

Salt bush planted under a rough barked gum tree.



Landscaped creek acts as a fire break



REFERENCES AND OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

- Sustainable Landscapes *Reducing fire risk in gardens* Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Fire retardant garden plants for the urban fringe and rural areas. www.fire.tas.gov.au
- Landscaping for Bushfire – Garden design and plant selection www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- www.apsvic.org.au/plant_fire_resistant
- www.ilda.com.au/page/fire_retardent
- www.cfs.sa.gov.au
- Native Vegetation of the Murray Region by Todd Berkinshaw Greening Australia 2006
- Simply Saltbush by Nadine Brown 2014
- Barossa Bushgardens "Firewise" demonstration garden www.barossa.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=42
- Meldanda Bushgardens "Fire retardant plant display garden" www.midmurraylap.org.au/currentprojects.htm



Maireana sedifolia - Bluebush



Ground cover
Kennedia prostrata -
Running Postman

PROTECTING YOUR ASSETS FROM FIRE GARDENING WITH FIRE RETARDANT PLANTS

No Plant is completely fire-resistant under the right conditions all plants will burn, this brochure is intended to provide some local native plant options that have lower flammability properties.

Disclaimer this brochure has been designed to assist landholders in the Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin Region, the organisations involved with its development intended it as a guide only and take no responsibility for inaccuracies or misinterpretation of its information.

Acknowledgements:

Photographs by Nadine Brown and Aimee Linke

Supported by Mid Murray LAP and Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin





There are many resources available to assist you in protecting your home, please refer to reference list for some of these. During a bushfire the way you have managed the vegetation round your home is a factor that you can control. You can reduce the hazards around your home and sheds by reducing the fuel load available and selecting plants that will not readily burn, it is a good idea to remove dead plants or lower branches from large bushes and trees near your home as part of your regular maintenance program. Low growing plants near your house like ground covers are better than shrubs, but shrubs with dense foliage are better than those with an open airy crown. Eucalypts with smooth bark are safer than ones with loose or rough bark on their trunks. Eucalypts near your home can be safe guarded to some degree if the crowns of the trees aren't too close together for example in an open grassy woodland. The planting of saltbush shrubs around the bases of the trees will assist in preventing fire being able to burn up the trunk of the tree as they separate the leaf litter from the tree above and also help to reduce flammable weeds being able to grow.

LOW FLAMMABILITY CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics of plants with low flammability:

- high moisture content
- High salt content
- Broad fleshy leaves
- Low and dense habit
- Do not retain dead material
- Smooth trunks rather than rough bark.

If a fire is approaching your home fire retardant plants have the capacity to be able to absorb some of the heat of the approaching bushfire and not burn like more flammable plants would. They can also trap sparks and burning embers and reduce the wind speed near you house if positioned correctly and maintained appropriately.

- **Maintenance** – if you grow fire retardant plants you need to commit to maintaining them otherwise they too could become a fire hazard. You need to provide them with sufficient water to maintain a high leaf moisture content, remove any dead material and prune lower branches.
- **Mulch** – there is some debate about mulch and it is great if you can use non-flammable materials such as pebbles, rocks or sand. If however you need to use plant based mulch it is advisable to apply it after the fire season so it can have a chance to break down and decompose over winter which makes it less likely to ignite.
- **Weeds** – some weeds are very highly flammable and priority should be given to removing them from around your house and assets you most want to protect, especially Phalaris and Pampas grass. Other native plants that have a high oil content like Eucalyptus, Melaleuca, Callistemon and Native Pines should be avoided near your house. Still include these species on your property, keep clear spaces around them and don't plant in groups. Non native plants like lavender are also advised not to be planted to close to your home or assets.
- **Habitat** – It is important to still include native species as part of your garden design around your house and assets to provide local habitat and diversity for our native fauna, although many exotic species have low flammability properties, some also pose a great weed threat to our native bushland.

PLANTS WITH LOW FLAMMABILITY

All plants can burn under the right conditions. Plants with low flammability characteristics need to be grown and maintained to their optimum condition. Plants that are not healthy or are not maintained are likely to become susceptible to fire.

Groundcovers/climbers	Common Name	Height
<i>Atriplex leptocarpa</i>	Slender-fruit Salt-bush	
<i>Atriplex semibaccata</i>	Berry Saltbush	
<i>Carpobrotus modestus</i>	Inland Pigface	
<i>Carpobrotus rossii</i>	Native Pigface	
<i>Chenopodium desertorum</i>	Goosefoot	
<i>Einadia nutans</i>	Climbing Saltbush	
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney Weed	
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Running Postman	
<i>Maireana pentagonia</i>	Slender Fissure-plant	
<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	Creeping Boobiella	
<i>Sarcozona praecox</i>	Sarcozona	

Herb	Common Name	Height
<i>Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia</i>	Annual Rock-fern	0.5
<i>Cheilanthes sieberi</i>	Narrow Rock-fern	0.5
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Common Everlasting	0.6
<i>Maireana enchylaenoides</i>	Wingless Fissure-plant	0.2
<i>Mimulus repens</i>	Creeping Monkey-flower	0.2
<i>Pelargonium australe</i>	Australian Pelargonium	0.7
<i>Selliera radicans</i>	Shiny Swamp-mat	0.5
<i>Senecio odoratus</i>	Scented Groundsel	1.7
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Ivy-leaf Violet	0.1

