

“The Cape” Planting Ideas

2nd Revision 11/4/22

The dream; all front yards at “The Cape” planted out with an attractive range of Australian native plants providing habitat for birds and animals, with a variety of heights from grasses and groundcovers to shrubs and trees. While, backyards are more utilitarian with food crops, fruit trees and even some exotic species.

Following is a list of Australian native plants that are worth a try or have been “proven performers” at “The Cape” The list will be updated as the development expands and keen gardeners give more and more plants a go!

NB: This complimentary list does not replace “The Cape Residential Planting List” contained within “The Cape Design Guidelines”

The heights and widths listed for each species refer to what the plant will achieve in ideal growing conditions - in many cases at “The Cape” plants may struggle to grow to the listed size.

Plants listed in ***bold italics*** are proven performers at “The Cape”

TREES - TALL SHRUBS

High winds at “The Cape” make tree establishment difficult. Some believe that trees in nature establish without staking - “the strong ones will survive.” Yet, in nature, pioneer species (low shrubs, short-lived Acacias etc.) establish first, protecting the early growth of the emergent tree species.

Tree guards or grow tubes to protect early growth may need to be followed up with staking after their removal. So many “whippy” trees and tall shrubs have simply toppled over after their protection was removed. Young trees should be “staked not strangled” - staked down low, not strangled with ties up high.

TREES – TALL SHRUBS (CONT'D)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenou s to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W- windbreak	height x width in metres
Acacia suaveolens	Sweet wattle	Yes	Relatively short-lived (to a maximum of 15 years)	3 x 4
<i>Agonis flexuosa</i>	Willow Peppermint Willow Myrtle		Straight species to 15m but “Indigo” & “After Dark” to 5m Beautiful weeping habit and masses of white flowers along stems in spring/summer. Real performer in Cape Pat. streets C W	
Allocasuarina littoralis	Black sheoak	Yes	May be too large, with invasive underground roots unless on a large block.	8-12 x 4-7
Allocasuarina verticillata	Drooping sheoak	Yes	Too large, with invasive underground roots unless on a large block.	4-10 x 6
<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Coastal banksia	Yes	Banksia “Sentinel” (2.5 x 1) works well as a privacy hedge or windbreak W	15 x 7
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Silver banksia	Yes	Local forms 2-3m depending on shelter. Dwarf form “mini Marg” (.5 x 1) W	8 x 3.5
Bursaria spinosa var. macrophylla	Tree Bursaria	Yes	Used along road leading into RACV at Inverloch. Masses of white flowers in Summer followed by flattened brown seed capsules. Dense prickly foliage which offers protection for small birds (i.e. Wrens) Attracts butterflies. W	6 x 3
<i>Kunzea baxteri</i>	Crimson Kunzea		WA species Large red flowers Dwarf form “Mandy’s Surprise” (1 x 1) C	4 x 5

<i>Eucalyptus caesia</i>	Silver Princess		A beautiful gum with pendulous foliage, striking flowers & big gum nuts. However, being a mallee gum, it has difficulty coping with our winds and needs substantial staking or pruning even after establishment. C	6 x 4
<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>	Snow Gum	Yes		10 x 8
<i>Eucalyptus preisianna</i>	Bell fruited mallee		From WA	2-4 x 2-3
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> subsp. <i>pryoriana</i>	Coast Manna Gum	Yes	Local Koala habitat. Too large for small blocks	20 x 6
<i>Leptospermum continentale</i>	Prickly tea tree	Yes		3 x 1.5
<i>Leucopogon parvifolium</i>	Coast beard heath	Yes	Tiny white flowers followed by white berries	3 x 2
<i>Myoporum insulare</i>	Boobialla	Yes	A tough, drought tolerant, salt tolerant plant for “The Cape” Nice stand beside steps leading down to the channel. Hedges well, fire retardant. F W	6 x 3

SHRUBS

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenous to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W – windbreak	height x width in metres
<i>Adenanthos sericeus</i>	Woolly Bush		A number of good smaller cultivars. W	1-5 x 1-1.5
<i>Alyogyne huegelii</i>	Native hibiscus		Has performed well at “The Cape” Purple, pink & white forms. Prune regularly. C	2 x 1.5

