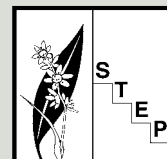


Garden makers of the Southern Tablelands



Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Regional Botanic Garden



PHOTO CREDITS

COVER: Blue devil (*Eryngium ovinum*): Andy Russell, Grey fantail (*Rhipidura albiscapa*): Liz Harman, Golden everlasting daisy (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*): Linda Muldoon, Brittle gum (*Eucalyptus mannifera*): Linda Muldoon

- A** Australia's Open Garden Scheme, 2010. Courtesy *The Canberra Times*: Kate Leith
- B** Grey Ghost (*Zieria cytisoides*): Janet Russell
- C** Courtyard: Linda Muldoon
- D** Spotted marsh frog (*Limnodynastes tasmaniensis*): Geoff Robertson
- E** King Parrot (*Alisterus scapularis*): Janet Russell
- F** Eastern Blue-tongue lizard (*Tiliqua scincoides*): Andy Russell
- G** Canberra Bells: ACT Government
- H** Long-leaf wax flower (*Philotheca myoporoides*): Janet Russell
- I** Courtyard: Linda Muldoon
- J** Rock isotome (*Isotoma axillaris*): Janet Russell
- K** Moth and flower (*Ammobium alatum*): Andy Russell
- L** Golden everlasting (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*): Andy Russell
- M** 'Canberra' grass (*Scleranthus biflorus*): Andy Russell
- N** Grassy woodland garden: Linda Muldoon
- O** Three gum woodland garden: Janet Russell

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www.STEP.asn.au

The Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) – ANPSA

<http://asgap.org.au/sgap1a.html>

The Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) – ANPSA is the national organisation representing the state and regional plant societies including the Australian Native Plant Society, Canberra Region. It caters for people interested in Australia's native flora whether that interest is simple appreciation of the beauty and diversity of the flora or whether it extends to propagation, cultivation and conservation.

The Gallery on the ANPSA website contains over 700 images of a wide range of Australian native plants. But it's not just a simple image gallery - each plant photo is accompanied by a description which includes a distribution map, botanical features and cultivation or propagation notes.

The gallery is arranged alphabetically by genus and a separate native garden gallery is included, illustrating a range of large and small gardens – to help in designing your own native garden.

The Australian Native Plants Society Canberra Region

<http://nativeplants-canberra.asn.au/>

The Australian Native Plants Society Canberra Region holds two plant sales a year, in March and in October, located in the southern car park of the Australian National Botanic Gardens. The sales are very popular, and attract thousands of people to the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

At the sales you will find a large variety of high quality plants suitable for both new and established gardens, including local species and cultivars and forms suitable for the Canberra climate. This website includes tips about starting your garden with local (indigenous) plants.

Friendly volunteers and growers will answer your questions about Australian native plants and gardening, as well as provide brochures and leaflets on native plants and local native plant nurseries. The Society mostly sells small plants with a well developed root system because these will grow much better and faster in your garden than large or fully grown plants.

Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG)

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/gardens/plantinfo/index.html>

The Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) is a wonderful living and virtual resource for Canberra garden makers. ANBG is a place for recreation, inspiration, science and learning. Situated on the lower slopes of Black Mountain in Canberra, the ANBG has the world's most comprehensive display of living Australian native plants. There are many plants of the Southern Tablelands region included in the collection.

The ANBG website is a scientific and horticultural resource for garden makers. If you would like see an image of a plant that you would like to grow you can look for it on the website on the photo image page. The website also has a map for the ANBG site with a search window so that you can search for the name of a plant to find its location in the ANBG. This means that you can visit a living specimen growing in the ANBG and get a better of idea of its character and growing needs.



The Canberra Bells Correa is the official native plant commemorating the 100th anniversary of the national capital.

http://www.canberra100.com.au/projects/canberra_bells_correa.php



Molonglo Catchment Group

<http://www.molonglocatchment.com.au/Weeds/index.htm>

When a species invades and dominates the ecosystem, habitat changes and so do the species that live in that habitat.

In our landscape and residential gardens, weeds compete with the naturally occurring plants for water, sunlight and soil nutrients.

The Molonglo Catchment Group website assists home owners and residents identify weeds, understand WHY they are weeds and how they can control or remove them. Also included on the website is a comprehensive list of indigenous native species.

Good garden design can assist you to control weeds, for example, mulching will inhibit weed growth.



Garden Maker's Guide for the Southern Tablelands

This brochure is produced by the Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park (STEP) Inc. We are a community organisation developing a small botanic garden promoting ideas for conservation and landscape restoration within the National Arboretum Canberra (the Arboretum) at STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden. STEP is a partner of the Arboretum and we benefit from sharing its education, research, horticultural, ceremonial and cultural objectives.

STEP hopes to encourage garden makers to see plants not just as individual species but as belonging to a community of plants. There are many local plants that can fill design niches within a garden landscape and that also are well-adapted to the local environment. By growing local plants garden makers can supplement the habitat that our local grassland and bushland provide so that the region can support abundant, healthy and vibrant wildlife.

This brochure can help you to:

- ▶ create attractive design and habitat features in your garden
- ▶ develop a healthy lifestyle and increase wildlife habitat
- ▶ get to know local plants and their growing needs
- ▶ manage water flows, soil and plant subsidence and loss of surface moisture
- ▶ identify and manage weeds
- ▶ appreciate the diversity of colour, height and shade elements in ecosystem plantings
- ▶ use online resources to view and select the plants you want to grow.

