



A VIBRANT, PROUD, GROWING AND HEALTHY  
COMMUNITY OFFERING LIFESTYLE CHOICES.

# *sustainable gardening*

IN THE SHIRE OF MELTON





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by the Shire of Melton.

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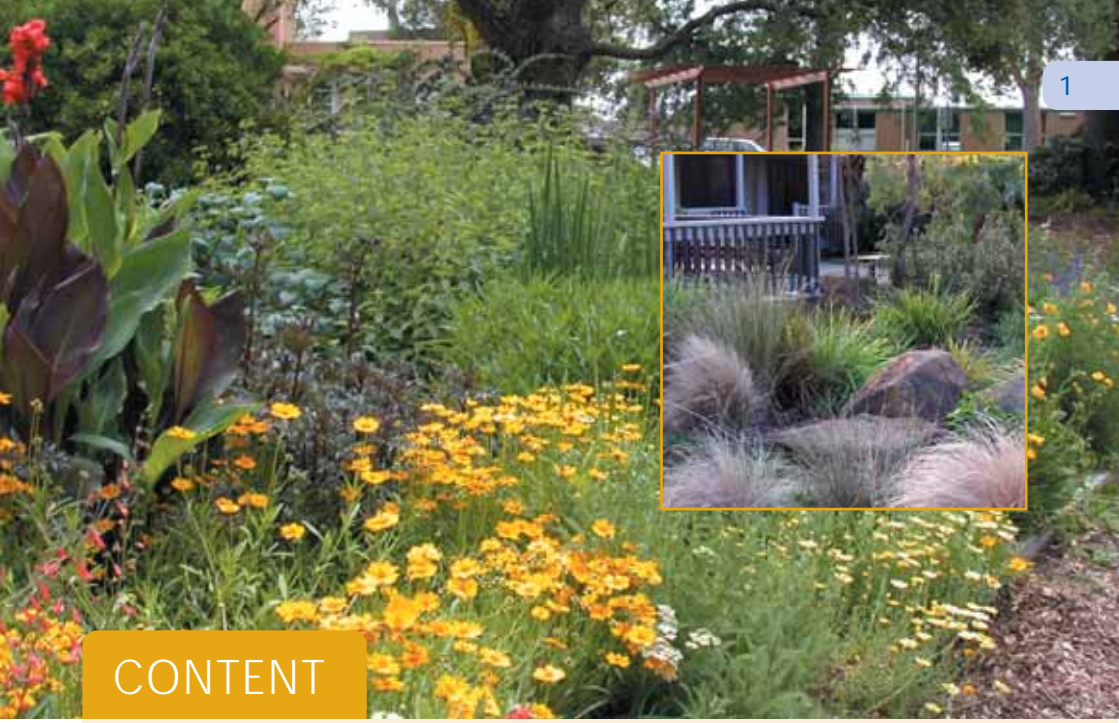
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*The Shire of Melton is committed  
to contributing to the  
achievement of sustainability  
within Melton and promoting  
sustainability to others.*





# CONTENT

- Introduction* ..... 2
- Garden Design* ..... 3
- Caring for Your Soil* ..... 5
- Compost – Easy and Fun*..... 7
- Green Waste*..... 10
- Water*..... 13
- Plant Selection* ..... 16
- Melton Local Plant Guide*..... 19
- Sustainable Plant List*..... 25
- Melton Garden Escapee Guide* ..... 26
- Chemicals*..... 32
- SGA Low Environmental Damage Chemicals*..... 35
- Produce*..... 37
- Products*..... 39
- Sustainable Gardening Score Card* ..... 41

## INTRODUCTION

Gardening is all about creating a beautiful environment. Sustainable gardening is about maximising those benefits to our natural environment and reducing some negative environmental impacts gardening can have.

Gardening can have a positive benefit to the health of our environment. If we plant local plants we provide food and shelter for birds and butterflies. By conserving water in the garden we help maintain water levels in our reservoirs. Reducing the use of chemicals in the garden will result in less chemicals in our creeks and streams. By composting our household and garden organic waste we can reduce the amount of waste going into landfill and therefore reduce the amount of greenhouse gas produced. If we purchase renewable resources for the garden instead of non-renewable resources, we can help to protect our old growth forests and river ecosystems.

It is easy to create beautiful gardens that suit our local climate and soil and have a low impact on our natural environment. Sustainable gardens can be introduced gradually, for example as an exotic plant dies replace it with a local plant. Sustainable gardens are low maintenance, as they require less watering, lower application of fertilisers and chemicals, and less mowing and pruning.

Sustainability also relates to social interaction. It is important that we create diverse and interesting gardens for family and friends to come together to work, play and socialise. This booklet has been designed to enable you to conduct a sustainability audit on your garden. Different

sections are addressed and in each section you simply tick a box if it is something you are doing in your garden. Add up each section and get a total score on the Sustainable Gardening Score Card at the back of this booklet. Make a note of what you have to do to score more ticks in six months and 12 months. You can then start working towards making your garden more sustainable.



## GARDEN DESIGN

Many gardens still have the traditional layout which came from English gardens many years ago. A paved sitting area, large open lawn and flowerbeds of exotic plants around the outside. These days people tend to be busier working and so have less time for the garden. Gardens are becoming smaller and children tend to spend more time inside.

Interior design, architecture, cars and fashion change to suit new lifestyles. It's time gardens did too. To design a good garden you need to take time to work out how to create a garden you feel comfortable with, that you enjoy and that suits your local soil and climate.

### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Have a plan of sun/shade, slope and soil variation in your garden
- Have a rough planting plan that groups plants according to their water, sun and soil needs
- Have designed your garden for low water use (see p. 13)
- Have thought about the amount of garden waste (e.g. lawn clippings and prunings) and ways and space for managing on site (composting or mulching)
- Have replaced concrete with gravel to allow more water to soak in (creating a permeable surface)
- Have designed your garden to have flow and interest to create appeal
- Have designed your garden to be a place for people to socialise.

**Design Score** /7

### GARDEN DESIGN TIPS

1. List what you need (shed, washing line, kids swings, entertainment area) and what you want (vegie garden, shade area, pond, fruit tree/s).