<i>Alyxia buxifolia</i>	Sea Box	Yes	Slow growing. Can be difficult to propagate & source.	3 x 2
<i>Atriplex cinerea</i>	Coast saltbush	Yes	Very hardy. Prune regularly for a dense habit. W	3 x 2
<i>Bauera rubioides</i>	Wiry bauera	Yes	C	2 x 2
Boronia sp.	Boronia		From WA but worth a go for the flowers and heavenly scent! Many cultivars available. C	2 x 2
Chamelaucium uncinatum	Geraldton Wax		Magnificent (famous) pink flowers. WA species, can be short lived. C	2-6 x 2-6
<i>Chenopodium nutans</i>	Nodding saltbush		Formerly known as Einadia nutans	1 x .2
<i>Chorilaena quercifolia</i>	Karri Oak		From WA. Interesting oak-like leaves, unusual flowers and a useful shrub in part shade. S	
Conostylis candicans	Cotton Heads		Grey foliage. Needs full sun. C	.3 - .8 x .3 - .8
<i>Correa alba</i>	White correa	Yes	Have had infestations of sap-sucking insects, although an application of neem oil seems to solve the problem. Will grow in full sun or part shade. W	2 x 3
Crowea exaltata	Small Crowea		Needs some shade.	1 x 1
Crowea saligna	Large flowered Crowea		Needs consistent water during establishment	1 x 1
Dampiera purpurea	Mountain Dampiera		C	1.5 x 1.5
Dillwynia cinarescens	Grey parrot pea	Yes		1.5 x 1.5
Dillwynia glaberima	Smooth parrot pea	Yes	Likes light shade	1.5 x 1.5
Dillwynia serica	Showy parrot pea	Yes		1.5 x 1.5

<i>Eremophila sp.</i>	Emu Bush		E. nivea has proven the hardest at “The Cape” C	various
Eriostemon australasica	Pink wax flower		Needs semi-shade and may need supplementary watering in Summer.	1 x 1.5
<i>Goodenia ovata</i>	Hop Goodenia	Yes	Prostrate form .1-.3 x .75-1 C	1 x 1-3
<i>Grevillea sp.</i>	Grevillea		WA species like G. petrophiloides & low growing grey leaf varieties are hardest in coastal areas. C	
Hakea ulicina	Furze Hakea	Yes	Variable species, mature plants can be spiky	2 x 3
<i>Leptospermum scoparium rubrum nana</i>	Dwarf red tea tree		Deep red to burgundy flowers Winter - Spring on a compact burgundy coloured bush - a real stunner! C	1 x 1
<i>Leucophyta brownii</i>	Cushion bush	Yes	Sand dune species. Great for full sun, windy spots.	1 x 1
<i>Olearia axillaris</i>	Coast daisy bush	Yes	Is self-seeding around “The Cape” Can be clipped.	1.5 x 1.5
Olearia ramulosa	Twiggy daisy bush	Yes		1 x 2.5
Ozothamnus turbinatus	Coast everlasting	Yes	Despite the name, has proven to be relatively short-lived at “The Cape” Looks similar to O. axillaris but with a yellow dot at the base of the leaf.	1.5 x 3
Persoonia pinifolia	Geebung		Birds attracted to edible yellow flowers. Other “geebungs” may also be worth a try. . C W	2-5 x 1-4
Phebalium squamulosum	Silvery Phebalium		Can be difficult to propagate / source.	1-3 x 1-3
Philotheca buxifolia	Box leaf wax flower		“Cascade of Stars” - showy, compact variety	1.2 x 1
<i>Philotheca myoporoides</i>	Long leaf wax flower		Handy in part shade. Many dwarf forms available. S	2 x 1.5

