

Growing locals for wildlife habitat

Planting ground covers, flowers, shrubs, climbers and small trees that naturally occur, or would have been likely to occur in your area, provides ideal habitat for local birds, frogs, insects and small mammals.



Image: Camouflage provided for a harmless tree snake



Local plants are adapted to local conditions and are more likely to survive and flourish. Many native plant species require little maintenance, they do not necessarily need fertilisers, many are drought tolerant, and they are also tolerant of the high rainfalls experienced on the Sunshine Coast.

Some species have variations in form according to where they grow (provenance). Using locally sourced seeds and propagation material helps to maintain the genetic diversity of these species.

Examples of plant species useful for creating habitat in your garden are provided in other Gardens for Wildlife notes. The Barung Native Plant Nursery in Maleny specialises in local native plants, so check out our latest plant lists.

The Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vine (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*) is a great example of a useful, local plant for your garden. The vine is the food species for the caterpillars of the endangered Richmond Birdwing Butterfly. Garden plantings of the vine can attract these beautiful creatures for you to admire and are making a significant contribution to the survival of the butterfly.

A decorative graphic of various green leaves, including a fern frond, is positioned in the top left corner of the page.

There is also a wide range of local plant species that have striking colour, bright flowers and attractive foliage, which can be used for creating or enhancing all garden styles.

A garden featuring native plants need not look messy or untidy. Native plants can look very attractive when planted with other species, or in pots or containers, on decks, courtyards or window boxes, and in plantings to achieve a particular garden style. Many native plants can be pruned to shape and many also respond well to a severe pruning after flowering. Seek inspiration from the local plants that are growing well and have proved reliable in friends' and neighbours' gardens.

Whatever the style of your garden, planting local plants can improve the habitat for local wildlife and make your garden look good too.



Image: Syzygium species provide nectar, perches and cover