

# Flora for a Fauna Friendly Sydney Garden

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To attract the greatest variety of wildlife to your garden you need to provide a **habitat** with *structural diversity* as well as *plant diversity*. What does this mean? This means that a garden with only trees, shrubs and mown lawns is not very inviting for most small creatures. What you must provide is a *well developed shrub* and herb layer.

You need to provide an area into which small birds can escape from aggressive bigger birds - this means an impenetrable thicket which offers both refuge and nesting sites. Also you need tufting and clumping plants, climbers, groundcovers and grasses. Finally you need a mulch of twigs and leaves for insects and lizards. The presence of permanent water will increase the number of visiting birds. Get the picture! Lots of layers!

Listed below is just a *small selection* of native plants to help you get started with turning your garden into a haven for native wildlife. For ecological integrity remember to plant only native species which occur in your area of Sydney.

## Grasses

|                             |                  |   |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---|
| <i>Themeda australis</i>    | Kangaroo grasses | a tussock grass with beautiful bronze highlights, provides seed for birds and butterflies |
| <i>Danthonia</i> spp        | Wallaby Grasses  | provide seeds for birds, attract butterflies.   |
| <i>Dichelachne</i> sp       | Plume Grasses    | butterfly attracting  |
| <i>Microlaena stipoides</i> | Weeping Grass    | an excellent habitat plant  |

## Tufting and clumping plants

|                            |                        |   |
|----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| <i>Dianella</i> spp        | Flax Lilies            | their beautiful blue berries provide fruit for birds, attract butterflies and insects |
| <i>Lomandra</i> spp        | Mat Rushes             | offer refuge, nesting sites. Attract butterflies, insects, seed & fruit-eating birds  |
| <i>Crinum pedunculatum</i> | Swamp Lily, River Lily | the bases of the thick fleshy leaves provide frog habitat                             |
| <i>Juncus</i> spp          | Rushes                 | offer great habitat attract seed and fruit eating birds and butterflies               |
| <i>Gahnia</i> spp          | Sword Grass, Saw Sedge | all gahnias are excellent habitat plants  |

## Climbers

|                              |                                  |   |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Billardiera scandens</i>  | Apple Berry, Dumplings           | bird and butterfly attracting. The fruits are edible when purple!   |
| <i>Clematis aristata</i>     | Old Man's Beard, Traveller's Joy | very good nesting site for birds and the masses of white flowers attract butterflies and insects                          |
| <i>Cissus antarctica</i>     | Watervine                        | offers shelter & nesting sites; birds like its berries; attracts moths and ringtails                                      |
| <i>Hardenbergia violacea</i> | False Sarsaparilla               | attracts seed & fruit eating birds, offers refuge and nesting sites, attracts butterflies, moths, bees and small insects. |
| <i>Smilax glycyphylla</i>    | Native Sarsaparilla              | provides nest-making material; birds and possums like its bunches of black berries  |
| <i>Kennedia</i> .spp         | Coral Peas                       | attract nectar, seed & fruit eating birds, butterflies, moths, small insects, bees  |

## References

Elliot, Rodger ( 1994 ) *Attracting wildlife to your garden* Thomas C Lothian Pty Ltd., Melbourne  
Robinson, Les ( 1991 ) *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney* Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst  
Information provided by ABBR's Newsletter Fauna Corner editor, Danie Ondinea. Many thanks!

## Groundcovers

|                                |                |  |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <i>Commelina cyanea</i>        | Scurvy Weed    | shelter for ground dwelling small lizards and frogs  |
| <i>Centella asiatica</i>       |                | shelter for small lizards  |
| <i>Carpobrotus glaucescens</i> | Pig Face       | the purple fruits provide bird food  |
| <i>Scaevola</i> spp            | Fan Flowers    | butterflies and insects love their nectar over many months of the year                                 |
| <i>Hibbertia</i> spp           | Guinea Flowers | offer food for insects, moths, butterflies and birds. Native bees collect the pollen to feed baby bees |
| <i>Correa</i> spp              |                | their tubular flowers are rich in nectar for both birds & butterflies                                  |
| <i>Dampiera</i> spp            |                | the insect attracting flowers provide food for small birds   |
| <i>Goodenia</i> spp            |                | the bright yellow flowers attract insects and butterflies which provide food for small birds           |

## Ferns

|                             |             |   |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---|
| <i>Blechnum</i> spp         | Water Ferns | shelter for many small birds  |
| <i>Pteridium esculentum</i> | Bracken     | nesting and shelter for Fairy Wrens, Silvereyes and other small birds |
| <i>Gleichenia</i> spp       | Coral Ferns | form thickets providing bird refuge                                   |
| <i>Cyathea</i> spp          | Treeferns   | native bees nest in the broken trunks                                 |
| <i>Doodia aspera</i>        | Rasp Fern   | will mass to form a low thicket offering shelter                      |

## Shrubs

|                             |            |  |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|
| <i>Acacia</i> spp           | Wattles    | any of the small local wattles provide seed for birds, and nectar for butterflies. The ones with dense foliage give shelter and nesting sites for small birds. |
| <i>Breynia oblongifolia</i> |            | the fruits resembling tiny apples provide food for birds and butterflies   |
| <i>Bursaria spinosa</i>     | Blackthorn | great wildlife habitat. Its prickly foliage gives safe refuge. The sweetly-scented flowers attract butterflies. Double-barred finches feel safe nesting here   |
| <i>Pultenaea</i> spp        | Bush-peas  | attract native bees, butterflies moth and seed eating birds  |
| <i>Zieria</i> spp           |            | a wide range of butterflies and many small insects visit these plants  |

## Trees

|                          |               |   |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|
| <i>Angophora hispida</i> |               | one of the best plants for attracting a wide range of insects   |
| <i>Allocasuarina</i> spp | She-oaks      | attract seed and fruit eating birds   |
| <i>Banksia</i> spp       |               | very important as a food source for birds, animals and insects as well as providing nesting sites                   |
| <i>Callistemon</i> spp   | Bottlebrushes | attract nectar feeding, seed, insect and fruit eating birds plus butterflies and they are pollinated by native bees |
| <i>Callitris</i> spp     | Cypress Pines | attract insects, birds and butterflies  |
| <i>Hakea</i> spp         |               | the prickly ones of this genus are great for nesting and refuge   |
| <i>Grevillea</i> spp     |               | attract nectar and insect-eating birds and butterflies  |
| <i>Eucalyptus</i> spp    |               | all species attract a wide range of wildlife  |