Philotheca verrococus	Fairy wax flower			1 x .8
Prostanthera sp.	Mint bush		Well worth a try for their masses of small flowers and mint scent - the smell of the Australian bush! P. incisa has one of the strongest scents. May need supplementary water in Summer.	2 x 2
Pultenaea daphnoides	Large leaf bush pea	Yes		2 x 3
Rhagodia candolleana subsp. candolleana	Seaberry	Yes	Fire retardant shrub that can be clipped into a low hedge if required. Will attempt to scramble over other plants. Has recently had a name change to Chenopodium candolleanum. F	1.5 x 2
Rhagodia parabolic			Hardy, unusual soft, grey foliage, clip to keep low against our winds.	1x1
Rhagodia spinescens	Hedge saltbush		See shaping at roundabout near BP at Inverloch.	1.5 x 2
Ricinocarpus pinifolius	Wedding bush		Masses of star shaped white flowers within pine-like foliage. Can be difficult to source.	3 x 2
Senecio odoratus	Scented groundsel	Yes		1.5 x 2
Spyridium parvifolium	Dusty Miller			1.2 x 1-3
Spyridium vexiliferum	Winged Spyridium			.8 x 1
Telopea sp.	Waratah		Worth a try, will require supplementary watering through Summer. C	1-3 x 1.5-4

<i>Westringia sp.</i>	Coastal Rosemary		Proving handy as a low hedge / windbreak. "Wynyabbie Gem" - very reliable. Large number of dwarf varieties available (.5m or less) W	W. fruticosa 2 x 4
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SMALL SHRUBS

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenous to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W – windbreak	height x width in metres
<i>Ajuga australis</i>	Austral Bugle	Yes	Useful in shade. S	prostrate x .5
<i>Argentipallium dealbatum</i>	Silver everlasting			prostrate x 1
<i>Banksia blechnifolia</i>	Fern Banksia		Interesting "fern-like" foliage	.2 - .5 x 2-4
<i>Banksia spinulosa cvs</i>	Cultivar "birthday Candles"		Will need supplementary watering in first summer. Usually does better with protection from hot afternoon sun. C	-.4 - .5 x .5 - 1
<i>Banksia integrifolia Prostrate</i>	Prostrate Coastal Banksia		Looks great falling over rocks. Often sold as Banksia "Roller Coaster"	.5-1 x 1-2
<i>Brachyscome sp.</i>	Break of Day daisy	Yes B. graminea	Many cultivars of B. multifida in a range of colourful flowers C	.3 x .5
<i>Calocephalus lacteus</i>	Milky beauty heads	Yes	Grassland species – responds well to pruning.	.3 x .3
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Common everlasting	Yes	Responds well to a prune. Widespread species. Many different cultivated varieties available. C	.3 x 2
<i>Dampiera diversifolia</i>	Dampiera		C	.4 x 1

Doryanthes excelsa	Gynea lilly		Amazing tall red spear-like flowers after 5-7 years. Needs some soil improvement and supplementary water in Summer. C	1.8 x 1.5
Epacris impressa	Common heath	Yes	Victoria's floral emblem. Dark pink and white varieties available. C	.5 x 1
Grevillea sp.	Grevillea		Not all Grevilleas will grow in our "challenging" conditions. Try smaller leaf varieties. "Robyn Gordon" "Fireworks" "Mt Tamboritha"- groundcover C	various
Hibbertia sericea	Silky guinea flower	Yes	Can be difficult to propagate / source.	.6 x 1
Indigofera australis	Indigofera		Worth a try - butterflies love it! C	1-2 x 1-2
Pelargonium australe	Austral stork's bill	Yes		.5 x .6
Pimelea humilis	Common rice flower	Yes		.4 x .7
Pleactranthus argentatus	Silver shield		Attractive silver leaves and spires of mauve flowers. Handy in protected, part shade. S	1 x 1.5
Pycnosorus globosus	Billy buttons		C	.3 - 1 x .2 - .5
Rhodanthe chlorocephala	Pink and white everlasting		WA Annual everlasting daisy, self seeds. C	clumps .3 - .6 high
Scaveola aemula	Fan flower		"Aussie Crawl" "Fairy Blue" "Bondi White" "Fairy Pink" C	.5 - 1
Scaveola albida var. palida	Fan flower		Also, cultivars; "White Carpet" & "Mauve Carpet" C	.5 x 1

Stylidium armeria	Common trigger plant	Yes	May require some supplementary water in Summer.	.4 x .3
Tetralthea ciliata	Pink Bells	Yes	C	.6 x .6
Thryptomene sp.	“F.C Payne” cvs		T. calycina (Grampians Thryptomene) provides taller varieties. C	1 x 1.5
Veronica perfoliata	Diggers Speedwell		Needs supplementary water, handy in shade. Responds well to pruning. May die back and re-shoot. C	1 x 1
<i>Xerochrysum bracteatum</i>	Golden everlasting		All the “paper daisies” are worth a go for swathes of colour. Many species C	.1 - 1.2 x .1 - .6
Xerochrysum papillosum	Island everlasting		C	.1 - .8 x .2 - .5
Xerochrysum subundulatum	Orange everlasting		C	.1 - .5 x .5 - 1
Xerochrysum viscosum	Shiny everlasting		C	.2 - 1 x .1 - .4

