

Information Sheet 3: Indigenous Plants

What are Indigenous Plants?

“Indigenous plants are plants that occur naturally in a local area, making them uniquely suited to their environment. Native plants are not considered to be indigenous when planted beyond their natural habitat”. (*Plants of Melbourne’s Western Plains: A Gardener’s Guide to the Original Flora*, 2012, page 32)

A native plant means that a plant is native to anywhere in Australia. Whereas an indigenous plant occurs naturally in a given geographical area.

It’s important for planting projects to use indigenous plants that are grown from seed or cuttings from remnant vegetation that occurs as near as possible to the planting site, in areas with similar soils and site conditions. This helps preserve the populations of indigenous plant species and re-creates habitat for native wildlife as part of the project.

Plant Selection and Habitat

Your Landcare or environmental volunteer group, local council, Landcare facilitator, or local indigenous plant nursery may be able to provide you with advice about suitable indigenous plants for your planting, and where to source them.

Consider optimal planting and weed control seasons, which plants are indigenous to your area, as well as bird attracting or butterfly attracting plant species that provide habitat.

The greater the diversity and cover of indigenous shrubs and grasses, the more food and cover (i.e. habitat) there is for native birds, insects, and other native animals. For example, a clump of prickly indigenous shrubs may provide nesting habitat for small birds; local grasses might provide food for native butterfly larvae; using a natural depression for a small wetland might create habitat for frogs.

Many local councils also provide information or flora booklets about the indigenous plants that are local to your area on their websites, or you may contact a local council’s Environment Officer for advice about indigenous plants. Find and visit the website for your [local council here](#).

Indigenous Plant Nurseries

Greening Australia has prepared lists of indigenous plant nurseries for both [Greater Melbourne](#) and [Regional Victoria](#), which is a good place to start when trying to source indigenous plants for your project from an indigenous plant nursery.

***TIP** - Most indigenous nurseries require six months’ notice to propagate plants for a planting project. Please consider this in the timing of your activities, and also the appropriate planting season.*

Junior Landcare Learning Centre

The following are examples of some of the learning activities from the [Junior Landcare Learning Centre](#) that may assist with the planning of your biodiversity-focused planting project: [Creating a wildlife habitat: design](#); [Creating a frog-friendly habitat: design](#); [Creating an Indigenous plant-use garden: plant list](#).