More about STEP

If you would like to help develop the STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden, you should consider joining STEP. The STEP website has more information about STEP including a membership form. Membership is \$20.00 for individuals or families.

Where is the STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden?

The STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden is one of the 100 forests of the National Arboretum Canberra. In contrast to the single species forests in the Arboretum, STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden contains 16 species of southern tablelands' eucalypts. They have been planted in groups that reflect their natural place in the landscape. We are gradually planting understorey species so that different parts of the site will display some of the shrubs, creepers, vines, herbs, ferns and grasses that are commonly found beneath the forest and grassy woodland canopies. STEP Forest 20 with demonstration garden includes a small ephemeral wetland that is a simple water feature to attract frogs and birds. It is hoped that visitors to the Arboretum will learn more about the key elements of the region's ecosystems and biodiversity from our site.

STEP offers opportunities for volunteers to participate in establishing the garden. Our working bees held every Thursday morning from 8.30 to 11.30 am are a great opportunity for garden makers to learn by experience.

What's on the STEP website?

The STEP website features information on the ecosystem-based plant communities of the Southern Tablelands in a series of fact sheets entitled *Telling the Understorey*. They include:

- ▶ a list of the trees and understorey plants of the five principal ecosystems of the region; and
- ▶ a list of the common and scientific names of the region's understorey plants.

The information about the understorey plants is divided into six plant categories: trees, shrubs, vines and creepers, herbs, ferns, grasses and grass-like plants.

STEP has been developing and utilising these resources for the garden design ideas and plant selection for our own botanic garden at the STEP site. Our research has been funded by a grant from the ACT Government entitled *Developing Our Natural Capital*.



Greening Australia

www.greeningaustralia.org.au/

Greening Australia (GA) has 30 years of experience in protecting and restoring the health and diversity of the Australian landscape assisted by its skilled volunteers and the general community. It has a strong local presence with its regional office and nursery based at Aranda in Canberra. Local seeds collected by volunteers are grown in the nursery by other volunteers for use in landscape restoration projects. GA is also establishing seed orchards to secure seed supply and allow wider distribution of rare local plants into the community via its members or through retail outlets.

Our garden

Our garden was featured in the Australian Open Garden Scheme in October 2010. It showcases a large range of native plants including many plants from the Southern Tablelands. The many species can be used in different ways to fill distinctive landscaping niches. Tall elegant eucalypts, colourful shrubs, strappy plants, small herbs and groundcovers provide variety and form in a garden in which there is some colour all the year round.

The grassy woodland section of our garden faces west towards the street and is a harsh environment in both summer and winter. The eucalypts including brittle gum and Argyle apple provide protection from the sun as well as shelter for the shrubs and ground cover plants in the understorey.

The remaining garden is mainly a shrubbery that screens the fences and provides cover for small birds. More of the less common shrubs such as the Grey Ghost (pictured below) are becoming available to buy commercially.

In the courtyard we have a wonga wonga vine growing over the pergola. This is lovely in spring when it is covered in white tubular flowers. This vine together with our small collection of potted ferns, rainforest plants and other pot plants provide a delightful shady spot on the hottest of days.

Andy & Janet



Garden makers tips

<http://www.aila.org.au/canberragarden/creating/inspiration.htm#attractive>

Consider including some of the following ideas in your garden for habitat based on ecosystem ideas:

- ▶ plant indigenous plants, ie that are local to the area and suited to the climate, to reduce use of fertiliser and water
- ▶ use pebbles, gravel and/or fine eucalypt mulch for design needs and to reduce loss of moisture and weed re-growth
- ▶ develop small rocky areas or walls that allow a cool root run for plants needing extra moisture as well as providing skink and other lizard habitat
- ▶ create a small wetland or a water feature with plantings of local sedges and rushes close by to attract frogs and birds
- ▶ plant trees with a sparse canopy, eg small eucalypts for dappled shade and protection of plants from frost: dense shade inhibits the growth of plants
- ▶ plant middle storey flowering shrubs for small birds including plants with spiny stems and foliage for the birds' protection
- ▶ make features of native grasses and daisies to bring in bees, butterflies and other insects
- ▶ if needed, employ a landscape specialist to help with design advice, manage water run-off to reduce soil erosion and water waste.



Visitors in the garden



Birds, bees and butterflies, skinks, lizards and frogs can all be attracted to your garden. You will need to design the habitat and use local plant species.

Birds

<http://garden.canberrabirds.org.au/index.htm>

Birds are most likely to be found in gardens near their preferred habitat, or similar to their preferred habitat.

They also prefer local ecosystems, biodiversity, local plant food, water, nesting opportunities and shelter from predators.

The Birds of Canberra Gardens website will provide you with information on how to attract and keep local birds in your garden.

Frogs

<http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au/frogwatch>

The Ginninderra Catchment Group website will provide you with information on Canberra and Region frog watch activities.

Frog are widely recognised as indicators of environmental health and their presence can indicate good water quality and the availability of high quality habitat.

When you create your frog habitat try to use local plants where possible as this helps to conserve local gene pools. Make sure you find a plant nursery that deals specifically in indigenous plants grown from local seed stock. You need to decide the type of water feature to provide as a breeding place for frogs.