CLIMBERS

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenous to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W - windbreak	height x width in metres
<i>Clematis aristata</i>	Mountain clematis	Yes		climber
<i>Clematis microphylla</i>	Small leaved clematis	Yes		climber
<i>Hardenbergia violaceae</i>	Purple coral pea		Cultivar “Happy Wanderer” Shrub forms also available. C	climber
Hibbertia scandens	Snake vine		Can be slow growing. C	climber
<i>Kennedia rubicunda</i>	Dusky coral pea		May need supplementary water. Better in shade. C	climber

Muehlenbeckia australis	Climbing lignum	Yes		climber
Pandorea pandorana	Wonga vine	Yes	C	climber

GROUND COVERS

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenous to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W - windbreak	height x width in metres
Casuarina glauca “Cousin It”			Interesting ground cover Casuarina looks great cascading over rocks or into a dry creek bed.	.3 x 1.5
Carpobrotus rossii	Karkalla, Native pigface	Yes	Have been infestations of white woolly wax scale at “The Cape” C F	prostrate x 2
Dichondra repens	Kidney weed	Yes	Handy groundcover around pavers or in part-shade however, dies back in the heat of summer without watering. S	prostrate x 1
Disphyma crassifolium subsp. clavellatum	Rounded noon flower, Native pigface	Yes	See note on Carpobrotus above. C F	.2 x 2
Hardenbergia violaceae	Cvs “Sea of Purple”		Reliable groundcover form. C	prostrate x 3
Kennedia prostrata	Running postman	Yes	Better in part shade. C	.2 x 2.5
Myoporum parvifolium	Creeping boobialla		Creates a verdant green carpet with masses of white or pink flowers in Spring, Summer. Broad-leaf white flower form has proven to be the best performer. C	.2 x 1-3
Tetragonia implexicoma	Bower spinach	Yes	Thrives at “The Cape” but will climb over any low shrubs. F	.3 x 3

<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Native violet		Handy between pavers particularly in part shade. Needs supplementary water in Summer. S	.2 x .3-1
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GRASSES

Planting grasses en masse at “The Cape” can be problematic - the area was not originally a grassland and, as such, large plantings will attract a limited range of fauna. Some of the grasses also retain dry leaves creating a potential fire hazard - this can be overcome by regular maintenance - cutting the plants down by two-thirds and removing all dry material. Grasses should also only be considered as a groundcover if they are planted close together preventing weed growth.

All of this said, a garden that is a mixture of native grasses, shrubs, climbers and trees will provide a range of habitats as well as the most interest with its variety of heights, textures and colours.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Indigenous to Bass Coast	Notes C – colour F – fire retardant S – grows in shade W- windbreak	height x width in metres
<i>Anigozanthos sp.</i>			Smaller varieties should be treated as short lived. Taller varieties (i.e. cultivars of <i>A. flavidus</i>) have been stunning at “The Cape” C	various
<i>Carex appressa</i>	Tall Sedge	Yes	Riverside species. Excellent for wet areas.	1 x .75
<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Tasman Flax Lily	Yes	There are many cultivars available. Any of the <i>Dianellas</i> will need supplementary water through Summer to look their best. Handy in part shade.	2 x 1.5

