



Planting to Reduce the Impact of Fire Damaging Your Home and Property

You can significantly reduce the damaging impact of a bushfire by planting certain types of vegetation on your property.

There is no such thing as a fire proof plant, as all vegetation will burn in the right circumstances or if subjected to intense prolonged heat. However there are types of plants that are more resilient to a fires impact.

The characteristics of these plants are:

- High water or salt content within the leaves, creating a buffer zone
- Low volatile oils within the leaves
- Do not accumulate litter on the bark or within the canopy
- Can be short, low to the ground and compact reducing the movement of a bushfire, dampening the effect of Radiant Heat as well as lessening the intensity of Ember Attack, as the foliage smoulders and self extinguishes after a short period of time
- Can be pruned excessively without damaging the plant in times of high fire risk

Aside from the types of plants there are other factors to consider when planting vegetation to reduce the impact of bushfires:

- Don't have tree branches hanging over the roof of your house. Try and have 5 meters of clear access between any trees and your house
- Avoid creating canopies that can assist the movement of fire by spacing trees and other plants apart
- Incorporate lawns, pebbles, pavers or water features to reduce the standing vegetation surrounding the house

Regardless of the types of vegetation you have on your property, it is recommended that before each Fire Season you:

- Clear gutters of leaf litter or other vegetation
- Remove rubbish that is laying around the property (dispose of gas cylinders, aerosols, batteries, etc according to local government laws and bi-laws)
- Maintain shrubs and trees regularly by removing dead branches, pruning and removing leaf litter that forms around the base
- If clearing any location of Native Vegetation that you will need to find out about any regulations or laws by contacting your local Council

By using the information provided in this handout, not only could you be reducing the impact of a bushfire on your property, you could also be assisting Rural Fire Brigade Volunteers in safely defending your property.

SUGGESTED VEGETATION

Lilly Pilly
(*Acmena Smithii*)



Found: East Coast of Australia from North Qld to Southern Victoria. Also found on King Island

Height: With 15 different species of the Lilly Pilly, the heights vary from 1m to 20m

Facts: Drought and frost tolerant once established

Illawarra Flame Tree
(*Brachychiton Acerifolius*)



Found: Far North Qld to Central NSW in coastal rainforest areas

Height: 30m to 35m though smaller height in cooler areas

Facts: Can be planted in most soils

Kurrajong
(*Brachychiton Populneus*)



Found: Inland areas from Southern Qld, through Western NSW to Eastern Victoria.

Height: Up to 20m

Facts: Drought tolerant – Can be used as food for stock

Blueberry Ash
(*Elaeocarpus Reticulatus*)



Found: In coastal scrub and rainforest areas from South East Qld, through Eastern NSW to Eastern Victoria including Bass Strait, Flinders and King Island

Height: 10m to 15m

Facts: Suits most soils where adequate water is available

Moreton Bay Fig
(*Ficus Macrophylla*)



Found: Central Qld through to Southern NSW in rainforest areas

Height: 15m to 35m

Facts: Not for normal suburban environments due to extensive root system

Native Frangipani
(*Hymenosporum Flavum*)



Found: Tall open forest areas as well as rainforest areas in Qld and NSW

Height: Around 10m in Southern areas, and around 25m in tropical areas

Facts: Hardy in dry areas

Blue Lillypilly
(*Syzygium Oleosum*)



Found: Coastal rainforest areas from Northern Qld through to Southern NSW
Height: 3m to 12m
Fact: Drought tolerant once established

Water Gum
(*Tristaniopsis Laurina*)



Found: Southern Qld to South Eastern Victoria in wet forest areas
Height: 15m to 20m
Facts: Good in most soils – needs water in dry periods

Coastal Wattle
(*Acacia Sophorae*)



Found: South East Qld in among coastal forests near sand dunes through to coastal areas of South Australia
Height: 2m to 3m
Facts: Good in wide range of soils – Can become Environmental Weed

Swamp Banksia
(*Banksia Robur*)



Found: In sandy, swampy areas intermittently along the coastline of Qld from Gladstone to Southern NSW
Height: 2m to 3m
Facts: Can tolerate poor drainage in wet areas

Hairpin Banksia
(*Banksia Spinulosa*)



Found: Coastal and mountain woodland and open forest areas in Qld and NSW
Height: Under 1m
Facts: Tolerant of frost – Suits average soil type - Attracts bees and birds

Sticky Hop Bush
(*Dodonaea Viscosa*)



Found: Throughout the majority of Qld, WA, NT and Tasmania and all of NSW, SA and Victoria
Height: 3m to 6m.
Facts: Drought and moderate frost tolerant

Dogwood
(*Jacksonia Scoparia*)



Found: South East Qld to South East NSW along the coastline in open and woodland forest areas
Height: 3m to 4m
Facts: Suits a range of soils – Adaptable to conditions once established

Lemon Myrtle
(*Backhousia Citriodora*)



Found: Coastal Qld in rainforest areas
Height: 2m to 20m
Facts: Slow growing – Tolerates all soils with the exception of poorly drained areas

Ivory Curl Flower
(*Buckinghamia Celsissima*)



Found: Northern Qld in rainforest areas
Height – 7m to 30m (in natural surroundings)
Facts: Requires well drained soils – Attracts birds

Cocky Apple
(*Planchonia Careya*)



Found: Tropical Northern Qld down to Fraser Island
Height: 4m to 10m
Facts: Fruit attracts Cockatoos

Beach Cherry
(*Eugenia Reinwardtiana*)



Found: Coastal Qld in tropical and sub-tropical areas
Height: 2m to 6m
Facts: Slow growing – Edible fruit – Requires regular moisture

Scarlet Fuchsia
(*Graptophyllum Excelsum*)



Found: Cape York and Port Curtis in Qld along the eastern ranges
Height: 1.5m to 8m averaging 4m
Facts: Tolerates varied climates – Attracts birds

Scrub Cherry
(*Syzygium Australe*)



Found: South East Qld and coastal NSW in sub-tropical rainforest areas
Height: Up to 25m
Facts: Requires regular moisture – Available in compact forms for large garden pots, etc

Golden Penda
(*Xanthostemon Chrysanthus*)



Found: Far Northern Qld in tropical areas
Height: 12m x 10m spread – Natural environment can reach 20m
Facts: Requires warmer climates

Tuckeroo
(*Cupaniopsis Anacardioides*)



Found: Coastal Qld in tropical and sub-tropical areas
Height: 8m to 15m
Facts: Tolerant of salt, poor soils and wind – Root system is non-invasive

Native Gardenia
(*Randia Fitzalani*)



Found: Coastal areas from Cape York to Rockhampton
Height: 6m to 10m
Facts: Requires adequate water - Intolerant to frost

Cape Honeysuckle
(*Tecoma Capensis*)



Found: Coastal areas of Qld to Central NSW
(Native to Africa)
Height: Up to 3m
Facts: Regarded as an Environmental Weed –
Must be pruned annually to control growth

Silver Bush
(*Convolvulus Cneorum*)



Found: Native to Europe
Height: Less than 1m
Facts: Drought and cold tolerant – Quick growing

Lily Turf
(*Liriope*)



Found: Native to South East Asia
Height: 30cm to 50cm
Facts: Ground cover plants for gardens – Grows
aggressively – Small violet blue flowers on central
spikes – Drought tolerant

Star Jasmine
(*Trachelospermum Jasminoides*)



Found: Native to South East Asia
Height: Up to 3m
Facts: Fragrant flowers used in perfumes and
cooking – House and garden plants – Hardy plant

Lily of the Nile
(*Agapanthus Orientalis*)



Found: Native to South Africa
Height: Up to 1m
Facts: Regarded as Environmental Weed – Sap
irritates the skin – Hardy garden plant

Day Lily
(*Hemerocallis*)



Found: Native to Japan, China and Korea
Height: Up to 1m
Facts: Tolerates most soils – Drought tolerant

Bird of Paradise
(*Strelitza Reginae*)



Found: Native to South Africa
Height: Approximately 2m
Facts: Slow growing – Low maintenance once
established – Intolerant to frost

Pig-Face
(*Carpobrotus Glaucescens*)



Found: QLD and NSW coastal sand dune areas
Height: Up to 30cm
Facts: Drought, salt and sand tolerant ground
cover – Low maintenance – Good in rocky
gardens

References and Photos

“Planting your Garden for Bushfire Protection Fact Sheet” *Indigenous Landscape Design Australia*

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)

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Emaho's Tree's

Website: <http://www.emahotrees.com.au>

Morrison's Garden Centre

Website: <http://www.morrisonsgardencentre.com.au>

“Plant Handout” Neil Fisher from Fishers Nursery, North Rockhampton Qld.