

# Coastal gardens

## A planting guide



Government  
of South Australia



**Natural Resources**  
Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges

# Healthy and attractive coastal landscapes

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

*Coastal gardens – a planting guide* is part of a series of gardening guides produced by Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges and funded through the NRM levy.

The other guides are:

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

They are available from

**[www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges)**, natural resources centres and various nursery outlets.

# Using this planting guide

## Getting started

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

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

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

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

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

Cushion Fanflower  
*Scaevola crassifolia*



# Discovering local native plants


## What is a local native plant?

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

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

## Why use local native plants?

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



Common Boobiala  
*Myoporum insulare*

# How to use local native plants

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

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

To make it easy to choose which plants best suit your garden, the local native plant section (pages 8-17) includes icons highlighting the following attributes and uses:



**Attracts native birds**



**Attracts butterflies and/or native insects**



**Suitable for pots**

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

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



Austral Trefoil  
*Lotus australis*

# Garden escapes



## Are you harbouring known villains?

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

Environmental weeds are trouble! They:

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

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



**Declared plant in SA**



**Weed of National Significance**

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

Landowners and managers have a legal responsibility to control declared plants and WoNS. Weed species, including local requirements for control, vary between and within NRM regions. For information on these types of plants contact your regional natural resources centre.

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



# You can help!



## 'How do garden plants become coastal invaders?'

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

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

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

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

Here are some other easy things you can do:

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

Call Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges on **8273 9100** or go to [www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges) for information on how to get involved.

## Trees and tall shrubs



# Don't plant me



### Western Coastal Wattle *Acacia cyclops*

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



### Century Plant *Agave americana*

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



### Coast Tea-tree *Leptospermum laevigatum*

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



### Mirror-bush *Coprosma repens*

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



### White Weeping Broom *Retama raetam*

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



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

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



### Olive *Olea europaea*

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



### Gorse *Ulex europaeus*

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



# Grow me instead



## **Drooping Sheoak** *Allocasuarina verticillata*

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



## **Common Boobialla** *Myoporum insulare*

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



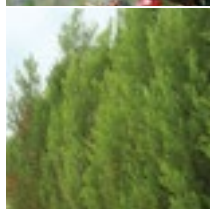
## **Mallee Box** *Eucalyptus porosa*

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



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

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



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

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



## **Silver Banksia** *Banksia marginata*

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



## Medium shrubs



# Don't plant me



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

(Canary Islands)  
Flowers: spring  
Reproduces: seed



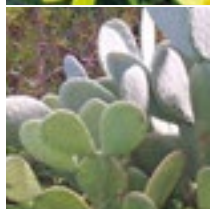
**Myrtle-leaf Milkwort** *Polygala myrtifolia*

(South Africa)  
Flowers: spring  
Reproduces: seed



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

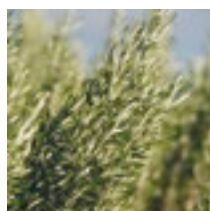
(South Africa)  
Flowers: late autumn to winter  
Reproduces: fleshy fruit (seed)



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

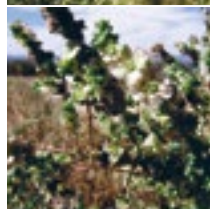
(Tropical and sub-tropical dry regions)  
Flowers: various  
Reproduces: mostly vegetative growth, some set seed

# Grow me instead



## Coast Daisy Bush *Olearia axillaris*

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



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

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



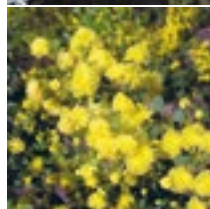
## Lavender Grevillea *Grevillea lavandulacea*

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



## Cushion Fanflower *Scaevola crassifolia*

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



## Round-leaf Wattle *Acacia acinacea*

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



Groundcovers, herbs  
and small shrubs

# Don't plant me



## Beach Daisy *Arctotheca populifolia*

(South Africa)

