

Spring: What's flowering now?



Cape York Lily *Curcuma australasica*

This is a luscious beauty that really suits a rainforest or Balinese style garden and is perfect for Mackay and the Whitsunday's tropical monsoonal climate. The Cape York Lily dies back during winter, then as the warmer weather returns in October - shoots appear almost overnight and open into glorious pink and yellow flower heads. These are followed by large green leaves which last the rest of the summer.

Preferring moist soils, keep this Cape York Lily in a well mulched, semi-shaded position. Alternatively try it in a large pot and bring it inside for some

glorious late spring colour around your home or entertainment area.

Interestingly - the Cape York Lily belongs to the Zingiberaceae family, which include such spices as Ginger, Turmeric and Cardamom. Look for this plant in the native rainforest or collectable section of your nursery.

Native Lasiandra *Melastoma malabathricum* *subsp. malabathricum*

Many will know Lasiandras and Tibouchinas from South America with their bold purple and pink flowers, but Australia features a few native varieties throughout Queensland and across the top end. This Native Lasiandra is a very attractive local variety that

forms a shrub to small tree.

It is covered in beautiful light mauve/pink flowers that the bumblebees flock to throughout the warmer months. The flowers are 'buzz pollinated' and need the buzzing of bee's wings to move pollen onto female parts.

Sometimes called "Blue Tongue" - the fruiting bodies of this plant were eaten by Aboriginal peoples and left the tongue stained blue.

This Native Lasiandra prefers ample year round moisture in a well drained, semi-shaded position. Give a light prune after flowering to keep in shape and remove old flower heads. This plant is usually available from

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The Little Kurrajong *Brachychiton bidwillii*

This attractive Australian native has a shapely trunk and large lobed leaves. Clusters of dark red star-shaped flowers are borne during spring, followed by large, attractive, boat-shaped seed pods filled with tightly packed irregular seeds. The seed pods are covered in fine hairs which can cause irritation.

The Little Kurrajong comes from south-eastern and central Queensland. It occurs in scrub, dry rainforest and the edges of open hardwood forest, but always in high light/sun areas

This ornamental small tree is little-known in cultivation but is suitable for tropical, subtropical or coastal regions and is drought resistant once established. The Little Kurrajong grows best in well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. It can be very slow growing in southern areas, but starts flowering when it is young.

Golden Everlasting Daisy *Xerochrysum bracteatum*

These very popular plants bring long-lasting colour and warmth into the garden. There are many everlasting daisies available in nurseries with flowers varying from white through cream, lemon, canary yellow, gold and bronze.

This Everlasting Daisy has an erect habit and grows to around 1m in height. It has weak hollow stems and thin green leaves. Flowers occur from autumn to early summer and the plant will keep producing flowers particularly if spent flowers are continually removed. Butterflies and other insects love them and will flock to your garden adding another area of interest. As seeds disperse, wild sown plants add a touch of surprise to your garden.



Little Kurrajong

They are also excellent as dried flowers, keeping their shape and colour for years - just hang a bunch up-side-down in a dark airy place and let them dry for a few weeks.

**For more information
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Golden Everlasting Daisy