2. Do a site analysis, (sun, shade, slope, privacy – all the problems that need solving) which will tell you what your site will let you do.
3. Do a scaled plan or mark out in the garden what will go where, practically and where it looks best. For example, placing a new shed in a shady corner, vegetables where they get full sun, a pond where it can be seen from inside the house, and a shade tree to the north of the house.
4. Find a style you like which suits your garden so all the paving, pots, water features, and plants match, especially in a courtyard garden.
5. Make beds bigger and lawns smaller. If you mulch all beds this will reduce your maintenance and enable you to create interesting areas within your garden.
6. If you want to reduce your lawn area to make bigger garden beds, you need to know what type of lawn you have. If you have a fine lawn grass such as Rye or Fescue you can mow the lawn low, cover with 8–10 sheets of newspaper (overlapping), add 10–15cm of pea straw on top, wait 3–4 months and then plant directly into it. This must be done when the soil is moist and all the grass should have died. If you have ‘running’ grasses such as Couch or Kikuyu they will not be eliminated by newspaper and mulch. They are very tough grasses to remove and you can try one of three methods:
  - Cover the grass with a sheet of clear plastic for several weeks in hot weather so that the grass effectively ‘cooks’
  - Mow the lawn area you wish to remove on the lowest mower setting and then dig out the remaining root system
  - Apply chemical herbicide.

### Further Information

*The Australian Garden* – Diana Snape

*Beautiful Gardens with Less Water* – John Patrick

*Bold Romantic Gardens* – Oehme Van Swede

Browse through the library

## CARING FOR YOUR SOIL

**Healthy soil = healthy plants.** Soil needs organic matter (mulch, compost, manure, grass clippings). Worms break it down to make food for plants to use and their burrows allow air into the soil so the plant roots can breathe. Organic matter needs to be replaced regularly as the worms eat it all up and plants absorb the nutrients. If organic matter is not added, the soil becomes like concrete in the summer and a sticky mess in the winter. In addition, most people want a low maintenance garden. This is much easier if you look after your soil.

### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Check mulch levels and replace every year to bring back to 8–10cm deep
- Regularly add organic matter to your soil
- Know which are the best types of mulch for different types of plants
- Know at least five good things mulch does to reduce maintenance
- Have at least three worms in a spadeful of soil wherever you dig in the garden
- Only dig your soil when you have to.

Soil Score /6

### SOIL IMPROVEMENT TIPS

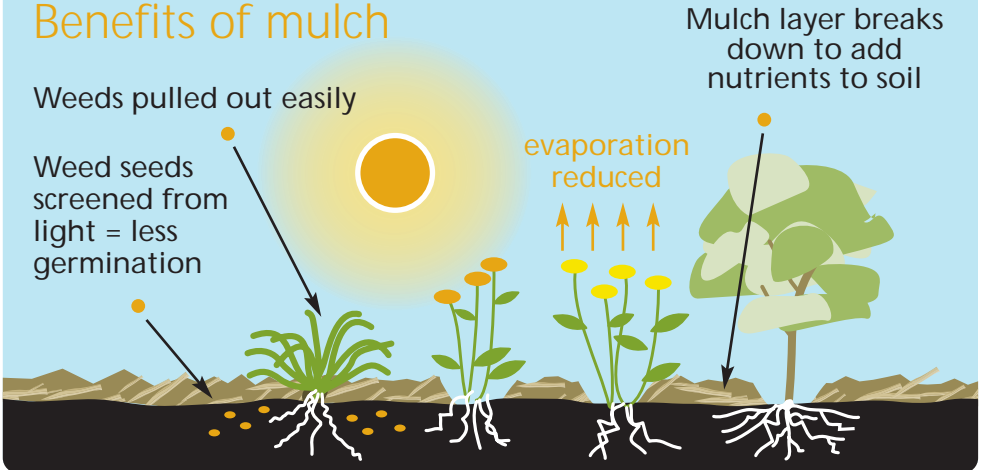
1. The soil needs to be damp before you add mulch so late spring (November) is the best time to put on mulch once the winter rains have soaked in.
2. Mulches made from recycled organics are an excellent choice as they save water, last well and feed the soil when they break down.
3. Spreading compost over your soil (under the mulch layer) will encourage worms in your garden.



4. Pea straw and Lucerne are the best if you have not mulched the soil for a long time as they break down quickly so it's easier for the worms to eat. Bark mulch has very few nutrients so it isn't very good for improving the soil.
5. Soil improvement such as pea straw placed on the soil surface is generally only required for exotic plants, vegetables and fruit trees. Most local and native plants like a relatively infertile soil so they prefer bark mulch on its own without soil improvement.
6. When buying new soil for your garden don't just buy topsoil, buy a soil that includes recycled organics or compost.
7. Don't cultivate your soil unless it is very compacted after building works. Digging destroys the soil structure, therefore destroying the air holes and drainage spaces.



## Benefits of mulch



### Further Information

*The Natural Gardener* – Jeffrey Hodges

*Gardening Down-Under* – Kevin Handreck

*The Natural Magic of Mulch* – Michael J. Roads

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au) [www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au](http://www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au)



## COMPOST – EASY AND FUN

Composting or worm farming your food scraps, grass and garden clippings (organics) can give you excellent garden food and soil improver that is free. Composting organics (rather than putting them in the rubbish) is one of the best things you can do in your garden – as well as creating great fertiliser, it reduces greenhouse gases, saves water and dramatically reduces your waste. Composting and getting that 'perfect mix' can also be lots of fun. Its not hard and almost half of household rubbish can be turned into compost that's useful for your garden.

### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Make your own compost
- Can list 10 things you can put in compost and three things you shouldn't put in compost
- Ensure your garbage bin is less than half full every week
- Put green waste out for collection less than four times per year
- Use your compost as a fertiliser under mulch, mix with potting mix in containers, use on top of seed beds in the vegetable garden or stewed in water to make a liquid feed
- Use a worm farm if you live in an apartment or have a small garden.

**Compost Score** /6

### COMPOSTING TIPS

1. Your compost bin or heap should be on soil, not concrete, so it drains well and the worms and bacteria can enter the bin to decompose the waste.
2. All compost bins or heaps, need a balance of materials that:
  - Are high in nitrogen, such as blood and bone, Dynamic Lifter or chook manure
  - Contain carbon, such as dried leaves or shredded newspapers
  - Contain both carbon and nitrogen, such as kitchen scraps, pea straw and green garden prunings.

3. In addition, the compost heap or bin needs:
  - Water, but only enough so that the contents are moist but not wet
  - Oxygen, from air, added by regularly turning over the contents of the heap
  - Warmth, by putting it in a sunny place
  - Easy access.
4. Hot (fast) compost takes 3–6 months – you need a recipe and to turn the compost every day. Cold (slow) compost takes 6–12 months – just keep adding waste, especially kitchen scraps.

