

HEDGES — Plants that make good hedges, mixed hedges and screens

Many of the following species are available at the Murrumbateman nursery or from local native growers:

- Dodonaeas
- Banksias (see description of *B. marginata* below)
- Correas — higher and lower hedges
- Acacias — grow with other plants so they may take advantage of nitrogen fixing, rapid growth and shelter
- Philothecas — wax flowers, e.g. *myoporoides* Flowergirl
- Olearias — daisy bush
- Callistemons — bottlebrushes
- Leptospermums — tea trees e.g. *lanigerum*
- Eucalyptus *pauciflora* (snow gum) or *E. stellulata* (black sallee); scatter some of these within the shrubs above
- Westringias — coastal or native rosemary
- Hakeas — include some spiky ones to protect small nesting birds
- Prostantheras — perfumed mint bushes
- Daviesias — bitter peas.

***Banksia marginata* — Silver banksia**

This is a plant common in woodland and montane (mountainous) forest in the ACT and surrounding regions. It grows in sandy loam or decomposed granite on moderate slopes at altitudes of 570-1300 metres. It's fairly variable in its growth habits — it can be a dense, medium shrub or a more open small tree to approx. 10 metres, depending on where/what conditions it is growing under. It grows in full sun to moderate shade, is frost resistant and copes well with dry conditions. It also it grows in wetter soil. These plants have great character and interest with their shapely, often gnarled, trunks and



silver backed leaves. You can grow them easily from cuttings if you are planning to have lots. Other characteristics are:

- bird attracting for nectar lovers and seed eaters
- salt tolerant
- grow well in large containers where its gnarled habit and silver backed leaves are very attractive; you can Bonsai them as well
- have greenish to bright yellow flowers on maturity that are perfumed and make good cut flowers and unusual wreathes for Anzac day
- make good windbreaks when grown in the company of other natives which we also grow here at the nursery e.g. Dodonaeas, Callistemons and Acacias (see HEDGES above)
- are good for hedging (can be pruned to keep dense and lower); pruning often makes a plant more attractive, for example, to display the flowers more prominently — just cut some of the leaves away.

You can buy prostrate and small forms and cultivars (bred and developed) from commercial nurseries. They include “Mini-marg” and groundcover forms (though you’ll have to search for these).

Dodonaeas — hop bushes

We grow the Sticky hop bush *D. viscosa* (pictured) in the nursery. It is a shrub 3 metres high by 1.5 wide — tall and narrow, which is often the shape you are looking for to fill that narrow space. It requires at least half sun.

It is found growing naturally in the ACT and surrounding areas and is common in woodlands. It's usually found on poor soils in dry sites on hilltops and upper ridges that are well drained. It was used by early settlers as a substitute for hops in beer making. *D. viscosa* variety *purpurea* is a lovely purple leaved form from NZ. Other characteristics are:



- hardy and adaptable in cultivation and well suited to inland gardens
- fast growing and drought resistant
- ornamental, with its spring/summer flowers and shiny leaves and later with its crimson hops (flat flowers)
- a good hedge or privacy screen with its neat habit
- easy to prune to shape
- able to be grown alone or with other plants we have in the nursery that require the same conditions
- a good street shrub which softens hard architecture.

REFERENCES

Photographic Guide to Native Plants of the Australian Capital Territory, Meredith Cosgrove

Flowering Natives for Home Gardens, Denise Greig

Grow What Where, Natalie Peate, Gwenda Macdonald and Alice Talbot

The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants, Diana Snape

Australian Plants for Canberra Region Gardens and other Cool Climate Areas, ANPS