Flowers: winter to summer

Reproduces: seed



## Gazania *Gazania* spp.

(South Africa)

Flowers: most of year, mainly spring to autumn

Reproduces: seed, vegetatively



## Hottentot Fig / Sea Fig

*Carpobrotus edulis* / *C. aequilaterus* / *C. chilensis*

(South Africa)

Flowers: late summer to winter

Reproduces: fleshy fruit in summer, vegetatively



## White Arctotis *Arctotis stoechadifolia*

(South Africa)

Flowers: spring to summer

Reproduces: seed

# Grow me instead



## Austral Trefoil *Lotus australis*

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



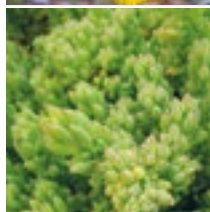
## Native Bluebell *Wahlenbergia* spp.

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



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

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



## Coast Bonefruit *Threlkeldia diffusa*

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



## Creeping Boobialla *Myoporum parvifolium*

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



## Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs

# Grow me instead



### Muntries *Kunzea pomifera*

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



### Cushion Bush *Leucophyta brownii*

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



### Native Pelargonium *Pelargonium australe*

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



### Native Fuchsia *Correa reflexa*

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



### Native Pigface *Carpobrotus rossii*

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





# Grow me instead



## Woolly New Holland Daisy *Vittadinia gracilis*



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



## Round-leaf Pigface *Disphyma crassifolium*

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



## Ruby Saltbush *Enchylaena tomentosa*



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



## Running Postman *Kennedia prostrata*



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



# Don't plant me



## Couch Grass *Cynodon dactylon*

(tropics world-wide)

Flowers: late spring to early summer

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



## Fountain Grass

*Pennisetum setaceum*

(East Africa and Middle East)

Flowers: summer to autumn

Reproduces: seed



## Kikuyu

*Pennisetum clandestinum*

(East Asia)

Flowers: summer to autumn

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



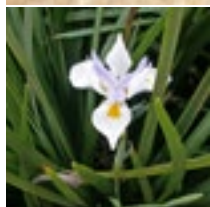
## African Feathergrass / African Lovegrass

*Pennisetum macrorum*, *Eragrostis curvula*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to autumn

Reproduces: seed, vegetatively (rhizomes)



## Wild Iris / African Iris

*Dietes* spp.

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to early summer

Reproduces: seed pods

# Grow me instead



## Coast Spear-grass *Austrostipa* spp.



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



## Wallaby Grass *Austrodanthonia* spp.



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



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



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



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



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



## Flat-sedge *Cyperus vaginatus*



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



## Sword Sedge *Lepidosperma gladiatum*



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



## Coast Tussock-grass *Poa poiformis*



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

## Climbers



# Don't plant me

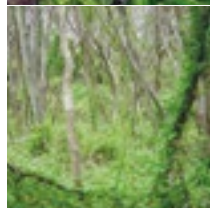


### **Bridal Creeper** *Asparagus asparagoides*

(South Africa)

Flowers: spring

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



### **Lavatory Creeper** *Dipogon lignosus*

(South Africa)

Flowers: spring

Reproduces: seed pods in summer, also spreads by underground root system (rhizomes)



### **Bridal Veil** *Asparagus declinatus*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: winter

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



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

(Western Australia)

Flowers: spring and summer

Reproduces: seed



### **Asparagus Fern**

*Asparagus scandens*

(Southern Africa)

Flowers: spring to winter

Reproduces: berries spread by birds, also spreading underground root system (rhizomes)



### **Blue Morning Glory** *Ipomoea indica*

(Tropics world-wide)

Flowers: most of the year

Reproduces: seed, vegetatively

# Grow me instead



## Coastal Lignum

*Muehlenbeckia gunnii*

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



## Climbing Saltbush

*Einadia nutans*

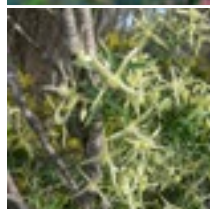
Climber or groundcover. Herbaceous or woody stems spreading to 1m diameter. Small pointed fleshy leaves. Tiny yellow flowers and attractive bright red or yellow fruit, most of the year. Uses: groundcover, creeper, hanging baskets. Moist, well-drained soil. Can plant in pots.