### Add to your compost

- Fruit and vegetable scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Tea bags
- Egg shells
- Onions
- Citrus fruit (cut up)
- Sour milk and yogurt
- Pizza and egg cartons
- Vacuum cleaner dust
- Animal fur
- Pure wool jumpers (that are not good enough for the op shop) and socks (cut up)
- Pure cotton articles (cut up)
- Grass clippings (thin layers 3–4cm)
- Cut up prunings
- Weeds without seed heads
- Blood and bone
- Shredded newspaper
- Small amounts of wood ash

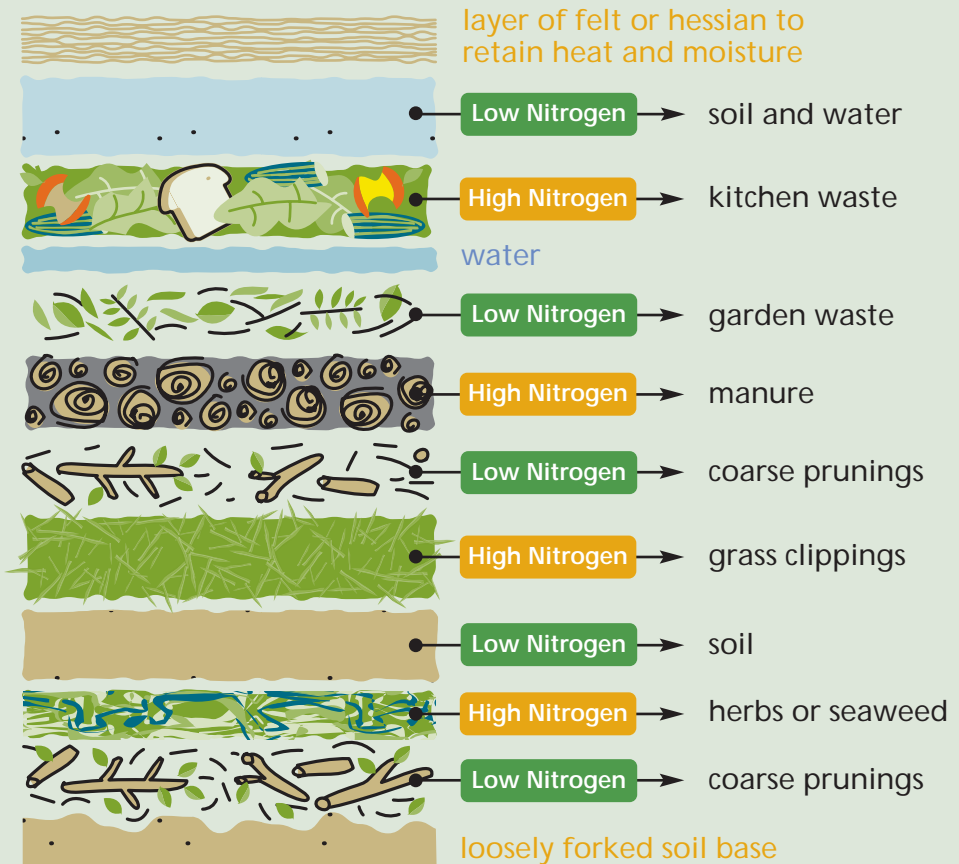
### Keep out of your compost

- Fish
- Meat
- Cat and dog droppings (consider a pet poo worm farm)
- Big woody prunings
- Bulbous weeds (e.g. *oxalis* spp.)
- Weeds with runners (e.g. couch grass)
- Bleached or glossy office paper (harmful chemicals)

## Building a layered compost heap

1. Build your compost in thin layers (3–10cm)
2. Alternate kitchen waste (high nitrogen) and garden waste (low nitrogen) layers
3. Aim for a ratio of 30 carbon : 1 nitrogen
4. Use diversity of materials

This diagram is an example of the different layers. Alternating kitchen and garden waste layers with an occasional layer of manure works well.



## GREEN WASTE COLLECTION

Collection – same day as your garbage, alternate week to recycling. Check your calendar for dates.

Around 50% of the average household weekly waste is garden refuse and or food scraps. Most of this organic matter can be turned into compost.

### PLEASE REMEMBER

These items **must not** go into your green waste bin

- ✗ NO plant pots
- ✗ NO plastic bags
- ✗ NO rubble or dirt
- ✗ NO large logs or stumps
- ✗ NO food waste or food scraps



120 or 240 litres



Garden prunings  
(including rose clippings)



Grass clippings & weeds  
(free of soil)



Leaves



Small logs & raw timber  
offcuts (up to 10cm in  
width & 30cm in length)

### WHAT GOES IN?

- ✓ **YES** Only put green waste into your green-lidded bin
- ✓ **YES** Place green waste items in loosely so the bin can be emptied completely
- ✓ **YES** Please don't overfill your bin

### REMEMBER NO PLASTIC BAGS

You can take plastic bags to some local supermarkets for recycling.

**IF IN DOUBT LEAVE IT OUT!**

### Further Information

*Make Your Own Compost* – Yvonne Cave

*Gardening Down-Under* – Kevin Handreck

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

Recycling Centre – Ferris Road, Melton Phone: 9743 1983

Call Melton Shire Council on: 9747-7200

## SOLVING COMMON COMPOST PROBLEMS

*Why is my compost:*

### *Left with half decomposed big lumps?*

Adding smaller pieces to the bin/heap should ensure that it all decomposes evenly. Avoid avocado seeds, pineapple tops, twigs and other woody items unless they can be crushed or chopped before adding. Always crush eggshells.

### *Smelly?*

**Either:** Too much nitrogen containing matter and not enough carbon. i.e. add more dry materials such as dried chopped up leaves and newspaper.

**Or:** Make sure you aid decomposition by using a garden fork and turning over the bin/heap occasionally (maybe once a week) to introduce more air. This prevents anaerobic bacteria from taking over and producing the smells. In a compost bin you can add lengths of slotted agipipe to increase aeration.

### *Crawling with ants and slaters?*

The heap is too dry. Add a sprinkling of water or less dry matter. Ants and slaters are not harmful at all but they do indicate that your compost will not decompose rapidly enough.

### *Attracting flies?*

If you see tiny flies (*Drosophila* spp.) every time you open the lid, rest assured that they are there because they enjoy the contents of your bin/heap, especially if you have been adding fruit peelings. Add a blanket cover to the contents of your bin/heap, such as hessian sacking or carpet felt underlay.

### *Visited by rats, mice, blowflies or maggots?*

Meat scraps or fish bones can be added to compost but **only** if it is working efficiently and quickly. They are best avoided since they do encourage vermin, especially over summer. Rats and mice enter the bin by digging underneath, so fasten a piece of fine mesh wire under the bin before commencing.

### *Taking so long to do anything?!?!*

The carbon/nitrogen ratio needs to be altered. Remember: **too wet**, add dry matter, such as newspaper; **too dry**, add water along with something high in nitrogen such as blood and bone, Dynamic Lifter pellets, or chicken manure. And don't forget to regularly turn the heap over!

