

# creating a waterwise

south west



*The information in this brochure is tailored to the South West. This covers the Perth Metropolitan, Peel, South West and Great Southern Regions - including Perth, Albany and Esperance.*

## tropical garden

Developing a tropical garden involves a careful selection of mostly bold foliaged plants to provide shade, shelter and colour throughout the year. While many plants from the tropics need a lot of water on a regular basis, there are some plants from the tropics and other plants with a tropical look that can be used to create a tropical garden that do not need a lot of water. What's right for your garden will depend on the size and style of your garden and the overall effect you want to achieve. For your tropical garden to be successful and rewarding, it is essential to carry out soil improvement prior to planting, mulch after planting, and install an efficient irrigation system.

### soil improvement

Soil improvement should be carried out prior to planting. The best soil improver is organic matter. It dramatically increases the moisture and nutrient holding capacity of sandy soil and encourages the all important soil micro fauna that are vital for healthy plant growth.

Improving the soil is a simple process:

- Dig a hole 25 to 30cm deep and, at a minimum, 3 times the width of the pot. The wider the better.
- Replace half the soil with organic matter.
- Mix thoroughly and replace in the hole in a shallow saucer shape.
- Take the plant out of the pot and place in the bottom of the saucer.
- Water in well, applying a wetting agent if necessary.
- Organic matter can be purchased as compost, soil improver or soil conditioner.

In addition to organic matter, the following can also be incorporated into the soil at planting time:

- Bentonite clay (sandy soils only).
- Gypsum (reactive clay soils only).
- Spongelite and zeolite (all soil types).
- Water storage polymers sold as granules or in sealed bags.

### mulching

Bare soil encourages weeds, wastes water and increases stress upon plants. A waterwise mulch spread to a depth of 5 to 10cm will reduce evaporation from the soil surface. It will also prevent erosion, reduce weeds, reduce temperature fluctuation in the soil, slowly break down over time to feed the soil and improve the overall appearance of the garden. A good waterwise mulch is one that has large, chunky pieces that hold little, if any, water. Always keep mulch just clear of stems and trunks and be prepared to spread more mulch over the surface as the material breaks down to feed the soil.

### irrigation

The most efficient irrigation systems are those that deliver the right amount of water to the right place, at the right time, with minimal wastage. The simplest and most efficient system available to the home gardener is known variously as sub-irrigation, integrated dripper or in-line dripper. It is simple to install and delivers water directly to the root system with little or no evaporative loss. For further information and expert assistance with irrigation, contact either your local Waterwise Garden Irrigator or Waterwise Irrigation Design Shop.

