

Trees attractive to birds

Many birds are attracted to gardens and parks by the trees and the shrubs growing there. Trees provide food and shelter and, in breeding periods, nesting sites and materials. A careful selection of species will attract a variety of birds through the year.

Food

Trees provide nectar, seeds and fruits. These and the insects which live on or around the trees are major food sources for many species of birds.

Some birds are specialised feeders, while others, such as noisy miners, eat a variety of foods.

Nectar

The flowers of eucalypts, grevilleas, banksias, callistemons and melaleucas are prolific nectar producers. They attract honeyeaters, spinebills, lorikeets, friarbirds and rosellas.



Fruits and Seeds

Fruit and seed feeders include figbirds, rosellas, lorikeets, currawongs, orioles, friarbirds and pigeons. Trees such as Bangalow palms, ash quandongs (blueberry ash) and lillipillis are suitable for small gardens. On larger blocks, silky oaks, silver (blue) quandong, sheoaks, figs and native tamarinds can also be planted. Birds spread the tree seeds as they move between food sources.

Insects

Insect-eating birds are valuable garden-pest controllers. The birds eat leafeaters and sap-suckers, and insects visiting flowers for pollen and nectar. Wrens, wagtails, pardalotes and welcome swallows feed exclusively on insects while silvereyes eat fruit as well. Magpies and butcher birds catch pests such as caterpillars, beetles, cicadas and grasshoppers in the canopy and scratch for soil insects beneath trees and shrubs. Cockatoos can be a nuisance, as they will tear bark and small branches to get at wood-feeding insects.

Water

In hot or dry weather a supply of fresh water will attract many garden birds. Bird baths or other water sources should be placed in an open position to give the birds a clear view of approaching cats.

Nesting

Birds differ in their nesting preferences. Small species such as wrens, robins, silvereyes and wagtails seek protection in dense shrubs and small trees sometimes with nests only a metre off the ground. Nesting materials can include moss, twigs, cobwebs and plant fibres. Welcome swallows build mud nests on buildings and under bridges and pardalotes nest in ground burrows.

Magpies and butcher birds prefer tall trees so that they can patrol and defend their territories. Kookaburras, dollar birds, lorikeets and many parrots nest in tree holes, or hollowed out arboreal termite nests. In the suburbs there are few hollow trees, but a nesting box fixed high in a tree will quickly attract occupants (and there may be competition from possums and gliders).

The table on the next page will help you select a variety of trees to encourage birds into your garden.

Season	Common name	Botanical name	Nectar	Seed/fruit	Insects
Summer	Black Bean	<i>Castanospermum australe</i>	Yes	No	No
	Bracelet honey myrtle	<i>Melaleuca armillaris</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Broad-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Broad-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca leucadendron</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Brush box	<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Cherry satinash	<i>Syzygium luehmannii</i>	No	Yes	No
	Evodia	<i>Melicope elleryana</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Fig tree	Ficus species	No	Yes	No
	Flame tree	<i>Brachychiton acerifolium</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Geebung	<i>Persoonia linearis</i>	No	Yes	No
	Lillipilli	<i>Acmena smithii</i>	No	Yes	No
	Narrow-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca linarifolia</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Net bush	<i>Calothamnus villosus</i>	Yes	No	No
	Red ironbark	<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	River tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca bracteata</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Silky oak	<i>Grevillea robusta</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Silver cassia	<i>Cassia artemisioides</i>	Yes	No	No
	Sydney blue gum	<i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Thyme honey myrtle	<i>Melaleuca thymifolia</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Umbrella tree (weed SEQld)	<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>	No	Yes	Yes
	Weeping bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Wheel of fire	<i>Stenocarpus sinuatus</i>	Yes	No	No
	White cedar	<i>Melia azedarach</i>	No	Yes	No
Wombat berry	<i>Euctrephus latifolia</i>	No	Yes	No	
Autumn	Banks grevillea	<i>Grevillea banksii</i>	Yes	No	No
	Broad-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca viridiflora</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Broad-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Gympie messmate	<i>Eucalyptus cloeziana</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Red bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon polandii</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Southern satinash	<i>Acmena ingens</i>	No	Yes	No
	Swamp banksia	<i>Banksia robur</i>	Yes	No	No
	Swamp bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon pachyphyllus</i>	Yes	No	Yes
Wallum banksia	<i>Banksia aemula</i>	Yes	No	No	
Winter	Ash quandong	<i>Eleocarpus reticulatus</i>	No	Yes	No
	Brisbane wattle	<i>Acacia fimbriata</i>	No	Yes	Yes
	Ferny-leaved silky oak	<i>Grevillea pteridifolia</i>	Yes	No	No
	Glory wattle	<i>Acacia spectabilis</i>	No	Yes	Yes
	Green-leaved tamarind	<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>	No	Yes	No
	Heath-leaved honeysuckle	<i>Banksia ericifolia</i>	Yes	No	No
	Hill banksia	<i>Banksia spinulosa</i> var. <i>collina</i>	Yes	No	No
	Queensland silver wattle	<i>Acacia podalyriifolia</i>	No	Yes	Yes
	Rose gum	<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Sheoaks	Casuarina species	No	Yes	No
	Wallum banksia	<i>Banksia aemula</i>	Yes	No	No
	White banksia	<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Yes	No	No
Spring	Bracelet honey myrtle	<i>Melaleuca armillaris</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Broad-leaved tea-tree	<i>Melaleuca leucadendron</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Crow's ash	<i>Flindersia australis</i>	Yes	No	No
	Grevilleas and silky oaks	<i>Grevillea banksii</i> and species	Yes	No	No
	Palms (general)		No	Yes	Yes
	Paperbarks	Melaleuca species	Yes	No	Yes
	Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum phillyraeoides</i>	No	Yes	Yes
	Plunkett mallee	<i>Eucalyptus curtisii</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Sheoaks	Casuarina species	No	Yes	No
	Tantoon	<i>Leptospermum polygalifolium</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	Wattles	Acacia species	No	Yes	Yes
	Weeping bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	White bottlebrush	<i>Callistemon salignus</i>	Yes	No	Yes
	White banksia	<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	Yes	No	No

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