

## Native wildlife

### - information about attracting native wildlife to your garden

It is very rewarding to see native birds and animals in our gardens. Many people think that only native plants attract these animals but in fact many exotic species of plants also support native wildlife, as native animals have had to adapt to the diminishing number of native plants in the urban environment.

Most garden centres now carry a very good selection of native plants. Native plants produce large quantities of nectar and are generally a food source for native animals all year round as they are not deciduous. Because these plants do grow all year they provide an excellent food source for possums that eat their leaves, flowers and fruits and birds and flying foxes that eat the nectar, fruits or berries although this can be dependent on the season.

Native gardens can be of several types – from a bush style garden, cottage, formal or patio garden. This gives flexibility in terms on the amount of space you have available for planting. Lilly Pilly (syzygium or acmena), particularly the smaller varieties, make an excellent tub plant on the patio or in the courtyard and will attract birds. Possums also eat lilly pilly – from the leaves to the red berries.



*Australian lilly pilly (Syzygium leuhmannii),  
common name is 'riberry'*

Some examples of native plants that support possums (ringtail and brushtail) and flying foxes are: angophora, banksia, callistemon (bottle brush), ficus (fig), melaleuca (paper bark) and eucalyptus (gum). Possums also eat acacia (wattle), leptospermum (tea tree), grevillea (red, pink or orange flowering varieties) and nearly all lilly pilly varieties as well as exotics such as plumbago (a very easy to grow shrub), New Zealand Christmas Bush, Liquidambar, Crepe Myrtle and Jacaranda.