



Urban Wildlife Gardens

Best Plants for Noosa Wildlife

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The following is an outline of some of the best backyard plants to attract wildlife in the Noosa Area.

The list focused on plants that are suited to the scale of urban backyards. This list below list common habitat for common wildlife in Noosa but of course the list is not exhaustive and all local native plants are beneficial to wildlife.

Introduction

The gardens that are suited to wildlife have a mix of habitats and layers to provide maximum habitat opportunities:

- Mulch, branches and stones are imperative for invertebrates , snails, worms, spiders and reptiles
- Trees - choose carefully for urban backyards
- Shrubs – dense and spiky for shelter and nesting
- Grasses and rushes – seeds and shelter
- Groundcovers and Ferns - shelter
- Vines and Epiphytes – butterflies in particular

Look at natural forests surrounding your garden – can you plant similar species to attract the wildlife into your garden? Continuous planting to form a corridor through your garden from neighbouring bushland will attract more wildlife - small birds in particular won't cross open ground.

Nest boxes and tree hollows are valuable to attract wildlife, but so is having a supply for leaf litter, barks, grasses and spider webs for nest making.

A source of water is important to attract wildlife. Ideally the water body is designed and managed to deter cane toads, as well as being surrounded by dense shrubbery to provide shelter.

Gardens which avoid the use of herbicides and pesticides, will attract the most wildlife and create a natural balance over time. Snail and rat / mice baits inadvertently poison lizards, marsupials and many birds including raptors.

Keeping cats and dogs at bay in the garden is also fundamental to attracting and retaining wildlife in your backyard.

1. Trees

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
Acacia spp. Including <i>A. cincinnata</i> , <i>A. leiocalyx</i> , <i>A. maidenii</i> <i>A. disparrima</i> <i>A. melanoxylon</i> <i>A. shanonesii</i>	Wattles	Rosellas, Cockatoos and Red-winged Parrots eat the seeds Spiny Leaf Stick Insect feed on wattle foliage. This stick insect is regarded as one of the most fascinating insects and commonly sold overseas in the pet trade. Also hosts for butterflies and moths including Imperial Haristreak, Tailed Emperor and Large Grass Yellow Butterfly The sap exudes are critical feeding for Sugar Gliders and Squirrel Gliders	Wattles are the food pantry of native fauna in Australia. Found across Noosa in well drained soils. Chose an Acacia species that is a small tree and suited to a backyard.
<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i> <i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i>	Black She Oak Forest She Oak	The seed cones are Critical feed tree for Glossy Black Cockatoos She-oak seeds are also eaten by a variety of Finches and Parrots	Can grow to 15 -20 metres but has a fairly narrow crown so may be suited to larger back yards. Very stately tree when older and often used in formal garden schemes. Found across Noosa suited to well drained soils.
<i>Archontophoenix cunninghamiana</i>	Bangalow Palm	Fruit-doves, Whiteheaded Pigeons, Brown Cuckoo Doves, Double-eyed Fig-Parrots, Koels, Bowerbirds, Catbirds and Figbirds feed on the fruit	
<i>Capparis arborea</i> <i>Capparis mitchellii</i>	Caper Bush Wild Orange	Caper White Butterflies breed in large numbers on the leaves of this species	Small tree suited to backyard. Found in dry rainforest areas.
Citrus Trees (exotic)	Citrus trees including lemons, limes, oranges	Butterflies including Blue Triangles, Dainty Swallowtail and Orchard Swallowtail lay eggs on citrus leave sand the larvae feed on leaves	Avoid spraying citrus, particularly mature trees. On a mature tree damage is usually minimal and the butterflies they attract are very large!
<i>Eucalyptus bancroftii</i> <i>Eucalyptus conglomerata</i>	Tumbledown Gums Swamp Stringybark	Many bird species such as Spotted and Striated Pardalotes , Bell Miners, and other small species Honeyeaters feed on the sugar rich secretions of lerps, often present in eucalypts.	These Eucalypts are the smallest of the genus found on the Sunshine Coast but prune to encourage mallee shape with multiple trunks. Found in well drained soils near the coast. Will persist in clay if elevated and well drained.

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
<i>Ficus coronata</i>	Sandpaper Fig	Flocks of Figbirds feast on the fruit when ripe	Smaller Fig Tree that may be suited to larger backyards.
<i>Glochidion ferdinandi</i>	Cheese Tree	Ringtail Possum likes the “cheese” fruits and can be heard munching them into the evening. Commonly use tree to build their nest Fruit-doves, Whiteheaded Pigeons, Brown Cuckoo Doves, Double-eyed Fig-Parrots, Koels, Bowerbirds, Catbirds and Figbirds also feed on the fruit	This is a smaller tree that is generally suited to larger backyards. Found naturally near damp gullies throughout Noosa.
<i>Melaleuca</i> spp. Including <i>M. linarfolia</i> , <i>M. quinquinervia</i> , <i>M. sieberi</i> , <i>M. patchphylla</i> ,	Paperbarks	Rainbow lorikeets and a wide variety of Honeyeaters Ringtail possums love eating the flowers and commonly use this shrub to build their nest	These are medium trees generally suited to larger backyards. Found naturally near damp gullies throughout Noosa.
<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	Pink Doughwood	Fruit-doves, Whiteheaded Pigeons, Brown Cuckoo Doves, Double-eyed Fig-Parrots, Koels, Bowerbirds, Catbirds and Figbirds feed on the fruit	
<i>Syzygium</i> spp. Including <i>S. austral</i> <i>S. luehmanni</i>		The fruit is very important food source for many birds including: Fruit-doves, Whiteheaded Pigeons, Brown Cuckoo Doves, Double-eyed Fig-Parrots, Koels, Bowerbirds, Catbirds and Figbirds Other birds such as Australian King-Parrots, Lewin’s Honeyeaters, Pied Currawongs, Helmeted Friarbirds, Orioles, Cuckoo-shrikes, Silvereyes and Crimson Rosellas are occasional foragers	Medium to Large Trees. Can be pruned to maintain a shrub size. Allow the plant to flower and fruit before any pruning.