## Native Lilac

*Hardenbergia violacea*

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



## Old Man's Beard

*Clematis decipiens (formerly C. microphylla)*

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



## Sweet Apple-berry

*Billardiera cymosa*

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

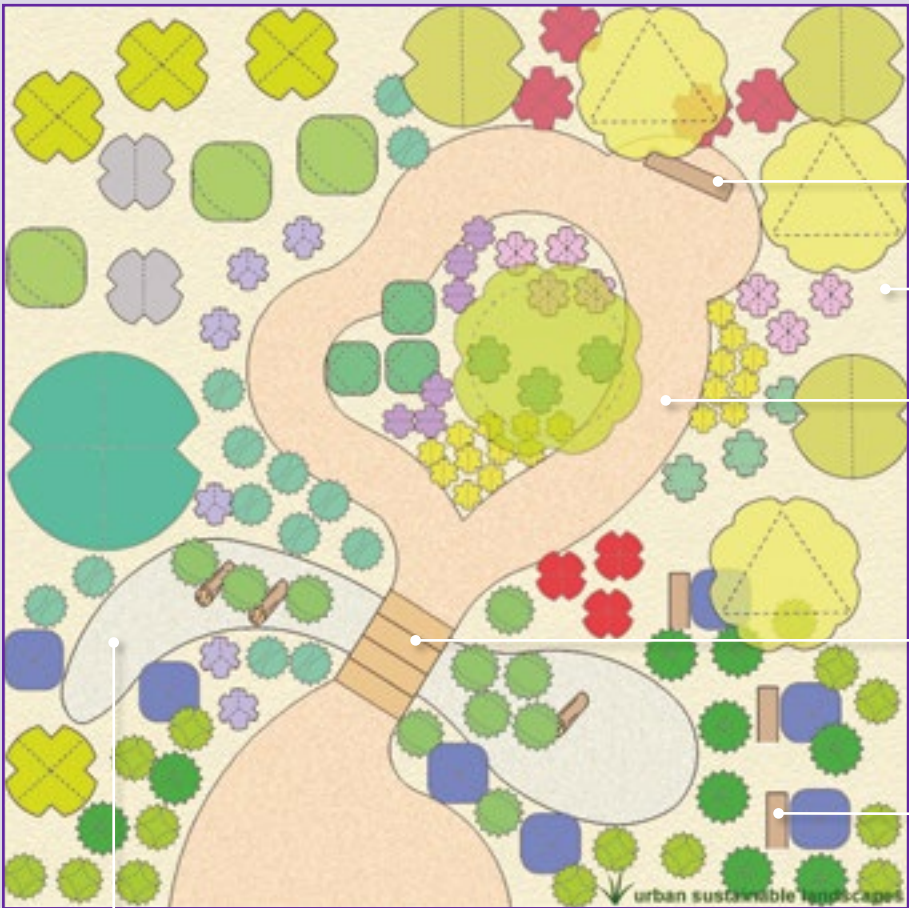




# Natural cottage

A natural cottage garden is easy to achieve with local coastal plants as many species flower in winter, providing a colourful garden year-round. These gardens are relaxed and flowing, and are a wonderful place for local wildlife. To achieve a natural cottage garden,





















mimic the flow and mix of plant species in natural coastal areas. Allow plants to cascade over paths and lace through one another. Utilise weaving paths and rustic furniture. Add bird-baths, hollow logs, and nesting boxes to attract and support local wildlife.