Low Shrub (<5m)	Common Name	Height
<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Wreath Wattle	0.3-2
<i>Acacia argyrophylla</i>	Silver Mulga-bush	1-5
<i>Acacia brachybotrya</i>	Grey Mulga-bush	1-4
<i>Acacia farinosa</i>	Mealy Wattle	1-2
<i>Acacia glandulicarpa</i>	Hairy-pod Wattle	1
<i>Acacia ligulata</i>	Umbrella Bush	2-Apr
<i>Acacia microcarpa</i>	Manna Wattle	1-3
<i>Allocasuarina muelleriana</i>	Common Oak-bush	0.8-4
<i>Alyxia buxifolia</i>	Sea Box	1-2.5
<i>Atriplex cinerea</i>	Coastal Salt-bush	1.8
<i>Atriplex limbata</i>	Spreading Saltbush	0.5
<i>Atriplex lindleyi</i>	Baldoo	0.3
<i>Atriplex nummularia</i>	Old-man Saltbush	2-3
<i>Atriplex paludosa</i>	Marsh Saltbush	1
<i>Atriplex rhagodioides</i>	River Saltbush	3
<i>Atriplex stipitata</i>	Bitter Saltbush	1
<i>Atriplex vesicaria</i>	Bladder Saltbush	1
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Sweet Bursaria	2-3
<i>Correa reflexa</i>	Common Correa	0.5-1.5
<i>Dodonea viscosa ssp. spatulata</i>	Hop Bush	2-4
<i>D. viscosa ssp. angustissima</i>	Narrow-leaf Hop-bush	2-4
<i>D. viscosa ssp. cuneata</i>	Wedge-leaf Hop-bush	1-3
<i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i>	Ruby Saltbush	1
<i>Eremophila deserti</i>	Turkey-bush	1-4
<i>Eremophila divaricata</i>	Spreading Emu-bush	1.5
<i>Frankenia pauciflora</i>	Southern Sea-heath	0.3
<i>Geijera linearifolia</i>	Sheep-bush	1-3
<i>Maireana erioclada</i>	Rosy Bluebush	0.6
<i>Maireana georgei</i>	Satiny Bluebush	0.5
<i>Maireana brevifolia</i>	Short-leaf Bluebush	1
<i>Maireana pentatropis</i>	Erect Mallee Bluebush	1

<i>Maireana radiata</i>	Radiate Bluebush	0.3
<i>Maireana sedifolia</i>	Bluebush	1
<i>Myoporum brevipes</i>	Warty Boobiella	2
<i>Myoporum insulare</i>	Common Boobiella	3
<i>Nitraria billardierei</i>	Nitre-bush	1-3
<i>Olearia axillaris</i>	Coast Daisy-bush	2-3
<i>Rhagodia candolleana</i>	Sea-berry Saltbush	1-1.5
<i>Rhagodia crassifolia</i>	Fleshy Saltbush	1-1.5
<i>Rhagodia parabolica</i>	Mealy Saltbush	1-2
<i>Rhagodia spinescens</i>	Spiny Saltbush	1-2
<i>Scaevola aemula</i>	Fairy Fanflower	0.4
<i>Scaevola albida</i>	Pale Fanflower	0.5
<i>Sclerolaena diacantha</i>	Grey Bindyi	0.3
<i>Sclerolaena spp.</i>	Bindyi	0.5
<i>Senna artemisioides</i>	Desert Senna	1-2
<i>Solanum esuriale</i>	Quena	1-3
<i>Solanum laciniatum</i>	Cut-leaf Kangaroo-apple	1-3
<i>Solanum simile</i>	Kangaroo-apple	1-3
<i>Zygophyllum apiculatum</i>	Pointed Twinleaf	0.5

Tall shrub/tree (>5m)	Common Name	Height
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood	6-30
<i>Acacia oswaldii</i>	Umbrella Wattle	2-5
<i>Acacia pendula</i>	Weeping Myall	5-10
<i>Acacia salicina</i>	Willow Wattle	3-12
<i>Acacia stenopylla</i>	River Cooba	4-10
<i>Alectryon oleifolius</i>	Bullock Bush	3-5
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Drooping Sheoak	5-10
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Silver Banksia	5-7
<i>Eremophila longifolia</i>	Weeping Emu-bush	2-5
<i>Myoporum montanum</i>	Native Myrtle	8
<i>Myoporum platycarpum</i>	False Sandlewood	10
<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i>	Native Apricot	3-6

Grass/grass look-a-likes	Common Name	Height
<i>Lomandra effusa</i>	Scented Mat-rush	0.5
<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Spiny-head Mat-rush	0.5
<i>Lomandra multiflora</i>	Hard Mat-rush	0.5
<i>Microlaena stipoides</i>	Weeping Rice-grass	0.6
<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i>	Grass Trigger-plant	0.4
<i>Thermeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	1

Lilies	Common Name	Height
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Common Vanilla-lily	0.5
<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>	Bulbine-lily	0.2
<i>Dianella brevicaulis</i>	Short-stem Flax-lily	0.5
<i>Dianella longifolia</i>	Pale Flax-lily	0.8
<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily	1
<i>Dichopogon fimbriatus</i>	Nodding Vanilla-lily	1

When using plants not indigenous to your area please check for weed potential. Ask your local council for more information.