<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Knobby club sedge	Yes	Useful along the edge of “dry creek beds” or water features, also for up to 70%-part shade. Needs regular trimming to remove dry, dead material.	1.5 x 1
Gahnia sieberiana	Red fruit saw sedge	Yes	Can be hard to establish but the reward is magnificent almost black seed heads.	3 x 3
<i>Lomandra confertifolia</i>	Lomandra		Cultivars like the compact “Little Lime” “Frosty Tops” “Lime Tuff”	1 x 1
<i>Lomandra filiformis</i>	Wattle Mat-rush	Yes	Lomandras build up dead material over time and may require trimming every 2 - 3 years. Cultivars are easier to source including “Savannah Blue” has bluish foliage .3 x .3	.4 x .4
<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Spiny headed mat rush	Yes	See above. Cultivars performing well at “The Cape” including the ever-reliable “Tanika” .6 x .6	1 x .75
<i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>	Long purple flag	Yes	Beautiful masses of purple flowers. Lovely when planted in drifts BUT the jury is out on whether the plant takes well to regular trimming to remove dead, dry leaves. White flowered form available. C	.5 x .3
<i>Poa labillardierei</i>	Common tussock grass	Yes	Poa species produce a lot of dry material by the end of summer and will require regular maintenance.	.8 x .5
<i>Poa poiformis</i>	Coast tussock grass	Yes	See above.	.6 x .5
Rytidosperma caespitosum	Common wallaby grass	Yes	Was Austrodanthonia caespitosum	to 1.2m

Themeda triandra	Kangaroo grass	Yes	Can be difficult to propagate.	to .9
Xanthorhoea minor subsp lutea	Small grass tree	Yes	Nice stand of small grass trees at Venus Bay. Can be difficult to propagate / source.	1 x .6

NOTES

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO YOUR GARDEN

Birds need somewhere to live - habitat (**H**) and sources of food (**F**). Try to avoid a “refined palette” of plants in your garden and aim for perennial plants of varying heights and forms to create green corridors. Consider a small bird bath located in a protected area of your garden. Planting a hedge is also another way of creating habitat.

Bird attracting plants include:

Grevillea sp. (F)
 Banksia spinulosa and cultivars (F)
 Correa sp. (F)
 Pandorea pandorana (F)
 Anigozanthos sp. And cultivars (Kangaroo Paw) (F)
 Eremophila sp. (Emu Bush) (F)
 Eucalypt sp. (H)
 Ficinia nodosa (Knobby Club Rush) (H)
 Westringia sp. (Coastal Rosemary) (H)
 Leptospermum sp. (Tea Tree) (H)
 Kunzea sp. (H&F)
 Agonis sp. (F)

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLANTS

Not all plants “Indigenous to Bass Coast” will grow successfully at “The Cape” Species adapted to the sand dunes as well those that grow in the damp, sandy, herb-rich coastal woodlands should succeed. Yet, plants adapted to Swamp Scrub usually won’t survive - i.e. those plants that grow in the swampy areas where water becomes trapped behind the dunes such as at the end of “The Cape’s” walking track near Surf Beach Road.

A rough rule of thumb is to select local species adapted to a sandy coastal environment. Species from the mallee as well as those from SW Western Australia may also be worth a try.

MULCH

Try to avoid hardwood chip as “Nitrogen Draw Down” can occur – soil biota rob the soil of Nitrogen during the process of breaking down the hardwood.

Chipped tree prunings (usually sold as “Bush Mulch”) is a better alternative. It varies in size from fines through to large chips and is more easily broken down providing a beautiful humus-rich top soil.

SOIL

At best, soils at “The Cape” can be described as sandy loam at the northern end of the development ranging to almost pure sand (minimal top soil) closer to the dunes.

Sandy soils are hydrophobic (they resist water penetration). Yet, under steady rain, sandy soils also drain rapidly, retaining very little moisture. During a heavy deluge, soils at “The Cape” can also flood – this is caused by an impervious layer below the surface (locally known as “coffee rock”).

Using a soil wetter such as “Eco-Hydrate” will assist in breaking down the water repellency as well as increasing water holding capacity. Also consider sub-surface drainage in any low-lying areas.

Soil improvement is important as there is nothing “natural” about the soil at “The Cape” – the original herb-rich coastal woodlands were destroyed and replaced by impoverished pasture lands that were subsequently disturbed by land forming for the development.

Retaining the top soil from site excavations or adding an imported top soil and mixing it into the existing soil profile will improve planting success. NB: Try to avoid imported top soil that has added bird manure as high phosphorus levels may kill Waratahs, Grevilleas, Banksias and Acacias.

WATERING

Many species will require supplementary water during establishment (particularly if planting is done in spring / summer). The best time for large landscape planting is during the “rainy months” (late autumn - early winter).

Thanks to Megan at Melaleuca Nursery for your assistance in the compilation of this list.

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