WAVERLEY
COUNCIL

SKY PARKS

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A project aimed at greening urban spaces

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BushTucker Garden

This BushTucker garden is part of the Skyparks project which is researching the benefits of cooling hot urban spaces, such as carparks, by installing vegetation. This project is being delivered by Waverley Council in partnership with Scentre Group, Goodstart Learning UNSW and Biofilta. The project is assisted by New South Wales Government and supported by Local Government NSW

Why SkyParks?

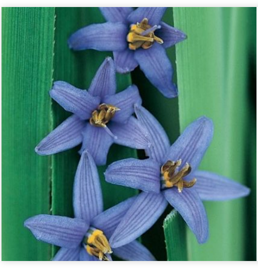
Lack of vegetation makes some of Waverley's districts extremely hot during summer, and temperatures are likely to increase further under projected climate change. With limited ground-level space available to establish new parks or canopy, capturing opportunities to grow plants on top of built structures is increasingly important.

The SkyParks project is to install vegetation cover on key sites in Sydney's East to demonstrate and measure cooling, species suitability, as well as habitat and community benefits.

What's in this Garden?

All the plants in this Bushtucker garden are native plants, which are adapted to the local climate and provide food and shelter for butterflies, insects, birds and other animals. Plants have many uses for Aboriginal people – for food, medicine and as raw materials. Some plants are also linked to Dreaming stories and can be more deeply connected to Aboriginal people as spirit ancestors of Country. The list below explains some of the characteristics of the plants in this bushtucker garden.

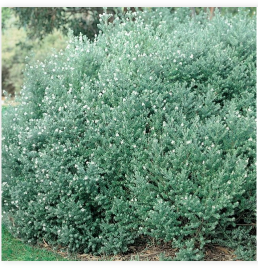
Image credits: Flower Power, Australian Native Plant Society, Daleys Fruit, Alpine Nurseries



Blue Flax Lily

Dianella

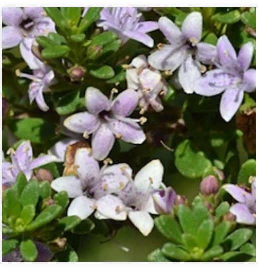
The fruit from the Blue Flax Lily. When it becomes ripe it can also be used as an indicator that the saltwater fish are ready to catch



Coastal Rosemary

Westringia Fruticosa

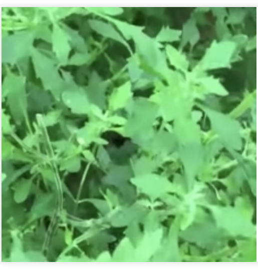
The plant's bright coloured flowers attract small birds and other helpful pollinators to the garden



Creeping Boobialla

Myoporum Pavifolium

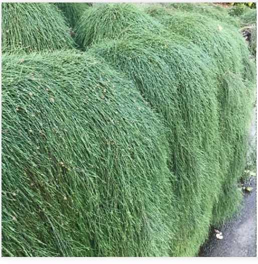
It can be used as a feature in your garden



Cut-leaf Mint Bush

Scientific Name ???

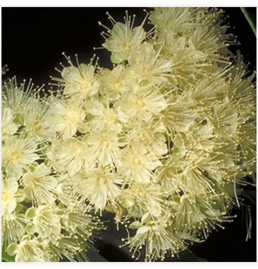
The leaves from the Cut-leaf Mint Bush can be used to make a medicinal tea. They also add spice flavours when added to your cooking



Kattang Karpet

Scientific Name ???

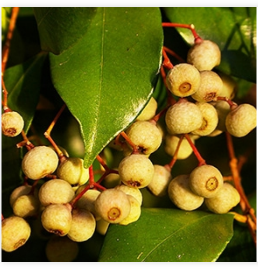
The small seeds from Kattang Karpet can be collected, slightly roasted and then turned into a nut paste



Lemon-scented Myrtle

Scientific Name ???

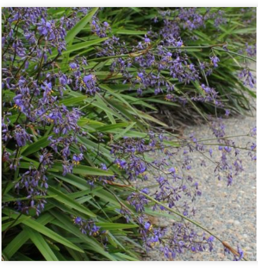
The oil can be applied to skin infections, and the leave can be seeped in hot water to make an antibacterial and antioxidant tea



Lilly Pilly

Scientific Name ???

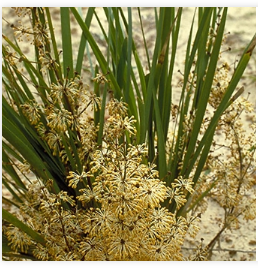
The fruit from the Blue Flax Lily. When it becomes ripe it can also be used as an indicator that the saltwater fish are ready to catch



Little Jess Flax

Scientific Name ???

