



STILL CREEK LANDCARE

Small Native Trees for your Garden

By Jutta Hamilton



In selecting suitable small species for smaller gardens there are several factors which need to be considered. Firstly, you need to decide what you mean by "small". For the purpose of this article I have adopted a maximum height of about 10 metres (30 feet) or smaller. Then you need to consider the local growing conditions in comparison to the conditions of the natural habitat of the various species.

Some trees may only grow to shrub size, with a naturally branched habit, but can be trained into a single trunk tree.

The first tress that springs to my mind is *Tristaniopsis laurina* (Water Gum). It is a small spreading tree with handsome leaves and beautiful pale bare sheen to the bark and dense clusters of yellow flowers around Christmas. Although its natural habitat in this area is along rocky creeks in sandstone gullies, it is quite adaptable to various soils and conditions.

Acmena smithii (Lillipilly) is a small tree with dense dark glossy foliage that grows quite tall in rainforest gullies, but is much shorter in the open garden setting.

Backhousia myrtifolia (Grey Myrtle) is usually found along banks of streams, but can grow on drier hillsides. It has dull dark green foliage with the young branches

covered in fine grey hair. It has cream coloured flowers in summer.

Many of the Bottlebrushes are large shrubs and can form tree-like trunks. *Callistemon salignus* (Willow Bottlebrush) has a corky bark and creamy flowers, while *Callistemon citrinus* (Crimson Bottlebrush) has bright red flowers.

Melaleuca linariifolia (Snow-in-summer) is an adaptable small tree with papery bark. It put on an extraordinary display of white flowers in Summer.

Other local native favourites of mine are: *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* (Blueberry Ash), with its fringed flowers and pretty blue berries, *Trema tomentosa* (Native peach), and *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* (NSW Christmas Bush).

So why not try one of the above selections when looking for a small tree or large shrub for your garden.

From all the Volunteers here at Still Creek Landcare, we wish you the Happiest Christmas for 2021 and a wonderful 2022.

For more information, contact Nick on 9653 2056, www.stillcreeklandcare.com.au email Stillcreeklandcare@iinet.net.au or Facebook.



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