



Design with Nature - Planting a Native Garden

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From the February 2009 issue of the Study Group Newsletter.

First . . .

Record the physical characteristics of your garden whether new or under rehabilitation.

- Prepare a layout plan showing the size and shape of your block . . .
- Most important - locate north!
- Indicate the slopes and levels
- Indicate the on-site and adjacent structures
- Show the underground and overhead services
- Define the landform, rock and soil patterns
- Locate existing vegetation for preservation

Second . . .

Get to know your site and its surrounds, personally.

- Illustrate on the layout plan the physical and microclimate impacts . . .
- Most important - locate north!
- Assess the patterns of sunshine and shadow
- Identify the effects of storm, wind, breeze
- Identify the effects of rainfall and water runoff
- Identify the positive and negative views
- Assess the quality of the soils and sub-soils
- Identify existing vegetation for preservation, transplant or removal

Third. . .

Identify your principal family needs and functions.

- Define on plan how YOU want to use the garden . . .
- Assess your budget, priorities and available time
- Plan for interesting arrival and first impressions
- Identify vehicle circulation requirements
- Plan functional and interesting access pathways
- Define and locate areas for outdoor living activities
- Plan for children's play facilities
- Identify areas for work activities in the garden

Don't forget - a garden is an artistic creation that evolves over time.

Fourth. . .

Choose a style and theme for your garden. Your preferred garden character will influence the site planning and plant selection.

- Is your garden to be . . .
- Formal, informal, traditional, contemporary or for seasonal horticultural display?
- Reflect the architectural style of the house?
- Exciting fusion of plants and materials
- Bush garden, rainforest, coastal, cottage or ?
- Collectors, scientific, experimental?
- 'Walkabout' or stroll garden?
- New fresh and uniquely Australian!
- Fundamentally simple, livable and affordable

Fifth . . .

Now you are ready to select plants for your garden.

- Each plant has differing attributes . . .
- What is it? - tree, shrub, cover, vine, fern, palm or ?
- Where is it from?
- What conditions does it prefer?
- How big does it grow in nature?
- Does it adapt to horticultural techniques?
- Have you seen it thriving nearby?
- What is its most prominent feature - form, foliage, flowers, fruits, bark or ?
- Where are the most flowers and colourful foliage displayed and when?

Listen to the Plants!

To help you select the right species, they can tell you about themselves . . .

- Large leaves = shade tolerance
- Small leaves = sun preference
- Thick and waxy leaves = store water for later (water wise)
- Swollen trunk = store water (drought tolerant)
- Lignotubers = fire resistance
- Aromatic = insect resistance
- Massive seed production = weed potential
- Grey and silver leaves = sun tolerant and salt resistant
- Delicate leaves = moisture stress indicator
- Thorns and spines = wildlife protection and habitat

Trees

Trees have a variety of characteristics and functions

- Evergreen or deciduous
- Consider root systems
- Diverse forms: globular, upright, umbrella, irregular, weeping, conical, etc
- Specimen tree as a feature or focus element: form, foliage, bark, flower , fruit or fragrance
- Shade tree locate to control sunshine and shadow
- Multi planted as a grove, forest or windbreak

Palms and Cycads

Palm fronds add a special and unique character to a garden.

- Size: tall, medium, low

- Self cleaning or persistent fronds
- Feather frond or palmate frond
- Individual specimens
- Formal avenues
- Informal groves

Shrubs

Shrubs fulfill some important design functions . . .

- Size: tall, medium, low
- Screens and hedges: privacy, conceal, windbreak, filter breeze
- Feature: form, foliage, flower, fruit, fragrance
- Shrubbery: foliage contrast, water zone
- Aesthetic: colour, texture

Groundcovers

Covers are diverse in colour, texture and form as well as functionally and structurally useful . . .

- Dwarf shrubs, mattes, tufts, vines, scramblers, grasses, ferns
- Erosion control
- Living mulch
- Feature plants, seasonal colour

Vines and Scramblers

Vines are functionally and structurally useful . . .

- Select and locate to maximize flower display - over canopy, under canopy, along stems
- Shade and shelter: pergola and arbours
- Softening: fence, walls
- Maintenance: pruning, woody, fire, tree damage

Five basic planting techniques for any aussie garden - water wise garden design issues

1. Garden Layout and Maintenance - to simplify and minimise water application

- Group plants with similar water needs together - Hydrozoning
- Shallow regular watering (unwise) - encourages roots to remain in the drier upper soil levels
- Deep soaking watering less often (wise) - draws roots down to permanent reserves of subsoil moisture
- Apply water deep down in the root zone through a slotted tube (wise) - to replenish subsoil reserves of moisture

2. Soil aeration, fertility, additives;

- Amend soil texture to improve water absorption and aeration - add sand and organic material
- Use additives to lock applied moisture into soil so it is progressively available to plants
- Do not over fertilize and promote soft new growth - can you supply enough water to keep the plant alive?

3. Exposure - sun or shade, air movement;

- Reduce exposure to sun and minimise moisture loss through transpiration
- Utilize available shade from house or trees to insulate plants from drying sun
- Protect plants from excessive air movement to inhibit loss of moisture from foliage
- Plant windbreaks and water-efficient shade trees to create cool shaded conditions

4. Landform - water runoff and harvesting

- Form suitable landform to collect surface water to absorb into subsoil and minimise runoff

5. Insulate the garden against the sun

- Mulch; Mulch; Mulch
- A minimum of 100 mm of mulch will insulate the soil like a blanket and conserve applied moisture

Choose and use Australian Natives - *a basic element for landscape design.*