

## MLG nursery and planting guide

### Step 1 – Planning:

### Things to consider before you request plants

The nursery is staffed by volunteers, so we want to make sure that our efforts and resources are going to good use – that the plants we produce are in the ground, and in areas where they will thrive and benefit the environment.

Before requesting plants, think about both the species and number of plants you need. Some guidance is provided here on the various things to take into consideration for both of these.

You can also email our nursery people if you have questions or need help in planning ([mlg\\_nursery@yan.org.au](mailto:mlg_nursery@yan.org.au)).

#### Choosing species to plant

What types of plants do you want? This will depend on the landscape of the area and the mixture you want.

##### Landscape site

Plants will grow best in areas they are suited to. When choosing species of plants for your property, consider the types of habitat you have and where plants are needed.

The nursery has made it easy for you to request plants that suit your property. Local Landcare experts have curated mixes of suitable species for 4 different landscape types (see diagram on the following page about paddock landscape types). This means you can simply choose the mix that will suit your property.

The 4 landscape types are:

- **slopes** – plants for grassy woodland and forest on better soils and mid to lower slopes and flats
- **ridges** – plants for dry forest on poor shallower soils, upper slopes and rocky ridges
- **riparian** – plants for damp sites including streambanks, dams and damp areas on flats
- **garden** – plants for garden sites close to a house.

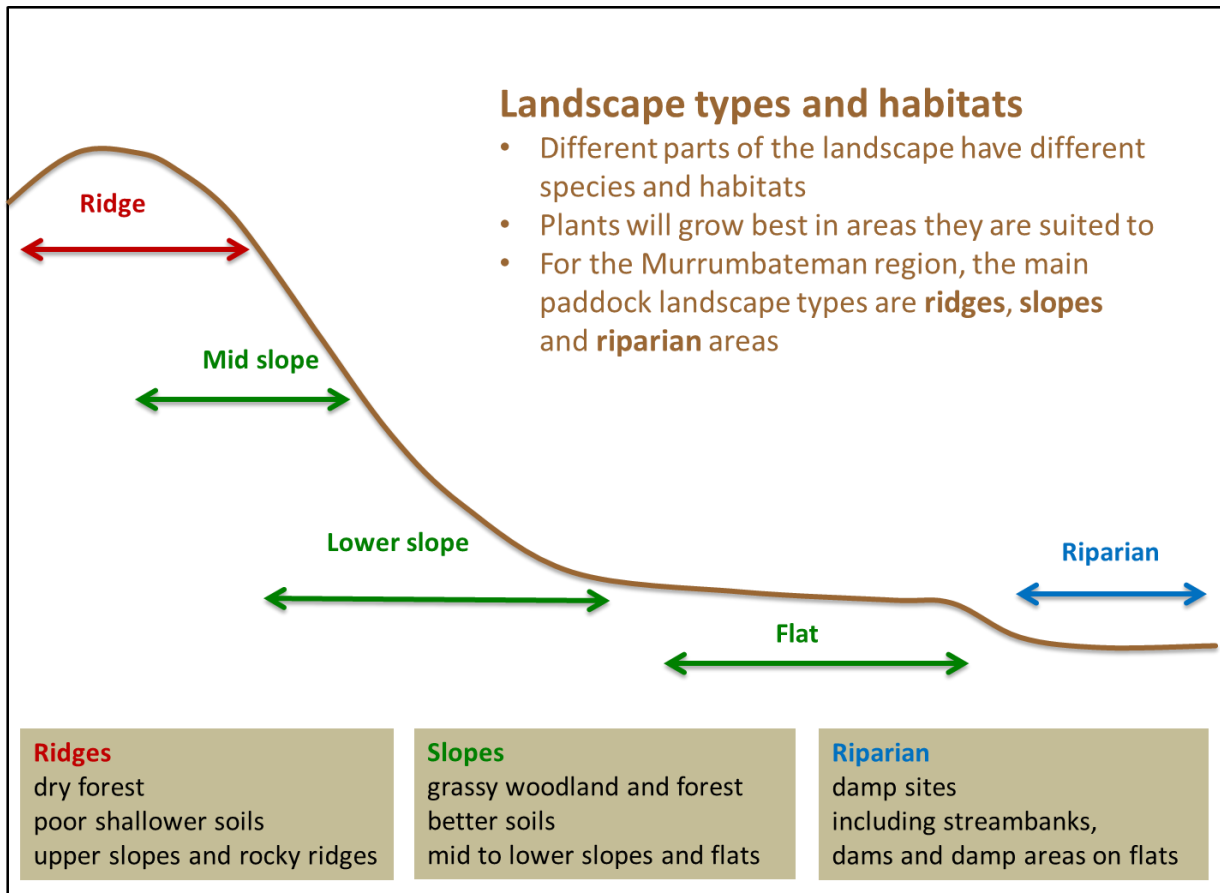
The nursery request form has plants arranged by landscape site. The MLG Nursery species guide has further information about the species height and growth habit and what they need to thrive.