## WATER

Australia is the driest habitable continent in the world and yet we are also the highest consumers of water per capita. We have been in drought conditions for several years. Even though rain falls in winter it is not enough. We are using more water than gets replaced, and each year the reservoirs have less and less water. Up to 30% of domestic water gets wasted in the garden through things like water not being able to penetrate the soil deeply, not using mulch to stop water evaporating, inefficient irrigation and bad garden design.



### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Have 30% or more of your garden planted with plants in the Melton Local Plant Guide (pp. 19–24)
- Have less than 50% of your garden area taken up by lawn
- Have mulched all your garden beds and pots
- Don't have a lawn, or if you do, cut your lawn long (8–10cm) over summer
- Water in the cool of the day
- Water around the plant root zone with long, infrequent watering
- Use a soaker hose or dripper system instead of sprays
- Have either a timer on your taps or shut off valves on your hoses
- Have a water tank
- Recycle greywater from the laundry and bathroom to the garden using EPA approved techniques or systems.

Water Score /10

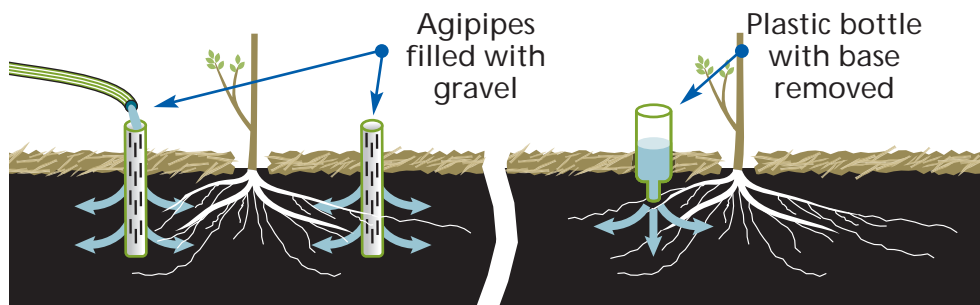


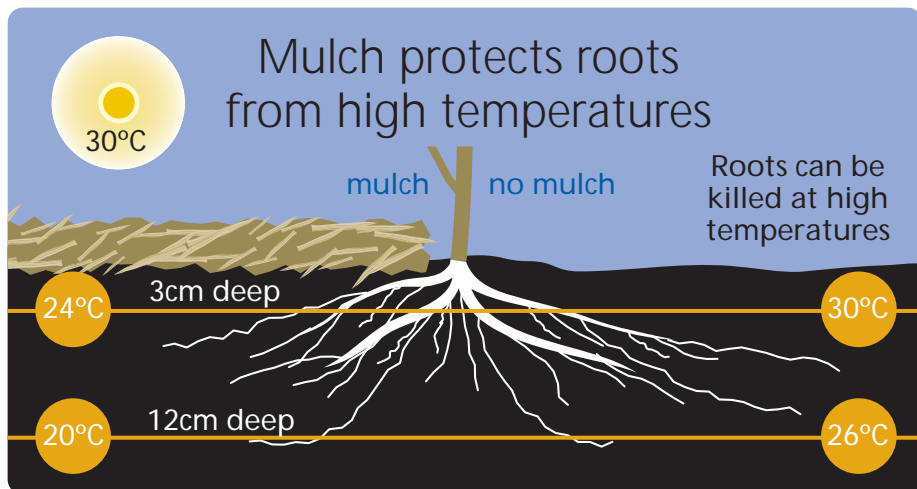
## WATER TIPS

1. After you have watered dig down to see how far it has penetrated, it should be at least 10cm.
2. Have as large a rainwater tank as possible, 3000 litres of water in a tank for summer is ideal.
3. Check and clean your irrigation system every spring.
4. Mulch all your garden beds and pots. Mulch made from recycled organics is a great water saving product.
5. Micro-sprays waste up to 70% water through drift and evaporation and if the soil is mulched, water will not penetrate to the soil.
6. Water pots and plants with a low pressure on the hose. The water should be running slowly, not on a spray, as this does not penetrate very deeply.
7. Go for a tough drought tolerant grass like 'Sir Walter Buffalo'; a native grass such as *Microlaena stipoides* (won't take football games, but is fine for walking on); or a native groundcover like *Myoporum parvifolium* for the front garden.
8. To avoid potential health risks greywater from the bathroom and laundry must be collected and used according to EPA and council regulations.
9. Check the weather forecast to avoid watering before rain.



**Watering:** Deep watering delivers water slowly to the roots and encourages deep roots.





### Further Information

*Waterwise Gardening* – Kevin Walsh

*Waterwise House and Garden* – Allan Windust

*Water Efficient Garden* – Wendy van Dok

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

[www.savewater.com.au](http://www.savewater.com.au)

[www.epa.vic.gov.au](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au)

City West Water Phone: 131691 [www.citywestwater.com.au](http://www.citywestwater.com.au)

Western Water Phone: 1300 650 425 [www.westernwater.com.au](http://www.westernwater.com.au)

## PLANT SELECTION

Local (indigenous) plants are suited to the local soil and climate. They do not require large amounts of nutrients and once established, little water. There are many beautiful plants local to the Melton area. Many of these plants offer shelter and are important food sources for local birds, insects, reptiles and animals. (Refer to the Melton Local Plant Guide pp. 19–24.)

Two thirds of Victoria's environmental weeds are garden escapees. Their seeds are spread from our gardens by birds and animals or by people dumping garden cuttings into our bush and waterways. Weeds compete with our local plants for light, nutrients and water. Before too long they have replaced our local plants, leaving native animals without food or homes. As gardeners we need to know which plants can escape and destroy our unique natural environments. (Refer to the Melton Garden Escapee Guide pp. 26–31.) Please consider removing and replacing garden escapees as there are so many beautiful plants that are alternatives.

Plants need to be grouped together according to their sun/shade, water and fertiliser needs. If you mix your plants you can be forever replacing dead plants. You need to go to a Garden Centre to find a plant to suit the position you have in mind, not the other way round.



### Give yourself a tick if you

- Know the difference between native, indigenous and exotic plants
- Have more than 30% of your garden planted with plants listed in the Melton Local Plant Guide (pp. 19–24)
- Have more than 30% of your garden planted with Sustainable Plants listed on p. 24
- Do not have any of the plants listed in the Melton Garden Escapees Guide (pp. 26–31)
- Have at least one shade tree of suitable size for your garden
- Have reduced your lawn area to less than 50% of total garden area
- Have grouped your plants according to their water, sun and nutrient needs
- Regularly observe native birds, reptiles, insects and animals in your garden.

