



Nature for backyards

20
20

Native plants of the Inner West

These plants have been selected because of their availability and suitability for bringing habitat and colour to your home and urban backyards of all sizes. They are just a small sample of what is locally native to the area.

Key to the plant list

Height

The height of a plant should only be used as a guide. Ultimately, the height of a plant will depend on the conditions where the plant is grown. A plant grown in favourable conditions may reach a greater height than what is predicted. For trees, the heights provided are generally the maximum height you can expect but this will vary depending on where it is grown.

The tree abbreviations below are used:

ST = Small tree

MT = Medium tree

TT = Tall tree

Sunlight preferences

S = Shade

PS = Part shade or dappled light

FS = Full sun

Watering preferences

LW = plant tolerates dry soils and drought periods

MW = plant prefers moist soils

HW = plant tolerates wet soils for longer periods or occasional waterlogging

Planting Zones

There are three main vegetation zones in the Inner West. Visit Council's website to find out which zone you are located in. The zones are based on the likely distribution of the original vegetation communities. This should be used as a guide only and in addition to considering the current environmental conditions in your backyard.

The full names of the abbreviated zones are:

SSFW = Sandstone Slopes Forest and Woodland

STIF = Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest

WC = Wetland Complex (includes Swamp Oak Forest and Estuarine Saltmarsh and Reedland areas)



Climbers

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Billardiera scandens</i>	Apple Berry		MW	any	PS – S	SSFW, STIF	A scrambling plant with slender stems and cream flowers in September– December. Followed by purple fruits.
<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>	Climbing Guinea Flower		LW	any	FS – PS	SSFW, STIF	A climber with bright yellow flowers in spring and summer. Can also be used as a groundcover.
<i>Kennedia rubicunda</i>	Dusky Coral Pea		LW	any	FS	SSFW, STIF	A robust woody scrambler with red peaflowers in August – November.
<i>Clematis aristata</i>	Old Man's Beard		MW	any-clay	PS	STIF	A vigorous, woody climber with masses of delicate white flowers in August–November.
<i>Clematis glycinoides</i>	Headache Vine		MW	any	PS – S	STIF	A woody dense vine which produces lots of cream-white flowers in spring. The species is dioecious meaning the plants have either male or female flowers.
<i>Glycine clandestina</i>	Love Creeper		MW	any	PS – S	SSFW, STIF	A slender twiner with mauve pea-flowers throughout the year.
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral Pea		LW	any	FS	SSFW, STIF	A hardy evergreen scrambler with clusters of rich purple peaflowers in September – November.
<i>Eustrephus latifolius</i>	Wombat Berry		LW	any	PS	SSFW, STIF	A fast growing vine that will clump and can be used as a groundcover. Has pink to mauve or white flowers and small orange berries.
<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>	Wonga Wonga Vine		LW	any	FS – PS	SSFW, STIF	A fast-growing woody twiner with prolific clusters of small white flowers in June–December.

Groundcovers and Grasses

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Alternanthera denticulata</i>		20cm	HW	any - damp	PS - S	WC	A compact spreading groundcover plant with straw coloured flowers.
<i>Carex appressa</i>	Tall Sedge	0.5m	MW	any	FS- S	WC	A tussocky plant with tough strap-like leaves and brown seed heads in October- January.
<i>Carex fascicularis</i>	Tassel Sedge	0.5m	HW	any - damp	FS- S	WC	A tussocky plant with bright green strap-like leaves and green seed heads in October- January.
<i>Carpobrotus glaucescens</i>	Pig Face	20cm	LW		FS- S	WC	A robust ground cover with succulent leaves and pinky purple flowers for most of the year.
<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Asiatic Pennywort	15cm	MW	any	FS- S	STIF, WC	An evergreen perennial forming a dense mat of leaves with clusters of tiny flowers in November - May.
<i>Commelina cyanea</i>	Scurvey Weed	20cm	MW	any	PS - S	SSFW, STIF, WC	Often confused with the exotic weed Tradescantia, a hardy groundcover with blue flowers in December- May.
<i>Cymbopogon refractus</i>	Barbed Wire Grass	60cm	LW	any	FS - PS	STIF	A tufted grass with tall wiry stems.
<i>Dianella caerulea</i>	Blue Flax-lily	50cm	LW	any	FS - S	STIF	An erect, tufted plant with strappy leaves and rich blue flowers in September- February. Followed by purple berries.
<i>Dichelachne crinita</i>	Longhair Plume-grass	60cm	LW	any - sand	FS - PS	SSFW, STIF	A tufted perennial with yellow and reddish brown flowers in spring.