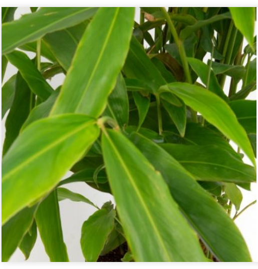
The leaves of flax plants can be used to make a high-pitch snake whistle. Aboriginal Australians used this sound to lure snakes out of hiding



Lomandra Lime Tuff

Scientific Name ???

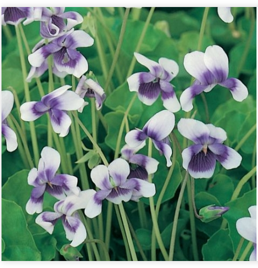
Lomandra Lime Tuff is an evergreen grass that can grow to be 80cm tall



Native Ginger

Alpinia Caerulea

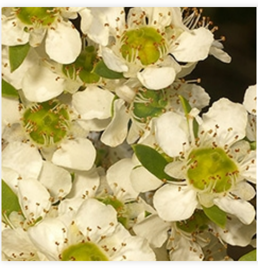
Its flowering months are during Spring and Summer, from September to January



Native Violet

Scientific Name ???

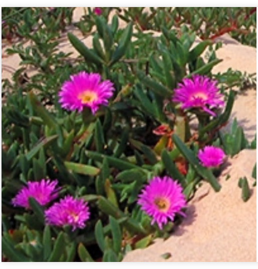
The flowers from the Native Violet can be eaten. They also attract bees and other pollinators



Pacific Beauty Tea-tree

Scientific Name ???

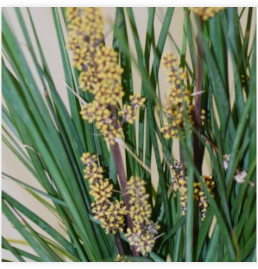
This tree has many uses, including as a medicine to treat cold and flu symptoms, and a repellent for insects and reptiles



Pigface

Scientific Name ???

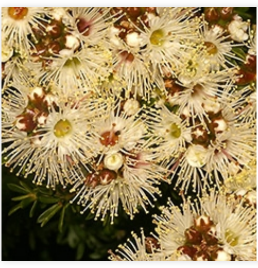
Commonly found on the coast in the sand dunes. It's strong stems connect like a web to hold the sand together and provide protection from erosion



Spiny-headed Mat-rush

Scientific Name ???

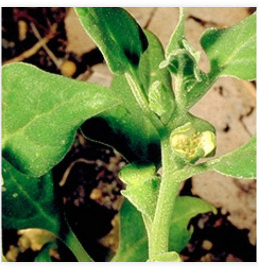
Commonly known as Basket Grass. It is a strong and hardy grass, proven to grow in all climates and withstand weather conditions



Tick bush

Scientific Name ???

The oil from the Tick bush leaves helped to relieve skin irritations, muscle tightness and pain



Warrigal Greens

Scientific Name ???

Warrigal Greens are eaten as a medicinal vegetable and as a substitute for spinach

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Ippei Naoi

Why a bush tucker garden near a Preschool?

Goodstart Early learning is strongly committed to sustainability education. Early childhood is a critical period in which children involvement in sustainability and environmental education can develop lifelong practices for respecting and protecting our planet.

Furthermore, the Waverly council area has extremely high population density, with 60% of people living in flats, units or apartments. Research shows that families who live in urban landscapes depend on being able to access local environments, due to limited space available within their apartment complexes (Andrews & Warner, 2019).

Supporting Children's wellbeing

01 Build confidence

The way that children play in nature has a lot less structure than most types of indoor play. There are infinite ways to interact with outdoor environments, and letting your child choose how they treat nature means they have the power to control their own actions.

02 Promote creativity and imagination

This unstructured style of play allows kids to interact meaningfully with their surroundings. They can think more freely, design their own activities, and approach the world in inventive ways.

03 Teach responsibility

Living things die if mistreated or not taken care of properly. Entrusting a child to take care of the living parts of their environment means they'll learn what happens when they forget to water a plant or pull a flower out by its roots.

04 Encourage thinking

Nature creates a unique sense of wonder for kids that no other environment can provide. The phenomena that occur naturally in backyards and parks everyday make kids ask questions about the earth and the life that it supports.

05 Reduces stress and fatigue

According to the Attention Restoration Theory, urban environments require what's called directed attention, which forces us to ignore distractions and exhausts our brains. In natural environments, we practice an effortless type of attention known as soft fascination that creates feelings of pleasure. (Cohen, n.d.)

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