Plant Score /8

### PLANT TIPS

1. The ideal time to plant is autumn. Never plant in summer.
2. Fast growing plants (e.g. Jasmine, Variegated Pittosporum) are great at first as screening plants because they very quickly fill a space. However, they keep growing and growing and growing! They then become high maintenance plants and produce large amounts of green waste from regular pruning. It's better to wait for slower growing plants to reach the height you want.
3. There is a tree to fit every size garden. They provide shade, can provide fruit, leaves for mulch, habitat for wildlife, produce oxygen and use up carbon dioxide. If possible plant a native or indigenous tree.

4. Native, indigenous and exotics can be used together to create successful gardens, but care is needed at planning stage.
5. Compost weed prunings or put them in the green waste bin. Cut off the seed heads of any garden escapees and put them in the bin.

Refer to the list of Nurseries Stocking Indigenous Plants Suitable for the Shire of Melton on the back cover of this booklet

### Further Information

*Flora of Melbourne* – Society for Growing Australian Plants (Maroondah)

*Environmental Weeds* – Kate Blood

*Grow What Where* – Australian Plant Study Group

*Habitat Garden* – Peter Grant (ABC shops)

*The Australian Garden* – Diana Snape

*Australian Plants for Mediterranean Climate Gardens* – Rodger Elliot

*Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains: A Gardner's Guide to the Original Flora* (1995) – APS Keilor Plains Group

*Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of the West Port Phillip Region* (2000) – DNRE

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

[www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)

Call Environmental Services on 9747-7200



## MELTON LOCAL PLANTS

These plants are great plants for Shire of Melton gardens as they grow here naturally and are good for native wildlife.

### CLIMBERS ✓

#### Purple Coral Pea (*Hardenbergia violacea*)

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun;  
well-drained soils

**Features:** Useful for providing a light screen. Grows well in pots.



### GROUNDCOVERS and WILDFLOWERS ✓

#### Black Anther Flax-lily (*Dianella revoluta*)

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun;  
well-drained soil.

**Features:** Hardy, easily maintained plant. Ideal for growing close to trees. Butterfly attracting.



#### Clustered Everlasting (*Chrysocephalum semipapposum*)

**Requirements:**

Full/semi sun. Dry soil.

**Features:** Very hardy. Prune in winter to rejuvenate. Great in rock gardens, in pots, under trees or in an open position in the garden. Butterfly attracting.



#### Creeping Bossiaea (*Bossiaea prostrata*)

**Requirements:**

Easy to grow in well-drained soils.

**Features:** Grows well under other plants.





### Cut-leaf Daisy

**(*Brachyscome multifida*)**

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun; prefers moist soil and will tolerate dryness once established.

**Features:** Grows well in pots. Fast growing. Light pruning after flowering. Butterfly attracting.



### Kidney Plant

**(*Dichondra repens*)**

**Requirements:** Semi sun/full shade; well-drained soils.

**Features:** An excellent lawn substitute in moist shady areas where traffic is light.



### Native Flax

**(*Linum marginale*)**

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun. Dry soil and poor drainage.

**Features:** Grows mostly in the cooler months and dies back after flowering. Remove old stems in autumn. Can grow in pots, rock gardens and around ponds.



### Running Postman

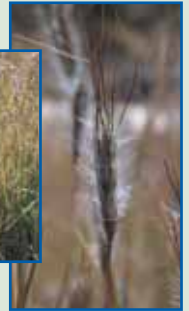
**(*Kennedia prostrata*)**

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun. Accepts most soils but avoid poor drainage.

**Features:** Attractive as a groundcover, in tubs, hanging baskets, cascading over rocks, walls and under trees. Insect and bird attracting.





**Tufted Bluebell****(*Wahlenbergia communis*)****Requirements:** Full/semi sun;  
moist well-drained soil**Features:** Looks great in containers  
or when planted amongst grasses.  
Butterfly attracting.**GRASSES****Kangaroo Grass****(*Themeda triandra*)****Requirements:**Full/semi sun; adaptable  
to most soils.**Features:** Habitat for  
insects, lizards and birds.  
Butterfly attracting.**Silky Blue-grass****(*Dichanthium sericeum*)****Requirements:**Full sun; well-drained  
heavy clay soils.**Features:** Blue-grey  
appearance provides  
great contrast.**Wallaby Grasses****(*Danthonia* spp.)****Requirements:** Full/semi  
sun; well-drained soil.**Features:** Excellent contrast  
plant in landscaping. Can  
make an excellent lawn if  
infrequently mown.



## SHRUBS (up to 4m) ✓

### Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*)

#### Requirements:

Any position;  
well-drained soil.

**Features:** Responds well  
to regular pruning.  
Butterfly attracting.



### Drooping Cassinia (*Cassinia arcuata*)

**Requirements:** Full/semi  
sun; well-drained soil.

**Features:** This graceful  
plant is easy to grow.



### Gold Dust Wattle (*Acacia acinacea*)

#### Requirements:

Full/semi sun;  
adaptable to most soils

**Features:** A good  
low screening plant.  
Suitable for large  
pots/tubs. Annual  
pruning is beneficial.  
Bird attracting.



### Hop Goodenia (*Goodenia ovata*)

#### Requirements:

Any position;  
prefers damp soil

**Features:** Fast  
growing. It responds  
well to pruning.



### Large-leaf Bush-pea (*Pultenaea daphnoides*)

#### Requirements:

Any position; it tolerates dryness once established

**Features:** Attractive tall shrub.



### River Bottlebrush (*Callistemon sieberi*)

#### Requirements:

Full/semi sun; adaptable to many soils.

**Features:** Excellent screening shrub. Pruning encourages flowering. Butterfly and bird attracting.



### Rock Correa (*Correa glabra*)

#### Requirements:

Any position; it is easily grown in well-drained soils.

**Features:** Ideal as a low screen. Bird attracting.



### Rosemary Grevillea (*Grevillea rosemarinifolia*)

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun; well-drained soil

**Features:** Pruning will encourage more compact growth. Grows well in large pots/tubs.





### Tree Violet

**(*Hymenanthera dentata*)**

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun;  
well-drained soils

**Features:** It has violet coloured berries and provides excellent habitat for birds and possums.



### Twiggy Daisy-bush

**(*Olearia ramulosa*)**

**Requirements:** Full/semi sun;  
well-drained soils

**Features:** Pruning as the flowers begin to fade usually encourages a further flush of flowers.



## TREES (over 4m) ✓

### Buloke

**(*Allocasuarina luehmannii*)**

**Requirements:**

Full/semi sun; grows well  
in heavy soils

**Features:**

Fast growing plant.

Drought tolerant once  
established.



### Lightwood

**(*Acacia implexa*)**

**Requirements:**

Full/semi sun;  
most soils

**Features:**

Small screen or shade  
tree. Bird attracting.




































