrub with grey-green leaves. In the garden it may reach a height of about 1.5 m and a spread of 1 m or more. It produces masses of crimson flowers in cooler months that will attract birds into the garden. Reasonably hardy and frost tolerant.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Callistemon 'Little John'

Callistemon 'Little John'

Ornamental low shrub of about 1 m and a similar spread with soft grey–green leaves and dark–red bottlebrush flowers in warmer months. It is reasonably fast-growing and responds well to regular light trimming after flowering to keep it compact and shapely. Like all bottlebrushes, it will attract nectar-feeding birds and small mammals into the garden.

Photo: Macbird Floraprint

Gardeners' Notes and Checklists

Use this page to make notes, plant lists or questions to ask gardening experts.

9) Further information and additional resources

There are many areas of information regarding invasive plants, it can become overwhelming! Here are some useful sources of information to help you learn more about invasive plants.

1. **Your local Nursery or Garden Centre -** Most employ trained nursery professionals or qualified horticulturists who are knowledgeable in regard to all aspects of plant selection.
2. **Your local council or shire -** Have information about plants considered invasive in your local area and some good indigenous alternatives.
3. **State Government -** Northern Territory Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport has useful information about invasive plants.
   Visit www.nt.gov.au/nreta/natres/weeds/index.html for more information.
4. **Australian Government -** Weeds in Australia Website. An excellent website with a good range of information, references, lists, databases and pictures and other resources.
   Visit www.weeds.gov.au for more information.
5. **Weeds Australia via the Australian Weeds Committee -** A national website resource created by the Australian Weeds Committee to promote access to key weed policies, regulations, current issues, national initiatives, research, extension, training and personnel. Visit www.weeds.org.au for more information.
6. **Nursery & Garden Industry Northern Territory (NGINT) -**
   PO Box 348
   PALMERSTON NT 0831
   Ph. +61 8 8983 3233 Fax. +61 8 8993 3244
   email: ngint@ntha.com.au
7. **Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) -** The Nursery & Garden Industry Australia is the national peak body for the nursery and garden industries in Australia. Their website provides useful information on invasive plants. Visit www.ngia.com.au and www.lifeisagarden.com.au for more information.

grow me instead

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia