



Creating Stepping Stones for Nectar Feeders

TIN Topic 16

One of the pleasures of creating a native garden is the sight of native animals, birds, possums, bats, and butterflies, using the “oasis” you have created even in the middle of suburbia.

You get to reconnect with the natural world without having the responsibility of keeping a pet, and if you have the right plants and a source of water, such as a bird bath or a pond, the wildlife looks after itself.

This fact sheet will suggest some local native plants to attract nectar feeders, and will give an indication of the size of the plants so you can choose plants to suit your site.



If you have a large block or acreage,

you can plant some of the local gum trees:



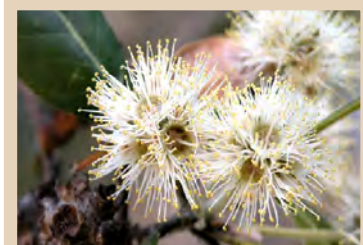
In coastal forest areas: Sydney Red Gum (Smooth-barked Apple) *Angophora costata*, Brown Stringybark *Eucalyptus capitellata*, Board-leaved White Mahogany *Eucalyptus umbra*, Blackbutt *Eucalyptus pilularis* Scribbly Gum *Eucalyptus haemastoma* or *Eucalyptus racemosa* and Red Bloodwood *Corymbia gummifera*

in coastal hills and ridgelines extending into the Hunter Valley: Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata*, Grey Ironbark *Eucalyptus paniculata* and Grey Gum *Eucalyptus punctata* or *Eucalyptus propinqua*

on alluvial flats and around coastal lakes and estuaries: Forest Red Gum *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, Rough-barked Apple *Angophora floribunda* and Swamp Mahogany *Eucalyptus robusta*

in sheltered gullies around creeklines in the upper catchment of creeks and rivers: Sydney Blue Gum *Eucalyptus saligna*, White Mahogany *Eucalyptus acmenoides*, Sydney Peppermint *Eucalyptus piperita*, and Turpentine *Syncarpia glomulifera*

The benefit of planting trees in natural associations like this rather than just one species is that the trees flower at different times of the year so that there is almost always a nectar source for wildlife.



Syncarpia glomulifera



Angophora costata



Eucalyptus racemosa



Angophora floribunda



Banksia integrifolia



Banksia aemula



In large coastal gardens on sandy soils, the larger Banksias (or Honeysuckles) would provide an excellent framework for a nectar garden.

Locally these are the Coastal Banksia-*Banksia integrifolia*, the Old Man Banksia -*Banksia serrata*, and the Wallum Banksia- *Banksia aemula*. Complementary nectar plants for coastal gardens would include Coastal Rosemary *Westringia fruticosa*, Coastal Tea Tree *Leptospermum laevigatum*, Thyme Honeymyrtle *Melaleuca thymifolia*, Bracelet Honeymyrtle *Melaleuca armillaris*, Hillock Bush *Melaleuca hypericifolia*, Red Bottlebrush *Callistemon citrinus*, Pine-leaved Bottlebrush *Callistemon pinifolius*, Narrow-leaved Bottlebrush *Callistemon linearis*, Drumsticks *Isopogon anemonifolius*, Cone-sticks *Petrophile pulchella*, Mountain Devil *Lambertia formosa*, Heath Banksia- *Banksia ericifolia*, Hill Banksia- *Banksia spinulosa* var. *collina*, Needle-bushes *Hakea sericea*, *Hakea gibbosa* and *Hakea bakeriana*, Gynea Lily *Doryanthes excelsa*, and Grass Trees *Xanthorrhoea* spp.



Westringia fruticosa



Leptospermum laevigatum



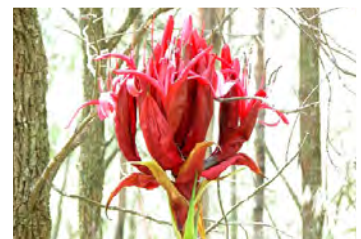
Melaleuca thymifolia



Isopogon anemonifolius



Petrophile pulchella



Doryanthes excelsa

In a small coastal garden or city courtyard on sandy soils, you could leave out the larger species and mass plant the smaller species at close spacing (less than 1 metre) or in pots to imitate the way these species grow in coastal heath.

