



Greening the Island with Indigenous plants.

With habitat disappearing at an alarming rate, you can help provide wildlife with an oasis of habitat they need to thrive. The native plants that you use can meet the needs of native wildlife without causing long-term damage to local plant communities.

WHY CHOOSE NATIVE PLANTS?

Native plants are attractive and come in many shapes and sizes. With the right species you can have a flowering garden all year round. 'Natives' are adapted to suit our conditions and can cope better with our changing climate. They are better for the environment, low maintenance, drought tolerant, and require minimal water. Native plants also provide habitat for native birds, butterflies, bees, lizards and other insects. By planting a native garden, you can help connect animal and plant populations across the island.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO PLANT?

You can plant natives at any time of the year. However the best time is autumn through winter. This gives them a chance to establish before the warm weather hits. Spring is a good time too, however they might need a little extra supportive watering through summer.

SHOULD I PREPARE THE GROUND BEFOREHAND?

The more effort you put into soil preparation the better results you will get, however it is not essential and will depend on your soil type. Removing weeds and getting organic matter back into your soils will improve your plants' success and viability.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO REMOVE THE PLANTS FROM THE POTS?

Give your tubes a good soak when you get them home and plant out as soon as possible. If you are not planting them out immediately keep them in a sunny position and water them regularly. Prior to planting, soak the plants in a bucket of water, ideally in a diluted seaweed extract. To remove the plant from its pot, always tap them out - never pull as this can damage the plant. Gently squeeze the pot around the base, place your fingers over the top and turn the pot upside down, then move your hands in a downward motion to remove the plant from the pot. For stubborn plants you can tap the edge of the pot on a hard surface to loosen it.

HOW BIG A HOLE SHOULD I DIG?

Dig the hole bigger and deeper than the plant you are planting (approximately 100mm deeper and 100mm wider than the current pot). If the soil is dry, fill the hole with water prior to planting and wait for it to soak in. Place the plant in the centre of your prepared hole and backfill with the loose soil. The top of the roots should be just below the existing soil level. Mound any leftover soil to create a basin, as this will help with watering. Water the plant in heavily, giving it a good soak.

SHOULD I TEASE OR CUT THE ROOTS?

Do not tease the roots. Our pots have specially designed root trainers to prevent the plants from becoming root bound and many natives do not like their roots to be disturbed.



Volunteers create cuttings for Bushbank plant stock.

SHOULD I MULCH MY PLANTS?

Mulching has a number of benefits, including helping to conserve soil moisture and reducing weed competition. It also adds nutrients back into the soil as it breaks down - a well-composted mix is recommended. Mulching every season or as your existing layer breaks down will improve the health of your plants and the look of your garden. We recommend that you mulch around your plants to a depth of 50-100mm, but don't mulch up to the stem as this can cause collar rot.

DO NATIVE PLANTS NEED FERTILIZER?

It is a common misconception that Australian Natives do not require fertilizer. Although they have adapted to often poor, infertile soils they will benefit a great deal from fertilizer, and it will help them grow vigorously and flower more profusely. If you choose to fertilize, an organic or slow release fertilizer with low levels of phosphorous is best.

DO I NEED TO GUARD OR PROTECT MY PLANTS?

Tree guards can provide some protection from frost, wind and plant eating pests. Staking your plants in most cases will not be needed. However if you find you do need to stake them, use three stakes instead of one. The idea is to help support the plant to develop its own strength - one stake will only make your plant more reliant on the stake. Remove the stakes as soon as possible once the plant is more stable.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WATER MY PLANTS?

An exact watering regime is hard to prescribe, and it will depend on a number of factors; your soil type, the weather, the time of the year, even plant selection. Your plants will most likely need extra help for their first summer and then some additional watering after that, depending on the above factors. It is best to give your plants a deep soak to encourage a deeper root system rather than small regular watering. It is also good to take note of the weather, as it is best to water your plants before a heat wave rather than waiting for your plants to become stressed.

SHOULD I PRUNE MY PLANTS?

Like any plant, Australian natives will respond well to pruning. After all, they do get pruned in the wild by kangaroos and wallabies. The shape that you desire will determine how you prune your plants. Shrubs will maintain a bush habit if they are regularly tip pruned during their growing period. As a general rule, prune in milder conditions and remember to keep your tools clean and sharp.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY EMPTY POTS?

In an effort to be more sustainable and reduce our waste, we will happily reuse your empty pots. You can return them to the nursery on your next visit where we will clean and reuse the pots for future gardeners.