2. Shrubs

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
<i>Acacia</i> spps including <i>A. attenuata</i> , <i>A. complanata</i> , <i>A. hubbardiana</i> , <i>A. longissima</i>	Wattles	Rosellas, Cockatoos and Red-winged Parrots eat the seeds Spiny Leaf Stick Insect feed on wattle foliage. This stick insect is regarded as one of the most fascinating insects and commonly sold overseas in the pet trade. Also hosts for butterflies and moths including for Imperial Haristreak, Tailed Emperor and Large Grass Yellow Butterfly The sap exudes are critical feeding for Sugar Gliders and Squirrel Gliders	Wattles are the food pantry of native fauna in Australia. Species listed are medium to small shrubs. Found across Noosa in well drained soils. Chose an Acacia species that is a shrub and suited to a backyard.
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coastal Banksia	Attracts Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos to consume the seed cones Popular with other large honey eaters including Blue Faced Honeyeaters, Brown Honeyeaters, Friarbirds and Wattlebirds	Tall Shrub found naturally along coast and in forest woodlands.
<i>Banksia robur</i>	Swamp Banksia	Attracts Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos to consume the seed cones Flowers popular with other large honey eaters including Blue Faced Honeyeaters, Brown Honeyeaters, Friarbirds and Wattlebirds	Medium Shrubs found along coast in moist friable sand soils. Can persist in clay soils with good drainage.
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> <i>Dodonaea triquetra</i>	Sticky Hop Bush Large-leaf Hop Bush	Seed capsules that are eaten by Australian King-Parrots .	Medium shrub in well drained soils.
<i>Leptospermum polygalifolium</i> <i>Leptospermum petersonnii</i>	Tea - trees	Crimson Rosellas love the fruits of this species	Medium Shrub Moist but free draining soils. Will persist in clay with good drainage.

<i>Melaleuca</i> spp. Including <i>M. nodosa</i> <i>M. patchphylla</i> ,	<i>Bottlebrushes</i>	Parrots and Honeyeaters Ringtail possums love eating the flowers and commonly use this shrub to build their nest	Found across Noosa in usually in damp places and along watercourses. Chose a species with suitable size that is suited to a backyard.
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3. Grasses, Sedges and Rushes

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
<i>Juncus usitatus</i>	Freshwater Rush	Common habitat for frogs including Wallum Sedge frog , Eastern Sedge frog	Plant in boggy areas in garden and along swales.
<i>Cymbopogon refractus</i>	Barbed Wire Grass	Warblers, Fairy Wrens and Golden headed Cisticola and Finches which favour the tall grasses Tall grasses are valuable habitat for Brown Quails and Crested Pigeons	Let grass gown long and seed. Prune in sections to provide continuous habitat.
<i>Themeda traindra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	Warblers, Fairy Wrens and Golden headed Cisticola and Finches which favour the tall grasses. Tall grasses are valuable habitat for Brown Quails and Crested Pigeons In addition the Common Planigale , a mouse sized marsupial favours the long kangaroo grass as habitat	Let grass gown long and seed. Prune in sections to provide continuous habitat.
All grasses gone to seed		Flocks of Galahs and Corellas love grasses gone to seed.	Let grass gown long and go to seed. Beware of weed species as they will spread far and wide!

4. Groundcovers and Ferns

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
A good mix of groundcovers, hallow logs and boulders so it can move between shelter and sun	-	Blue Tongue Skinks	Don't use snail bait. Contain cats and dogs. Be careful with your garden spade

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
Viola hederacea	Native violets	Wallabies including including Black Striped, Red Necked and Swamp Wallabies love feasting on the flowers of native violets in forest clearings	You may be able to attract them into the garden from nearby dense forests.

5. Vines and Epiphytes

Species	Common Name	Wildlife	Notes
Amyena miquellii and Dendrophtoe vitellina	Mistletoes	Mistletoes are a parasitic plant that are found in the canopy of many trees and shrubs. They are very important species for many butterflies such as Common Jezebel and Mistletoe Birds	
Cissus spp. Including C. antarctica C. hypogaluca	Kangaroo Vine Water Vine	Host plant for striking Josephs Coat Moth both as a caterpillar and a moth	
Pararistolochia praevenosa	Bird Wing Butterfly Vine	Richmond Birdwing Butterflies – the most beautiful butterfly in Queensland	Suited to part sun / shady spots across Noosa. It is shallow rooted and requires care when establishing. Unlike most nature plants, this vine appreciates normal garden fertiliser with some phosphorous in it.

Things not to Plant or to Remove from your Garden

Moncultures of Greville cultivars – attracts territorial miners that exclude the other birds

Spathodea campanulate - African Tulip Trees - kills native bees

Aristolochia elegans - Dutchman Pipe Vine - confuses Richmond Birdwing Butterflies as a host plant and the leaves poison the larvae when they hatch

More Information

https://birdsqueensland.org.au/downloads/bq_birds_in_gardens_part1.pdf