Indigenous Plants of Monash
A guide to native plants suitable for residential gardens in the City of Monash

What are Indigenous Plants?
Indigenous Plants are plants which occur naturally in a specific area.

Benefits of Indigenous plants and gardens
- Indigenous plants are adapted to the local environment (rainfall, soil and drainage conditions)
- They are usually Low maintenance
- They have Lower water requirement
- Indigenous Plants promote and improve local biodiversity
- Strengthen local ecosystems

Pre-Urban Environments of Monash
The City of Monash sits on the boundary of two geological regions in Melbourne, which gave rise to two soil groups which dominate the area: Tertiary Sands and Silurian-derived Sedimentary Hills (see map).

Tertiary Sands:
Derived from sandstone and wind-blown sand

Soil types:
- Dark loams, Clays, Local sands, Dark grey sands over clay, Light grey sands over clay, Deep sands free of lime.

Silurian-derived Sedimentary Hills:

Soil types:
- Light grey loams over clay (moist in winter and dry out in upper layers in summer), Moist dark loams (along water courses/drainage lines), Clays, Local sands, Gritty dark grey loams over clay, Red loams.

Soil Properties:
- Sands:
  - Retain some moisture as depth increases
  - Drainage is excellent
  - Nutrient-deficient soils
  - Digging in humus, clay or loam soil will improve water retention
  - Soil wetting agents can also be used.

- Loams:
  - Good drainage
  - Retain some moisture and allow the roots of native plants to readily penetrate downwards

Clays
- Heavy soils that can retain a lot of moisture
- Plenty of plant nutrients
- Add gypsum to make clay soils more friable (1kg per square metre; repeat at yearly intervals if necessary)
- Adding sand and humus also helps improve friability
- Many native plants grow well in clay soils.

Dominant Plant Communities of Monash
The above soil types supported the following dominant plant communities:

Valley Heath Forest
North-East part of Monash, extending east and southeast in the vicinity of Dandenong Creek and protruding westward along Monash Freeway from the corner of Waverley and Blackburn Roads.

This plant community is dominated by a low, open forest to 15 m tall with a sedgy/grassy understorey with a component of small ericoid shrubs and grass-trees.

Swampy Woodlands
Along Dandenong Creek

This plant community was dominated by Eucalypt woodland to 15 m tall over a diverse ground layer of grasses and herbs. The shrub component is usually sparse. These community types are now found only in remnants across the City of Monash.

What plants should I plant in my garden?
The plants you choose will depend on:
- Where you live – large or small garden space and orientation
- What type of garden you want – formal or informal
- What the existing Flora is

What the existing Flora is

Where you live

What plants should I plant in my garden?

The plants in this brochure are representative of soil and vegetation communities (understorey, middle storey and canopy) found in Monash.

For advice on plants and garden design visit your local Native Flora Nursery.

Suppliers of Native Plants
We encourage the purchase of plants and/or seeds from nurseries in your specific soil type area (e.g. Sand-belt or Silurian), and seeking details of the plant source form your chosen supplier.

Greening Australia www.greeningaustralia.org.au and
Australian Native Plants Society www.asgap.org.au provide information on Native Flora Nurseries in the Melbourne Metropolitan Region.

Acknowledgements:
Andrea Cehovin assisted with Map Design
Australian Plant Society – Waverley assisted with soil information
City of Monash Horticulture services assisted with plant species selection

References:
Knox City Council, Gardening with Indigenous Plants in Knox, Knox City Council

Disclaimer:
The information in this brochure should be used as a guide only. For more information on soil types, indigenous vegetation communities in Melbourne and Victoria and plant species consult the references provided or visit the Department of Sustainability and Environment website www.dse.vic.gov.au.
## Ground Cover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thalictrum flavum</td>
<td>Pale yellow flowers, light green leaves, large clumps, male &amp; female together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dianthus chinensis</td>
<td>Pink flowers, dense clumps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primula vulgaris</td>
<td>Flowering in April, prefers moist locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euphorbia glauca</td>
<td>Evergreen, live for 20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Low Plants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euphorbia tirucallii</td>
<td>Evergreen, produces a variety of colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acaena rhodopepla</td>
<td>Produces red flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxalis stricta</td>
<td>Has red flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola odorata</td>
<td>Has purple flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Grasses, Lilies & Irises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agapanthus africanus</td>
<td>Has blue flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilium regale</td>
<td>Has yellow flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris pseudacorus</td>
<td>Has purple flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Tips for Gardening

- Most Natives prefer well drained soils. Building up of garden beds, or provision of underground drainage, can be beneficial.
- When adding soil, thoroughly mix it into the existing soil. Do not just spread soil on top.
- Eliminate weeds from the planting area. Especially those spreading by underground runners.
- Group together plants needing similar conditions. Plants needing full sun rarely tolerate shady situations.
- Avoid over watering.
- Most grow well without extra fertilizer. High phosphate fertilizers may be harmful.
- Use mulches and groundcovers to help reduce weed growth and keep the soil cool, moist, and friable.

## Climbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clematis armandii</td>
<td>Produces white flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyacinthoides hispanicus</td>
<td>Produces blue flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonicera periclymena</td>
<td>Produces pink flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisteria sinensis</td>
<td>Produces purple flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Large Shrubs & Trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acacia dealbata</td>
<td>Produces white flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddleja davidii</td>
<td>Produces purple flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forsythia x intermedia</td>
<td>Produces yellow flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutzia scabra</td>
<td>Produces pink flowers, grows in open areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Tips for Gardening

- Best time to plant is in autumn and spring when the soil is moist and the weather mild.
- Dig a hole slightly bigger than the pot, gently remove the plant from the pot by holding it upside down and tugging gently - avoid pulling the plant out by the stem. Place the plant carefully in the hole and fill the soil around it. Firm the soil as you go.
- Water well. All plants need to be watered individually to settle the soil around the root system. Rain will not provide the same effect.
- Place a 10 cm thick layer of mulch in the garden bed, adding that the plant stems are kept clear of the mulch as it can cause the stem to rot. Mulch retains moisture in the soil reducing the need to water, encourages the growth of beneficial ants, ribes, and suppresses weeds. Alternatively, pebbles of large rocks can be used instead of plant based mulch.

## Control of Weeds

- A key element in successful gardening. Remove weeds by hand, smothering with mulch or by herbicide application.

## Watering

- After this initial watering associated with planting, gardens may require watering once or twice a week during summer and drought periods. Remember, winter can also have extended periods without rain.

## Fertilizing

- Some plants may respond to light applications of native plant fertilizer that is low in phosphorus (K).