Species such as the following would be suitable: Coastal Rosemary *Westringia fruticosa*, Thyme Honey-myrtle *Melaleuca thymifolia*, Hillock Bush *Melaleuca hypericifolia*, Red Bottlebrush *Callistemon citrinus*, Pine-leaved Bottlebrush *Callistemon pinifolius*, Narrow-leaved Bottlebrush *Callistemon linearis*, Drumsticks *Isopogon anemonifolius*, Cone-sticks *Petrophile pulchella*, Mountain Devil *Lambertia formosa*, Heath Banksia *Banksia ericifolia*, Hill Banksia *Banksia spinulosa* var. *collina*, Needle-bushes *Hakea sericea*, *Hakea gibbosa* and *Hakea bakeriana*, GyMEA Lily *Doryanthes excelsa*, and Grass Trees *Xanthorrhoea* spp.

Pruning after flowering would imitate the dwarfing effect of fire in heathland and result in a dense, compact shrub. Indeed, some of the

coastal gums can be dwarfed in this way: by pruning back to the base once established, you end up with a multi-trunked, dwarfed tree which still provides nectar for local wildlife. Two naturally occurring dwarfed gums are Dwarf Apple *Angophora hispida* and Heart-leaved Stringybark *Eucalyptus camfieldii*.



Callistemon citrinus



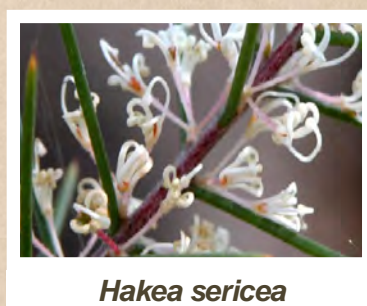
Banksia ericifolia



Banksia spinulosa



Hakea gibbosa



Hakea sericea



Lambertia formosa

For a large garden on swampy soils

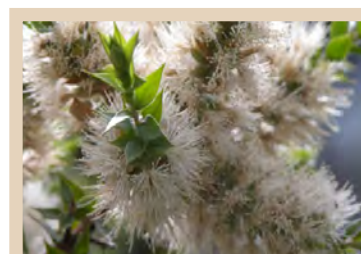
the large Paperbarks are ideal.

Broad-leaved Paperbark *Melaleuca quinquenervia* usually grows in association with Swamp Mahogany *Eucalyptus robusta* and/or Forest Red Gum *Eucalyptus tereticornis* in coastal areas. In late winter these trees are massed with flowers and full of honeyeaters and parrots during the day and with bats, possums and gliders at night. They provide a nectar source for two threatened species, Swift Parrot and Regent Honeyeater.



Melaleuca quinquenervia

Prickly-leaved Paperbark *Melaleuca styphelioides* is another large Paperbark usually growing in moist, coastal gullies below Spotted Gum/ Ironbark Forest, or with Sydney Blue Gum *Eucalyptus saligna* and Turpentine *Syncarpia glomulifera* in the upper catchments.



Melaleuca styphelioides

For a smaller garden on swampy soils,

Paperbarks like Snow-in-Summer *Melaleuca linariifolia*, Siebers Paperbark *Melaleuca sieberi*, Swamp Paperbark *Melaleuca ericifolia* and Ball Honeymyrtle *Melaleuca nodosa* usually stay below 5 metres in height. Willow Bottlebrush *Callistemon salignus* grows in similar conditions and to about the same height.

Other nectar plants for swampy soils are Swamp Banksia *Banksia robur*, the Tea Trees *Leptospermum polygalifolium*, *Leptospermum trinervium*, *Leptospermum continentale* and *Leptospermum liversedgeii*, Swamp Lily *Crinum pedunculatum* and Christmas Bells *Blandfordia grandiflora*.

Dense rainforest gardens do not usually support species like honeyeaters but some nectar feeders like butterflies are attracted by the flowers of rainforest plants such as Palm Lily *Cordyline stricta*, Veiny Wilkiea *Wilkiea hugeliana*, Native Frangipani *Hymenosporum flavum* and the Bangalow Palm *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*.



Banksia robur



Crinum pedunculatum



Blandfordia grandiflora



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