Swale with 14mm quartzite gravel and habitat logs

0 1 2 3 4 5m



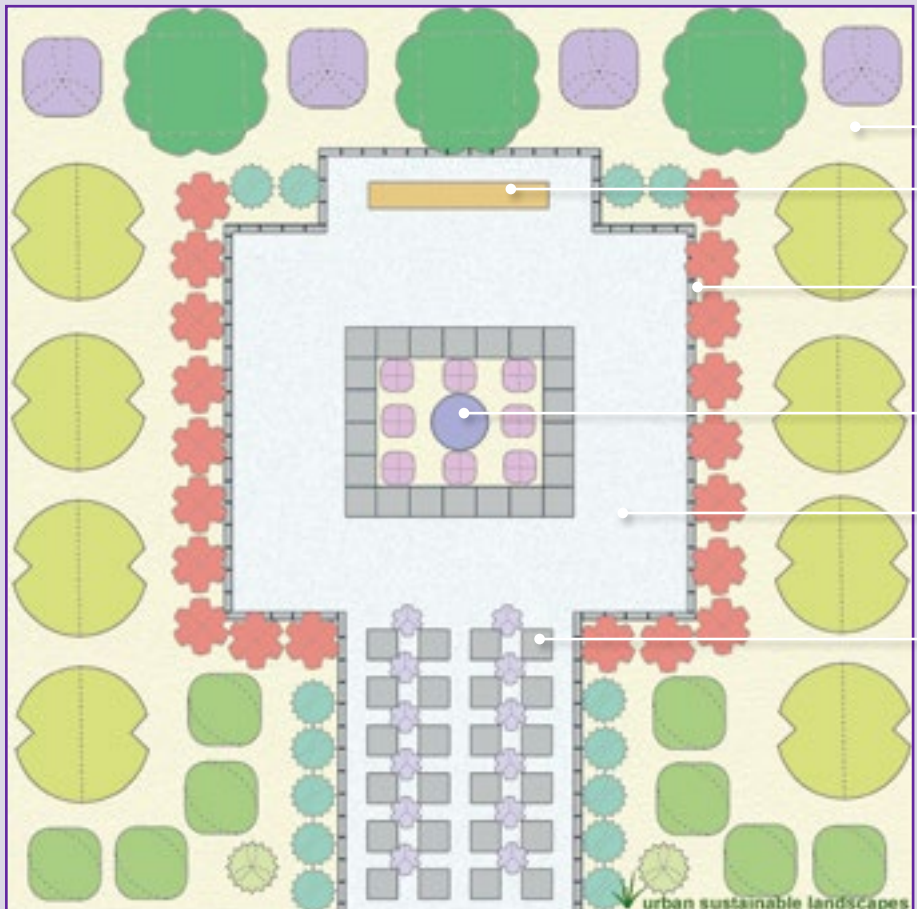
	<p><b>Trees and tall shrubs</b></p> <div>     </div> <div> <p>Mallee Box</p> <p>Common Boobialla</p> <p>Sticky Hop-bush</p> <p>Silver Banksia</p> </div>
Bench	
Mulch	<p><b>Medium shrubs</b></p> <div>   </div> <div> <p>Coast Daisy-bush</p> <p>Lavender Grevillia</p> </div>
White wash sustainable pebble	
	<p><b>Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs</b></p> <div>      </div> <div> <p>Cushion Bush</p> <p>Native Fuchsia</p> <p>Austral Trefoil</p> <p>Native Pelargonium</p> <p>Common Everlasting</p> </div>
Flat sleepers set in gravel to give boardwalk appearance	<div>     </div> <div> <p>Ruby Saltbush</p> <p>Muntries</p> <p>Woolly New Holland Daisy</p> <p>Native Bluebell</p> </div>
	<p><b>Grasses and sedges</b></p> <div>     </div> <div> <p>Wallaby Grass</p> <p>Short-stem Flax-lily</p> <p>Coast Spear-grass</p> <p>Knobby Club-rush</p> </div>
Recycled hardwood timber post, upright 2m high	<p><b>Climbers</b></p> <div>  </div> <div> <p>Native Lilac</p> </div>