Full Sun =  Part Shade =  Shade = 

# SUSTAINABLE PLANT LIST These plants aren't indigenous but include great natives and low water users.

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	FORM	CONDITIONS
Cabbage Palm	<i>Cordyline australis</i>	Tree	
Chef's Cap Correa	<i>Correa baeuerlenii</i>	Strap Foliage	
Bougainvillea	<i>Bougainvillea trillii</i>	Climber	
Bower Vine	<i>Pandorea jasminoides</i>	Climber	
Autumn Sage	<i>Salvia gregii</i>	Cottage	
Blazing Star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Cottage	
California Lilac	<i>Ceanothus</i> spp.	Ground Cover	
Prostrate Juniper Grevillea	<i>Grevillea junipera prostrata</i>	Ground Cover	
Pachysandra	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	Ground Cover	
Fan Flower	<i>Scaevola aemula</i>	Groundcover	
Glossy Abelia	<i>Abelia x grandiflora</i>	Medium Shrub	
Mexican Orange Blossom	<i>Choisya ternata</i>	Medium Shrub	
Geraldton Wax	<i>Chamelaucium uncinatum</i>	Medium Shrub	
Wax Flower	<i>Eriostemon myoporoides</i>	Medium Shrub	
Bird of Paradise	<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>	Perennial	
Enamel Flower	<i>Adenandra uniflora</i>	Small Shrub	
Silver Bush	<i>Convolvulus cneorum</i>	Small Shrub	
Gum Rock Rose	<i>Cistus ladaniferus</i>	Small Shrub	
Dwarf Willow Myrtle	<i>Agonis flexuosa nana</i>	Small Shrub	
Small Crowea	<i>Crowea exalata</i>	Small Shrub	
NZ Rock Lily	<i>Arthropodium cirratum</i>	Strap Foliage	
Lily Turf	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	Strap Foliage	
Kangaroo Paw	<i>Anigozanthus</i> Bush Gem hybrids	Strap Foliage	
Grevillea	<i>Grevillea</i> 'Ivanhoe'	Tall Shrub	
Flinders Ranges Wattle	<i>Acacia iteaphylla</i>	Tall Shrub	
Tea Tree	<i>Melaleuca bracteata</i> 'Revolution Green'	Tall Shrub	
Willow Myrtle	<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Tree	
Coral Gum	<i>Eucalyptus torquata</i>	Tree	
Bottle Brush	<i>Callistemon</i> 'Kings Park Special'	Tree	

## MELTON GARDEN ESCAPEES

All the plants in this section are serious garden escapees in Melton. Please do not plant these species, and if you have them in your garden, please remove them and replace them with one of the suggested similar non-invasive indigenous plants.

### CLIMBERS and CREEPERS



#### Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*)

Forms thick carpets.  
Leaves broad and glossy

#### Replace with:

Purple Coral pea  
(*Hardenbergia violacea*)



#### Bridal Creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*)

A scrambling climber. Leaves shiny, broadly oval to round.

#### Replace with:

Purple Coral pea  
(*Hardenbergia violacea*)



#### English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Fast climber can grow to 30m up trees or creeping along the ground and forming carpets. Shiny, triangular, dark green leaves with pale veins. Poisonous if eaten and can cause skin and eye irritation.

#### Replace with:

Small-leaved Clematis  
(*Clematis microphylla*)



### Morning Glory (*Ipomoea indica*)

Fast growing climber.  
Leaves spear shaped,  
bright green.

#### Replace with:

Large Bindweed  
(*Calystegia sepium*)



### Gazania (*Gazania spp.*)

#### Replace with:

Cut-leaf Daisy  
(*Brachyscome multifida*)



### Wandering Tradescantia (*Tradescantia fluminensis*)

Forms thick carpets. Glossy  
green leaves, oval to 4cm. Can  
cause allergic reaction to dogs  
with skin irritation particularly  
on the stomach.

Replace with: Kidney Plant  
(*Dichondra repens*)



### Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*)

Toxic to people and animals

#### Replace with:

Small-leaved Clematis  
(*Clematis microphylla*)





**GRASSES and HERBS** X**Agapanthus (*Agapanthus* spp.)**

Leaves poisonous.  
Sticky sap can ulcer mouth.

**Replace with:** Pale Flax-Lily  
(*Dianella longifolia*)

**Arum Lily  
(*Zantedeschia aethiopica*)**

Highly poisonous.

**Replace with:**  
Pale Flax-Lily  
(*Dianella longifolia*)

**Fountain Grass  
(*Pennisetum setaceum*)**

**Replace with:**  
Wallaby Grass  
(*Danthonia* spp.)

**Pampas Grass  
(*Cortaderia* spp.)**

Leaves easily cut the skin and cause irritation when handled.

**Replace with:**  
Thatch Saw-sedge  
(*Gahnia radula*)



**Serrated Tussock  
(*Nassella trichotoma*)**  
Commonly confused with native grasses and grown in many gardens, especially rockeries.

**Replace with:** Common Tussock Grass (*Poa Labillardieri*)



## SHRUBS

### Oleander

*(Oleander spp.)*

Leaves, flowers and twigs are poisonous.

Replace with:

Boobiolla

*(Myoporum insulare)*



### Cootamundra Wattle

*(Acacia baileyana)*

Replace with:

Black Wattle

*(Acacia mearnsii)*



### Cotoneaster

*(Cotoneaster spp.)*

Berries contain toxins that can be harmful to infants if eaten.

Replace with:

Prickly Currant-bush

*(Coprosma quadrifida)*



### English Broom

*(Cytisus scoparius)*

Seeds poisonous if eaten in quantity

Replace with:

Slender Bitter-pea

*(Daviesia leptophylla)*

and Golden Spray

*(Viminaria juncea)*



**Flax leaf Broom**  
(*Genista linifolia*)

Seeds highly poisonous

**Replace with:** Slender  
Bitter-pea (*Daviesia  
leptophylla*) and Golden Spray  
(*Viminaria juncea*)



**Hawthorn**  
(*Crataegus monogyma*)

**Replace with:**

Tree Violet  
(*Hymenanthera dentata*)



**Mirror Bush**  
(*Coprosma repens*)

**Replace with:**

Prickly Currant-bush  
(*Coprosma quadrifida*)  
and Boobialla  
(*Myoporum insulare*)



**Montpellier Broom**  
(*Genista monspessulana*)

Seeds highly poisonous

**Replace with:**  
Gold-dust Wattle  
(*Acacia acinacea*)



**Prickly Pears**  
(*Opuntia* spp.)

Replace with: Kangaroo Apple  
(*Solanum laciniatum*)



**Sweet Briar**  
(*Rosa rubiginosa*)

Replace with:  
Sweet Bursaria  
(*Bursaria spinosa*)



**TREES**



**Desert Ash**  
(*Fraxinus angustifolia*)

Replace with:  
Blackwood  
(*Acacia melanoxylon*)



**Pine Tree**  
(*Pinus* spp.)

Replace with:  
Drooping Sheoak  
(*Allocasuarina verticillata*)



## CHEMICALS

Pesticides and fertilisers can move from our garden to the natural environment. Sprays can drift in the wind and powders can wash into waterways. Strong chemicals can kill our native insects, plants and animals. Too much fertiliser can put extra nutrients in our waterways and result in blue-green algae growing out of control and harming animals and sometimes people.

### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Check your garden regularly for pest outbreaks
- Know exactly what pest or disease you are trying to control
- Use chemicals that have a low toxic level (Refer to the SGA Low Environmental Damage Chemicals p. 35)
- Avoid using chemicals before it rains or on windy days
- Use chemical alternatives (e.g. garlic sprays) or if you do spray, you target-spray only the affected plant/s
- Use organic fertilisers (compost, manure, seaweed and fish emulsions)
- Don't over-fertilise your plants as it produces excessive plant growth and excess green waste from additional pruning.

**Chemical Score** /7

### CHEMICAL TIPS

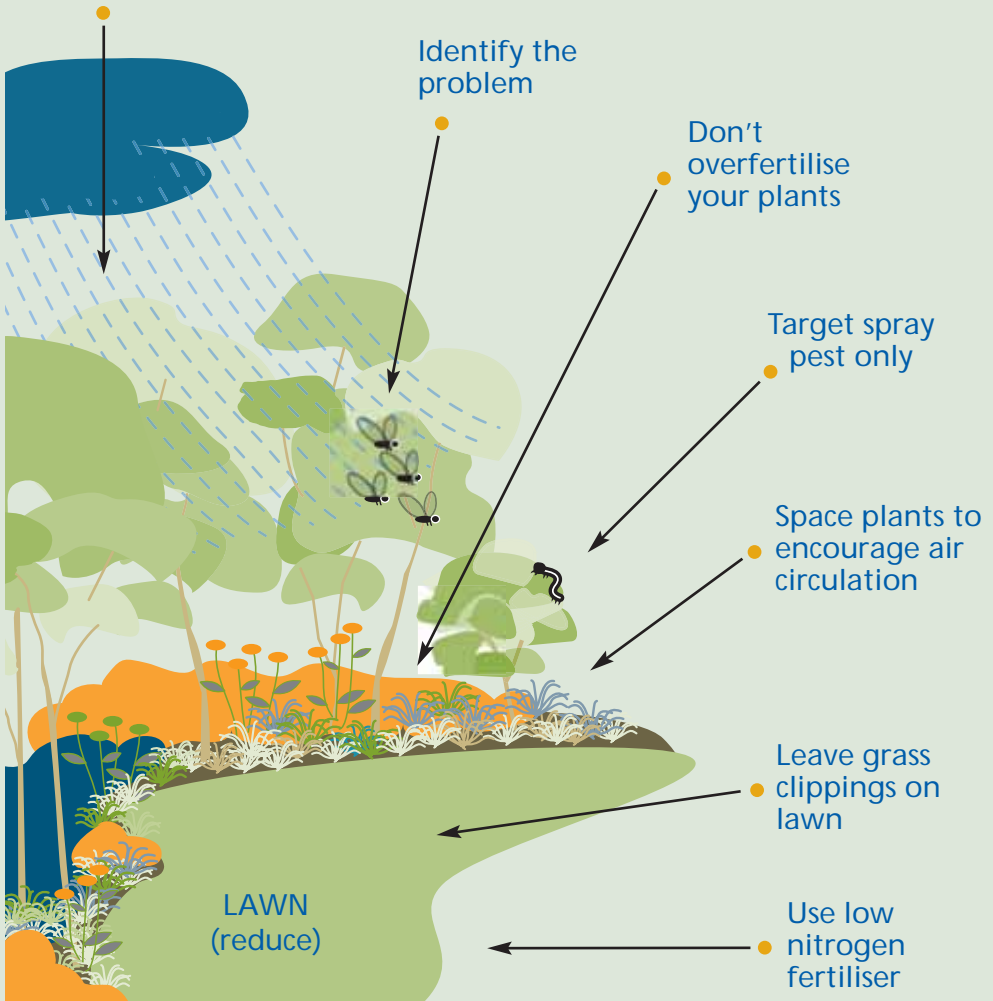
1. Many insects in the garden such as ladybirds are 'good guys' that will hunt and eat pests such as aphids. If you spray lots of chemicals in your garden you will also kill these beneficial insects and make your pest problem harder to control. Multi-sprays in particular kill anything they touch.





## Reducing chemical usage

Don't spray / sprinkle chemicals on a windy day or before rain



2. Use natural alternatives such as pyrethrum and garlic spray to control pests.
3. Too much fertiliser makes plants produce a lot of leafy growth that often becomes a target for pests.
4. Organic fertilisers such as compost, manures, seaweed and fish emulsion break down more slowly than synthetic (chemical) fertilisers and generally match the rate at which plants need the nutrients. Synthetic fertilisers break down quickly and can 'burn' plant roots.
5. Organic fertilisers improve the soil structure meaning the soil is better able to hold water and make it available to plants. Synthetic fertilisers add nothing to the soil structure and tend to move easily from the soil after heavy rain or watering.
6. When a plant looks sick the worst thing you can do is feed it!
7. Sterilise your secateurs between pruning plants to prevent the spread of disease.

### **Further Information:**

*Natural Gardening in Australia* – Jeffrey Hodges

*Natural Control of Garden Pests* – Jackie French

*Plant Protection* – Ruth M Kerruish

*What Garden Pest or Disease is That?* – Judy McMaugh

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)



## SGA LOW ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE CHEMICALS

Sustainable Gardening Australia in conjunction with the University of Melbourne (Burnley) has rated all horticultural chemicals into three categories: low, medium and high environmental damage. SGA advocates non-chemical prevention such as monitoring for early outbreaks, good air circulation between plants and alternative home remedies, such as garlic sprays. If you must use a chemical please consider the products listed below that have minimum environmental impact.