Groundcovers and Grasses

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney Weed	5cm	MW	any	FS-S	STIF	A creeping perennial forming a dense mat of kidney shaped leaves with tiny white flowers in September - February.
<i>Echinopogon caespitosus</i>	Tufted Hedgehog Grass	50cm	MW	any - clay	PS-S	STIF	A tufted grass with round green seed heads.
<i>Einadia hastata</i>	Berry Saltbush	60cm	LW	any - clay	FS-S		Low shrubby perennial with dark green triangular leaves. It has very small green or yellow flowers followed by small succulent red berries.
<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Knobby Club Rush	60cm	MW	any	FS-S	WC	A tussocky plant with tough needle-like leaves and brown ball-shaped seed heads in October-January.
<i>Geranium homeanum</i>	Northern Cranesbill	50cm	MW	any	FS-S	STIF	A creeping groundcover with pale pink flowers in spring and summer.
<i>Hydrocotyle peduncularis</i>	Small Leaved Pennywort	15cm	MW	any	PS-S	STIF	A creeping perennial forming a dense mat of ivy-shaped leaves with tiny white flowers in September-February.
<i>Juncus usitatus</i>	Common Rush	1m	MW	any	FS- S	WC	A tussocky plant with tough needle-like leaves and straw coloured seed heads in October- January.
<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Mat Rush	1m	LW	any	FS- S	STIF	A tufted plant with tough strap like leaves and tiny yellow flowers in October - January.

Groundcovers and Grasses

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Microlaena stipoides</i>	Weeping Grass	30cm	MW	any	PS- S SSFW	STIF	A soft, slender grass with weeping seedheads throughout the year.
<i>Oplismenus aemulus</i>	Basket Grass	20cm	MW	any	PS- S SSFW	STIF	A creeping perennial forming a dense mat of arrow shaped leaves.
<i>Pelargonium inodorum</i>	Wild Geranium	30cm	LW	any - sand	FS- PS	SSFW	Low shrubby perennial with fuzzy leaves. It has pink flowers in the warmer months.
<i>Persicaria decipiens</i>	Slender Knotweed	50cm	HW	any - damp	FS- PS	WC	Low open perennial with pink flowers in the warmer months. Disappears in dry or cold periods but comes back next season.
<i>Rytidosperma species</i>	Wallaby Grass	60cm	LW	any	FS- PS SSFW	STIF	A tufted perennial grass with compact flower heads which appear bleached and fluffy when mature.
<i>Scaevola albida</i>	Fan-flower	30cm	MW	any	FS- S	SSFW	A creeping perennial forming a dense mat with mauve flowers in the warmer months.
<i>Schoenus apogon</i>	Common Bog-rush	20cm	MW	any - clay	FS- S	STIF	A creeping tussocky plant with soft needle like leaves.
<i>Tetragonia tetragonioides</i>	Warrigal Greens	20cm	MW	any - sand	PS- S	WC	A big fleshy-leaved groundcover.

Groundcovers and Grasses

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Themeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	75cm	LW	any	FS- PS	SSFW STIF	A tufted perennial grass with purplish seed heads in the warmer months.
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Native Violet	15cm	MW	any - sand	PS- S	WC	A creeping perennial forming a dense mat of kidney shaped leaves with white and purple flowers in September – February.
<i>Wahlenbergia gracilis</i>	Australian Bluebell	30cm	LW	any	FS- PS SSFW	STIF WC	A slender tufted perennial with sky blue flowers throughout the year.

Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Acacia falcata</i>	Hickory Wattle	5m	MW	any - clay	PS	STIF	An open shrub with grey green foliage like a miniature Eucalyptus tree. It has cream flowers in winter.
<i>Acacia implexa</i>	Hickory Wattle	4-10m		any	FS-S SSFW	STIF	A graceful, willowy shrub 4-10m high, with pale yellow flowers.
<i>Acacia linifolia</i>	Flax-leafed Wattle	2m		any	FS-S SSFW	STIF	A graceful shrub to 2m high with cream flowers in summer or early autumn.
<i>Acacia longifolia</i>	Sydney Golden Wattle	3-4m	LW	any-sand	FS-S SSFW, STIF	WC	An attractive screening shrub 3-4m high, with golden yellow flowers late winter - early spring.
<i>Acacia suaveolens</i>	Sweet Wattle	2m	LW	any - sand	FS-PS	SSFW	A leggy, open shrub with blue green foliage and cream flowers in winter.
<i>Acacia terminalis</i>	Sunshine Wattle	1.5m	LW	any-sand	FS-PS	SSFW STIF	An open shrub to 1.5m with bright yellow flowers late summer and winter.
<i>Acacia ulicifolia</i>	Prickly Moses	1.5m	LW	any	FS-PS SSFW	SSFW STIF	A prickly shrub around with cream flowers autumn and winter.
<i>Acacia myrtifolia</i>	Myrtle Wattle	0.5-1m	MW	any	FS-S SSFW	STIF	A small shrub with red tinged foliage and pale yellow flowers in winter.
<i>Banksia spinulosa</i>	Hairpin Banksia	2m	MW	any	PS	SSFW	A rounded shrub with yellow orange flowers in winter.

Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Sweet Bursaria	2-3m	MW	any-clay	FS-PS	STIF	An erect shrub 2-3m tall with masses of white flowers in late summer.
<i>Callistemon linearis</i>	Narrow-leaved Bottlebrush	2m	MW	any	FS-PS	SSFW	An erect shrub with red flowers in spring.
<i>Correa alba</i>	White Correa	1m	LW	any-sand	FS-PS	SSFW	A bun shaped shrub with white flowers autumn/winter.
<i>Correa reflexa</i>	Native Fuchsia	1.5m	MW	any	FS-S	STIF	A bun shaped shrub with green and red flowers autumn to spring (long flowering season).
<i>Dillwynia retorta</i>	Heathy Parrot Pea	1m	LW	any-sand	FS-PS	SSFW	A fine leaved open shrub with yellow and reddish brown flowers in spring.
<i>Dodonaea triquetra</i>	Hop Bush	2m	LW	any	PS-S	SSFW, STIF, WC	A soft leaved shrub with lime green paper lantern like fruits in spring and summer.
<i>Goodenia ovata</i>	Hop Goodenia	2m	MW	any-sand	PS-S	SSFW, STIF, WC	A dense bun shaped shrub with yellow flowers over the warmer months.
<i>Grevillea buxifolia</i>	Grey Spider Flower	2m	LW	any-sand	FS-PS	SSFW	A dense bun shaped shrub with grey felty flowers over the warmer months.
<i>Grevillea linearifolia</i>	White Spider Flower	2m	LW	any-sand	FS-PS	SSFW	An open shrub with pinkish white flowers winter to spring.
<i>Hakea sericea</i>	Needlebush	2-3m	MW	any	FS-S	STIF	A dense, prickly shrub with cream flowers in winter.
<i>Hovea linearis</i>	Common Hovea	1.5m	MW	any-sand	FS-S	SSFW	An open shrub with mauve flowers spring.

Shrubs

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Austral Indigo	1.5m	MW	any-clay	PS-S	STIF	An umbrella shaped shrub with grey/green foliage and pink flowers in spring.
<i>Kunzea ambigua</i>	Tick Bush	3m	LW	any	FS-PS	STIF	A dense, spreading shrub with white, honey scented flowers in late spring.
<i>Leptospermum polygalifolium</i>	Lemon-scented Teatree	3m	MW	any	FS-PS	SSFW, WC	A graceful open shrub with white flowers in late spring.
<i>Leucopogon juniperinus</i>	Prickly Beard-heath	1m	MW	any	PS	SSFW, STIF	A spikey dense shrub with white flowers in spring followed by berries.
<i>Pittosporum revolutum</i>	Rough Fruit Pittosporum	1-3m	MW	any-sand	PS-S	SSFW, STIF	An open shrub with scented creamy flowers in spring.
<i>Pomaderris intermedia</i>	Pomaderris	2m	MW	any-sand	FS-S	SSFW	A bushy shrub with masses of pale yellow flowers in spring.
<i>Solanum aviculare</i>	Kangaroo Apple	2m	MW	any	PS-S	Any	A fast growing umbrella shaped open shrub with mauve flowers and orange fruits.
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i>	Coastal Rosemary	1.5m	LW	any-sand	PS-S	Any	A dense shrub to around 1.5m high with grey green foliage and white flowers for most of the year.