## Garden design

# Formal

A number of local coastal plants can be grown into clipped hedges or shapes to form the basis of the formal garden. Sedges and grasses can be used in mass plantings and accent borders. Use local climbers or trailing plants in a feature urn, terrace or retaining

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



0 1 2 3 4 5m

Mulch

Bench

110mm x 220mm linear  
paver divider

Birdbath feature

14mm dolomite gravel

500mm x 500mm  
charcoal pavers

### Trees and tall shrubs



Southern  
Cypress-pine



Sticky  
Hop-bush

### Medium shrubs



Cushion  
Fanflower

### Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Ruby  
Saltbush



Native  
Fuchsia



Native  
Pelargonium



Native  
Pigface

### Grasses and sedges



Sword Sedge



Short-stem Flax-lily

## Garden design

# Japanese style

Local coastal plants are well suited to the minimalist style and reflective feeling of Japanese gardens. Aim to create a garden that mimics the natural balance and flow of nature. Clumps of local grasses can be used to compliment raked gravel areas.

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



Mulch

Recycled wooden  
bench

110mm x 220mm  
linear paver divider

Feature sculpture

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

14mm quartzite  
gravel

Table and chairs

400mm x 400mm  
charcoal pavers

Trees and tall shrubs



Drooping  
Sheoak

Medium shrubs



Round-leaf  
Wattle

Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Native  
Pelargonium



Cushion  
Bush



Muntries



Round-leaf  
Pigface



Creeping  
Boobialla

Grasses and sedges



Flat  
Sedge



Knobby  
Club-rush



Short-stem  
Flax-lily



Sword  
Sedge



Coast  
Tussock-grass

Climbers



Sweet  
Apple-berry

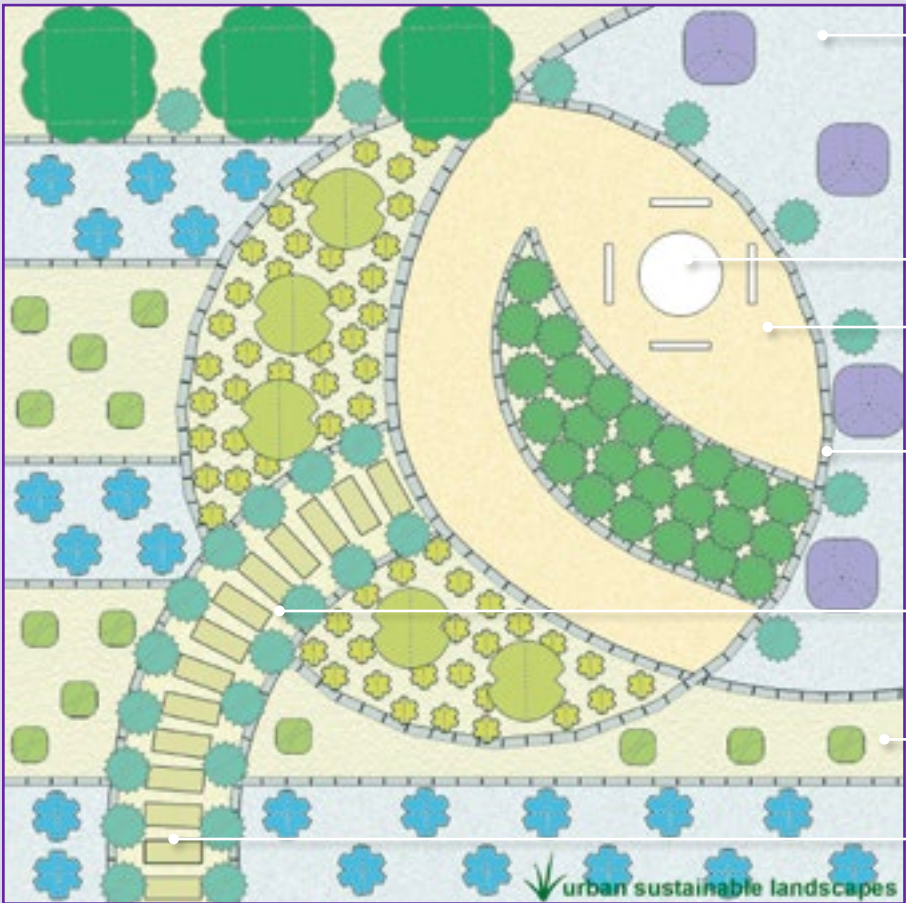


Native  
Lilac

# Contemporary

Contemporary gardens feature bold modern designs, with an emphasis on contrasts of colour, texture and form. Many local coastal plants offer excellent colour and texture for these bold designs. To develop your own contemporary garden, create interesting

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



0 1 2 3 4 5m



Dolomite gravel

Table and chairs

White wash  
sustainable pebble

110mm x 220mm  
linear paver divider

14mm quartzite gravel

Mulch

800mm x 300mm paver  
stepping stones

Trees and tall shrubs



Southern  
Cypress-pine



Sticky  
Hop-bush

Medium shrubs



Cushion  
Fanflower



Small-leaved  
Bluebush

Groundcovers, herbs and small shrubs



Common  
Everlasting



Round-leaf  
Pigface

Grasses and sedges



Short-stem  
Flax-lily



Knobby  
Club-rush

# Growing and maintaining local coastal plants

## When to plant

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

## Watering

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

Your aim is to establish strong, deep root systems which are robust and can survive during periods of low rainfall and minimal watering. However, take care as over-watering leaches nutrients from the soil, creates excessive growth, and results in less flowering and shorter-lived plants.

## Mulch and gravels

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

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