### INSECTICIDES

Beat-A-Bug Happy Roses Spray  
 Beat-A-Bug Insect Spray  
 Confidor Hose On Lawn Grub Killer  
 Confidor Insecticide Aerosol  
 Confidor Insecticide RTU spray  
 Garden King White Oil Aerosol  
 Hortico Derris Vegetable Dust  
 Manutec Dusting Sulphur  
 Multicrop Pyrethrum + Eucalyptus  
 Multicrop Pyrethrum Plus Garlic  
 NG Wasp and Nest Killer  
 Nurseryman's All Season Pest Oil  
 Pest Oil RTU  
 Pyrethrum Time Release Spray  
 Sharpshooter Pyrethrin RTU  
 Success Naturalyte Insecticide  
 TacGel Formula3 Insect Trap  
 Tropico Organic Bug Gun spray  
 Yates Dipel Bio-insecticide  
 Yates Green Earth Insect Spray  
 Yates Pest Oil  
 Yates Rose Blackspot and Insect Killer  
 Yates Scale Gun  
 Yates Slay-Afe Insecticide  
 Yates Surrender RTU  
 Yates White Oil Aerosol  
 Yates White Oil concentrate





## HERBICIDES

Brunnings Lawn Food Plus Moss Kill

## FUNGICIDES

Baycor Garden Fungicide

Chemspray Copper Oxychloride

Sharpshooter Lime Sulphur

Sharpshooter Rid a Rot Fungicide

Yates Anti Rot

Yates Fungus Fighter

Yates Leaf Curl Copper Fungicide

Yates Lime Sulphur Fungicide

## REPELLENTS

Beat-A-Bug Goodbye Snail

Beat-A-Bug Poss-Off Spray

D-Ter

Multicrop Keep Off Spray

Multicrop Keep-Off Granules

Multicrop Scat Animal Repellent

Multicrop Skedaddle Granules

Possom Shot Gel

Quassia Chips

Skunk Shot Gel Animal Repellent

Slug It

Stay Off Animal Repellent

## ALGICIDES

Oase Crystal Clear

Stephen Bros Barley algae control

## MOLLUSCICIDES (SNAIL KILLERS)

Amgrow Enviroguard Snail Bait

Multicrop Snail Killer Pellets



## PRODUCE

Commercially growing fruit and vegetables uses a lot of energy and chemicals in heating, cooling, spraying weeds and pest killers and transporting produce. Fruit and vegetables begin to lose their vitamins as soon as they're picked. After five days some have lost 40–50% of vitamins. Growing your own vegetables is so easy, and even easier if you've improved your soil. They're healthier, convenient and children love to watch them grow. Even if you only grow tomatoes, herbs and lettuce in a pot, it's a start!

### *Give yourself a tick if you:*

- Grow any herbs, fruit or vegetables
- Grow lots of produce!

**Produce Score** /2

### ORGANIC PRODUCE TIPS

1. Fruit and vegetables generally like to grow in the full sun with plenty of water, organic fertiliser and compost. On the other hand, local plants and native plants do not need a lot of water and fertiliser. It is therefore best to grow them in separate parts of the garden.
2. You can grow vegetables in no-dig beds on concrete and in big pots.
3. Don't use treated pine in vegetable gardens as the chemicals can leach into the soil.
4. Use recycled plastic sleepers to make raised beds. These will not rot after 10 years.
5. Rotate the position of vegetables every year to stop diseases spreading.



6. Use natural alternatives such as pyrethrum and garlic sprays to control pests.
7. You do need to water most days and check for bugs, especially snails on new seedlings. Go out at night and drown snails in a bucket of salt water.
8. Try heritage seeds. You can plant early, mid and late season tomatoes.

### Further Information

*Backyard Self-Sufficiency* – Jackie French

*The Australian Vegetable Book* – Clive Blazey

*Natural Gardening in Australia* – Jeffrey Hodges

[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)



## PRODUCTS

When we buy products for the garden we often don't think about where they have come from. Red gum trees come from woodlands and are part of a system which supports thousands of creatures. When the trees are chopped down all the creatures have nowhere else to go and die out. Many are in serious danger of extinction. We use red gum wood to make things like bark chips, tomato stakes and railway sleepers. Huge amounts of shiny river pebbles are dug out of active rivers in Asia. Whole river systems have been destroyed so we can create a garden feature of river stones.

### *Give yourself a tick if you*

- Ask where a product comes from and avoid buying unsustainable products
- Use recycled products, like bricks, timbers, plastic sleepers
- Take your own plastic bag or canvas bag to a Garden Centre to carry home products and plants
- Reuse your plastic plant pots or put them in a Garden Center pot recycling bin.

**Product Score** /4

### ALTERNATIVE PRODUCT TIPS

1. There are usually alternatives available. Pebbles that are quarried in Victoria from inactive streambeds are acceptable because at least they are not destroying living habitats.
2. Look up [www.timbershop.org](http://www.timbershop.org) to find out which timbers are acceptable. While many outdoor furniture companies claim that teak is plantation harvested in Asia, this magnificent tree is a rainforest plant that cannot be grown under plantation.
3. Plants such as Grass Trees, Tree Ferns and Native Orchids may have been sourced illegally from the forest. Plants should be sold with a government tag stating that they have been legally collected.



4. Use renewable mulches such as mulches made from recycled organics, pea straw or plantation sourced mulch. Recycled organic mulches are good to buy, as not only are they great products, but you are ensuring that garden waste is recycled rather than going to landfill.



### Further information

*Forest Friendly Building Timbers* – The Wilderness Society  
[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)  
[www.timbershop.org](http://www.timbershop.org)  
[www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au](http://www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au)







## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For advice on  
indigenous plants and  
environmental weeds

Department of  
Primary Industries  
Phone 136 186  
[www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)

Australian Plant Society  
(Melton/Bacchus Marsh)  
PO Box 493  
Melton VIC 3337  
[www.bulokebulletin.com](http://www.bulokebulletin.com)

Newport Lakes Native Nursery  
2 Margaret Street, Newport  
Phone 9391-0044

For free sustainable gardening  
information and advice go to  
[www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

Melbourne Water  
[melbournewater.com.au](http://melbournewater.com.au)

### Further reading

*Plants of Melbourne's Western Plains: A Gardner's Guide to the Original Flora.* (1995) – APS Keilor Plains Group

*Plants of the Merri Merri: A Home Gardener's Guide to Using Indigenous Plants in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne.*

R.Wigney ed, (1994). Merri Creek Management Committee.

*Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of the West Port Phillip Region (2000)* – DNRE

*Flora of Melbourne: A Guide to the Indigenous Plants of the Greater Melbourne Area.* Society for Growing Australian Plants, Maroondah (Rev. Ed. 2001). Hyland House.

Nurseries stocking  
indigenous plants suitable  
for the Shire of Melton

Newport Lakes Native Nursery  
2 Margaret Street, Newport  
Phone 9391-0044

Western Plains Flora –  
Ian Taylor  
By appointment only  
Phone 9740 3178

Greybox & Grasslands  
Indigenous Nursery  
Balliang East  
By appointment only  
Phone: 5369 5221