##### List of species

The MLG Nursery propagates around 40 species of plants, suitable for the local area. Those highlighted in green on the order sheet have been selected for being 'climate ready', meaning that they grow not only in our locality but also in hotter areas, and that we are using genetically diverse seed to improve resilience. Species with \* only have limited seed available, and may not be available once seed runs out.

We have also taken flammability rating information into consideration for garden plants. However, please realise that all vegetation can burn if a fire is hot enough.

The list and information about each species can be found in [MLG Nursery species guide — NSW Landcare Gateway](#).



## Deciding how many plants

How many plants do you want? This will depend on the area, type of plants and your resources.

### Area, spacing and distance

A key consideration is the area you want to revegetate, which affects how many plants you need. Larger properties can clearly use more plants, while smaller properties can focus on filling in gaps and improving the variety of species.

In choosing areas for planting, think about improving poor areas or building on existing areas of better vegetation. Avoid areas of heavy weed, areas that have previously been fertilised heavily, or areas that are on a wildlife or stock path. These areas are not likely to be successful.

While the overall area is one consideration, you also need to consider:

- spacing between plants – leave more space between larger plants so they have enough room to grow and mature. As a rule of thumb, you will need 10–30 m between trees, and 2–10 m between shrubs.
- spacing between patches – If you have a large area, you do not need to cover all of it with vegetation. Consider creating patches of reasonably dense vegetation, where wildlife can travel a short distance to another patch.

## Resources

Last, but definitely not least, is to think about the resources you have for planting. It can be tempting to request lots of plants, but you will need to make sure that you can get them in the ground and protect and water them. Please do not ask for more plants than you can plant and take care of.

Each plant will need:

- care before it is planted (watering daily, a shaded area to keep them)
- a hole to be planted in and ripping if needed
- initial watering (at least 2 litres per plant is recommended on planting day)
- a treeguard and stakes (these are available at cost price from the nursery and may need to be replaced over time – it is recommended that plants are protected for 1–5 years for best results)
- other optional items include wetting agents or surfactants to help the soil hold moisture, weedmat and mulch
- additional watering until established (depending on the position and rainfall).

The resources you will need to think about include:

- physical effort. Think about your physical fitness and how much digging, lifting and bending you can do in a day. You may be able to reduce the amount of digging required by getting planting lines ripped, but you will still need to physically place and settle each plant.
- transport. Think about how you will get the plants and materials to the planting site. Transporting enough water to plant many plants at one time can be a particular challenge.
- time. How much spare time do you have available during the planting season? Once you receive your seedlings, they should be planted out as soon as possible. A reasonably fit person might plant only around 20–25 plants in a day, especially if several days planting is required, so assess whether you have enough time in the planting season to get them all in the ground.
- materials. Make sure you have the tools you need for planting and enough guards and stakes – small plants are the most vulnerable to grazing and will need protection.

If you do not have a lot of resources but are still keen to improve native vegetation on your property, consider holding a planting day and getting neighbours and friends to help.

Another method is to go gradually. Rather than trying to do 100 plants in one season, just do 20 and slowly build your habitats. If you are new to planting, starting slowly also gives you a chance to test the process and species – ask for a small number of plants in your first year and find out how many you can plant in a day, and what planting and protection methods suit your property.

Another option is to do direct seeding, where seeds are planted straight into the ground. MLG does not generally offer seeds for this option, but Greening Australia may be able to help for suitable sites and projects.

## Bushfire considerations

MLG has recently completed a research project on bushfire landscaping for our region. Plants with low flammability can potentially assist in protecting our homes from bushfires. However, high flammability plants can exacerbate the risk of destruction.

We are selecting low flammability plants for our garden landscape site. Remember that regardless of the plant species used in the garden, it is vital to consider other aspects such as:

- the flammability of non-plant materials (e.g. mulches and decks)

- the density and pattern of planting
- availability of water
- the proximity of trees to each other and to buildings.

For landscape sites other than gardens, it may also be important to consider aspects such as species and planting density. For example, this may be a consideration in tree lanes.

Please note that all plants, even low flammability species, can burn if conditions are severe enough.

Please check our website before designing your planting, see: [Bushfire landscaping: designing gardens for bushfire-prone areas — NSW Landcare Gateway](#). Particular documents to note are:

- [Designing gardens for bushfire-prone areas](#)
- [Detailed information on flammability of plants suitable for our region](#).