## Fertilising

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

## Pruning

Pruning is beneficial for many local plants. Most species will appreciate a light trim to keep their shape, promote new growth and encourage flowering. Pruning is best done after flowering, usually late spring or early summer. Young plants can be pruned lightly and regularly. Older plants can be refreshed with a more extensive prune after flowering. Replace old plants that die or become straggly.

## Pot plants

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

## Sustainable landscaping

You can help the environment by using sustainable and locally sourced materials, and avoid materials taken from natural ecosystems, such as moss rocks, river stones, fallen logs and red gum mulch. More information on sustainable landscaping can be found on the Botanic Gardens website: [www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens) (search for 'sustainable landscapes project')

## More information

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



# Sourcing local native coastal plants

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

Alternatively, contact your local council's Environmental Officer or phone Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges on 8273 9100.

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

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

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



# Where to now?

So you've had a quick read of this guide and are keen to tackle some of the garden escapes you've realised are lurking in your garden, or you want to try your hand at gardening with local native species; here are some of the next steps you can take:

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

Use the table on the next page to help plan your new garden, there is plenty of space to write down your favourite species from this guide and how you plan to use them.

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





# Useful resources

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

- Natural resources centres / Backyards for Wildlife / Urban Biodiversity News  
[www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidentloftyranges](http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidentloftyranges)
- Your local council's website
- Weeds in Australia  
[www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds](http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds)
- Sustainable Landscapes Project, Botanic Gardens  
[www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au)
- Sustainable Gardening Australia website  
[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)
- *The native plants of Adelaide* (2010)  
Phil Bagust and Lynda Tout-Smith, Wakefield Press
- *Weed control handbook for declared plants in South Australia*  
Biosecurity SA [www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm\\_biosecurity/weeds](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa/nrm_biosecurity/weeds)
- Weeds Australia  
[www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)
- Nursery and Garden Industry Association (NGISA)  
[www.ngisa.com.au](http://www.ngisa.com.au)



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