

## Cottage Gardening Using Australian Native Plants

Cottage style gardening has been popular in Australia since the first settlement. This is a garden to enjoy, with flowers growing in profusion, providing colour and scent, giving a sense of charm and timeless style. Traditionally, cottage gardens provide a random mix of ornamental plants, vegetables and herbs.

Many of our Australian plants can be used to create a cottage garden. These plants can offer extended flowering periods enabling you to create a garden that is colourful all year, also providing nectar and seeds for the birds. New plant selections, hybrids and grafted plants have presented us with a bigger range of flowering plants with improved garden performance.

### Features of a Cottage Garden

1. An abundance of flowers with a mix of annuals, perennials, bulbs, shrubs and trees.
2. Fruit trees, vegetables & herbs are often included and do not look out of place.
3. Sometimes colour is the dominant feature with for example a blending of soft pinks, creams & whites.
4. Scented plants and climbing plants are a common feature.
5. Self-seeding plants can appear spontaneously, often in unusual places.
6. Take care if you live near natural bushland, as some seeds can become invasive.
7. Lawns kept to a minimum.
8. The use of rustic ornaments such as cast iron water pumps, farm implements etc.
9. Other ornaments, for example weather vanes, sundials, bird baths and garden seats.
10. The use of picket fences, stone walls, arbours, arches & lattice.

### Planning a Cottage Garden

- Select plants to give flowers throughout the year.
- Use a careful mix and balanced blend of colours – usually soft shades.
- Consider planting drifts of similar or contrasting colours to gain impact.
- For a quick splash of spring colour, plant one of the paper daisies from the Rhodanthe species syn. *Helipterum* such as *R. chlorocephala* subsp. *rosea* or *R. anthemoides*.
- Many of the daisies, Rhodanthe spp. and also the strawflowers, *Xerochrysum* spp. syn. *Bracteantha*, can be bought as seed from nurseries and supermarkets.
- Growing plants in containers will provide ‘moveable colour’.
- Taller shrubs to the back, smaller to the front.
- Garden beds should be well prepared and mulched to ensure good flowering.
- Plants will benefit from gentle trimming, particularly after flowering.
- Consider plants with interesting foliage, such as the pink new growth of the lilly pillies or the silver grey foliage of many Australian plants, to compliment the flowers.
- Choose plants with scented foliage such as Mint bush *Prostanthera* spp. or Native daphne, *Philotheca myoporoides*. Plant them near paths where you brush against them.
- There are many improved cultivars or compact forms available of many of our Australian plants, including the grafted Corymbias.
- Many of the grevilleas will provide flowers for most of the year for example *Grevillea rhyolitica deua*.
- Plants that produce a lot of flowers usually require a sunny position in the garden. Take care not to plant trees where they will cast too much shadow.

Cottage gardens require a lot of maintenance!

### Australian plants for a Cottage Garden

Main flowering times are listed for the plants on the following list, many will carry flowers at other times.

Plant Name	Common Name	Size H x W	Colour	Flowering	Local Annual	Sun	Part sun
Ground Cover							
<i>Brachycome iberidifolia</i>	Swan River Daisy	30cm x 1m	White, purple	Spr-Sum	A	Z	Z
<i>Brachycome multifida</i>	Cut-leaf daisy	15cm	Mauve-blue	All year		Z	
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Yellow buttons	15cm x 1m	Yellow	Spr-sum		Z	
<i>Dampiera diversifolia</i>		10 x 50cm	Dk . blue	Spr-Sum			Z
<i>Scaevola aemula</i>	Fairy fan flower	30cm x 1m	Blue- mauve	All year		Z	
Climbers							
<i>Clematis aristata</i>	Old man's beard	Vigorous	White	Spring	L		Z
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	False sarsaparilla	15cm x 2m	White, purple	Spring	L	Z	Z
<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>	Snake vine	2m	Bright yellow	Spr-Sum		Z	Z
<i>Pandorea jasminoides</i>	Bower climber	Vigorous	Pink, white	Spr-Aut			Z
<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>	Wonga Wonga	Vigorous	White, gold	Spring	L	Z	Z
Plants under 1m							
<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>	Flannel flower	50-90cm	Cream	Spring	L	Z	Z

Plant Name	Common Name	Size H x W	Colour	Flowering	Local Annual	Sun	Part sun
<i>Anigozanthos spp</i>	Kangaroo paws	H 20cm-2m	Red, yellow, orange, green	Spr-Sum		Z	
<i>Rhodanthe chlorocephala subsp. rosea</i>	Rosy sunray	90 x 30cm	White-pink	Spring	<b>A</b>	Z	
<i>Rhodanthe anthemoides</i>	Chamomile sunray	50 x 30cm	White	Summer		Z	
<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>	Strawflower	20 x 60cm	Bright yellow	Summer		Z	
<i>Dampiera stricta</i>	Blue dampiera	50cm x 2m	Blue / purple	Spr-Sum		Z	
<i>Isotoma axillaris</i>	Rock isotome	30 x 30cm	Pale blue	Summer		Z	Z
<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	Creeping boobialla	20cm x 1m	White	Spr-Sum		Z	Z
<i>Pimelia linifolia</i>	Rice flower	1 x 1m	White, pink	Spr-Sum	<b>L</b>	Z	Z
<i>Pimelia ferrugia</i>	Rice flower	1 x 1m	Pink	Spring		Z	Z
<i>Wahlenbergia stricta</i>	Native blue bell	30cm x 1m	Blue	Spr-Aut	<b>A</b>	Z	Z
Shrubs under 2m							
<i>Crowea exalata</i>		1 x 1m	Pink	Aut-Wint	<b>L</b>		Z
<i>Hibiscus splendens</i>	Native rosella	2m	Large pink	Summer		Z	Z
<i>Philotheca myoporoides</i>	Native daphne	1-2m	White	Spr-Sum		Z	Z
Shrubs over 2m							
<i>Prostanthera ovalifolia</i>	Mint bush	2 x 2m	Purple	Spring		Z	Z
<i>Corymbia 'Summer Beauty'/Eucalyptus</i>	Flowering gum	5m x 3m	Red	Summer		Z	

Plant Name	Common Name	Size H x W	Colour	Flowering	Local Annual	Sun	Part sun
<i>Chamelaucium spp.</i>	Geraldton wax	2 x 2m	White, pink, purple	Spr-Sum		Z	
<i>Buckinghamia celsissima</i>	Ivory Curl flower	2 x 4m	Cream	Summer		Z	