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Type	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Acacia decurrens</i>	Sydney Green Wattle	MT	6 -8m	LW	any	FS - PS	SSFW, WC	A fast growing and short lived tree with feathery leaves and bright yellow ball shaped flowers in July – November. Followed by seed pods.
<i>Acacia fimbriata</i>	Fringed Wattle	Shrub - ST	4 -8m	LW	any-sand	FS - PS	STIF	Small tree or rounded shrub. Lots of yellow ball shaped flowers in spring.
<i>Acacia binervia</i>	Coast Myall	MT	12 -14m	LW	any-clay	FS	SSFW, STIF	Typically growing 5-8m as a shrub. It has sickle shaped leaves and flowers in spring with rod shaped bright yellow flowers. Followed by long seed pods.
<i>Acacia implexa</i>	Hickory	MT	8 -10m	LW	any	FS - PS	SSFW, STIF	A fast-growing tree with pale yellow ball shaped flowers in December–April. Followed by seed pods.
<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>	Black She-oak	MT	10 -12m	LW	any	FS - PS	SSFW, STIF	A hardy, fast growing medium sized tree with dark bark and needle-like leaves. It has red flowers in spring.

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Type	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Angophora hispida</i>	Dwarf Apple	ST	6 -8m	LW	any - sand	FS - PS	SSFW	A small tree or large shrub with an open, spreading and twisting growth habit. Flowers in summer with cream fluffy flowers.
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coast Banksia	Shrub-MT	10 -15m	LW	any - sand	FS - PS	SSFW, WC	Typically growing 4-15m, this hardy tree has rough bark and large pale yellow flowers in January-June. Followed by ornamental seed pods.
<i>Banksia serrata</i>	Old man Banksia	MT	10 -12m	LW	any - sand	FS - PS	SSFW	Typically growing to 10m, this hardy tree has gnarled bark, serrated leaves and large creamy yellow in January-June. Followed by ornamental seed pods.
<i>Callicoma serratifolia</i>	Black wattle	Shrub-MT	12 -14m	MW	any - sand	FS - PS	SSFW	A large, spreading, screening shrub often growing to 4-5m (but occasionally taller). It has creamy yellow flowers in late spring.

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Type	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Ceratopetalum gummiferum</i>	Christmas Bush	Shrub-ST	8 -10m	LW	any-sand	FS - PS	SSFW	Typically growing to 5m, this tree or large shrub has clusters of white, pink and red flowers in September – December.
<i>Eucalyptus haemastoma</i>	Scribbly Gum	MT	10 -14m	LW	any-sand	FS - PS	SSFW	A small tree to 14m with white and grey mottled bark with scribble patterns on it. Creamy coloured flowers autumn to spring.
<i>Eucalyptus piperita</i>	Sydney Peppermint	MT	16 -18m	LW	any-sand	FS - PS	SSFW	A graceful tree typically 15m high, with rough grey bark at trunk level and white smooth bark above. Creamy coloured flowers in early summer.
<i>Eucalyptus punctata</i>	Grey Gum	TT	18 -20m	LW	any-clay	FS - PS	SSFW, STIF	Typically growing up to 20m, this tall open crowned tree is often found on infertile soils. Clusters of white flowers in December–February.

Trees

Scientific Name	Common Name	Type	Height	Water	Soil	Sun	Veg Zone	Description
<i>Eucalyptus robusta</i>	Swamp Mahogany	MT	10 -15m	MW	any-sand	FS	WC	A large tree with a thick trunk with deeply fissured grey brown bark and spreading branches that form a dense rounded crown. It has dark glossy green lanced shaped leaves and the cream coloured flowers appear in a cluster during winter.
<i>Melaleuca decora</i>	White Feather Honey-myrtle	ST	6 -7m	MW	any-clay	FS	STIF	A tall shrub or small tree. It has sweetly scented, white flowers and flowers in late spring and early summer.
<i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i>	Snow-in-Summer	ST	8 -10m	MW	any	FS - PS	SSFW, WC	A small tree with honey scented cream flowers in September – February.
<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i>	Turpetine	TT	18 -20m	LW	any-clay	FS	STIF	A slow growing tree with rough fibrous bark and clusters of white flowers in September – November.