### hydrozoning

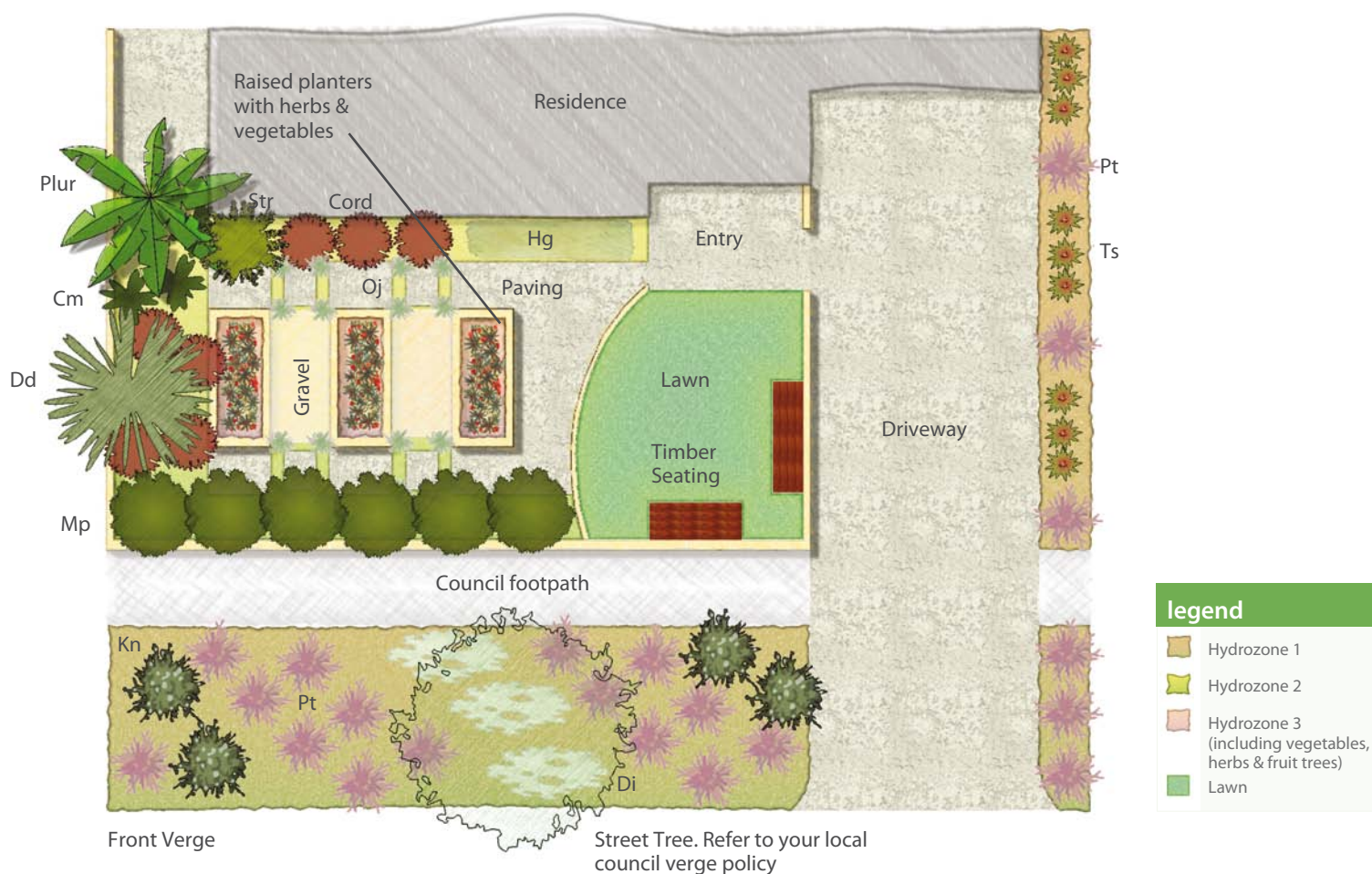
Hydrozoning is grouping plants with similar water needs together in an effort to be more water efficient. This is one of the most important tools to conserve water in the garden, and help save you money. You can choose plants to suit your garden and region with our Waterwise Plants for WA online directory.

Your local Waterwise Garden Centre can assist with plant selection and watering needs.

To find out your watering days visit our website.



# how to design a waterwise tropical garden



- Legend**
- Hydrozone 1
  - Hydrozone 2
  - Hydrozone 3 (including vegetables, herbs & fruit trees)
  - Lawn

Designs provided by Josh Byrne & Associates  
www.joshbyrne.com.au

## plant species

### Abrv Common Name

#### Grasses/Strappy Leaf Plants

Cm	Clivia
Cord	Cordyline 'Red Fountain'
Oj	Mondo Grass
Pt	New Zealand Flax (Dwarf) 'Elfin'
Ts	Moses in the Cradle

#### Trees

Dd	Dragons Tree
Plur	Frangipani

### Botanical Name

<i>Clivia miniata</i>
<i>Cordyline banksii x pumillo</i>
<i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>
<i>Phormium tenax</i>
<i>Tradescantia spathacea</i> or <i>Rhoeo spathacea</i>
<i>Dracaena draco</i>
<i>Plumeria rubra</i>

### Abrv Common Name

#### Ground Covers

Ada	Native Maidenhair Fern	<i>Adiantum aethiopicum</i> * $\Delta$
Di	Dichondra 'Silver Falls'	<i>Dichondra</i> *
Hg	Gooseberry Leaved Guinea Flower	<i>Hibbertia grossulariifolia</i> *
Kn	Black Coral Pea	<i>Kennedia nigricans</i> * $\Delta$

#### Shrubs

Mp	Orange Jessamine	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>
Str	Bird of Paradise	<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>

\* These species are endemic to WA  
 $\Delta$  Optional Species (not included in illustration)

## more information

For professional advice, visit our website to find a Waterwise Specialist near you. They include Garden Designers, Garden Centres, Garden Irrigators, Irrigation Design Shops, Landscapers, Lawnmowing Contractors, Plumbers and Water Auditors. Waterwise Specialists have been trained especially to help you save water by providing specialist advice on waterwise products and services for your home and garden. Look for the Waterwise Approved and Smart Approved WaterMark symbols when choosing gardening products such as mulch, plants, greywater systems and sprinklers.



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