

NATURE STRIP GARDEN GUIDELINES

VERSION 1.1 DECEMBER 2025



Superb Fairy-wrens (sometimes called “blue wrens”) and other small birds are declining in cities. Everyone loves fairy-wrens! Nature strip gardens using a diversity of native plants provide vital habitat and insects that the wrens require. Photo credit: Brendan Sydes.

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The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.



Checklist

This checklist will help you remain safe when developing your nature strip garden and provide your garden with the opportunity to thrive in the future.

If you have managed to tick 'YES' to all 13 questions, then you are on your way to a healthy, safe and thriving nature strip garden. If not, please revisit your garden design to ensure the best outcome.

1. Have you checked if your plans for a nature strip garden meet the requirements described in this guideline? If your plans do meet the requirements your garden is permissible. You must register your nature strip garden (Refer to page 14 for more information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
2. Have you checked if a local law permit is required for the works you are considering on your nature strip? (Refer to page 14).
☐ YES ☐ NO
3. Have you checked if your house is located in a heritage precinct. If you are located in a heritage precinct the nature strip garden requirements differ (Refer to page 17).
☐ YES ☐ NO
4. Have you checked if your nature strip supports existing native vegetation? Urban nature strips with remnant native vegetation are excluded from these guidelines - native vegetation is protected under law. (Refer to page 28).
☐ YES ☐ NO
5. Have you familiarized yourself with the 12 steps listed in the Before You Begin section? (Refer to page 9).
☐ YES ☐ NO
6. Will your plants and garden design remain within the permitted growth areas and ensure access is available to important infrastructure once matured? (Refer to page 20 for further information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
7. Have you confirmed that your surface treatment aligns with what our community wants? (Refer to page 15 for further information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
8. Is your nature strip designed as a Water Sensitive Design (WSD) treatment, such as a swale or channel? (Refer to page 10 for more information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
9. Are you willing to accept the responsibilities of a nature strip garden and the need for continued maintenance to ensure it supports the needs of our community? (Refer to page 15 for further information) If your answer is no, it is important now to reconsider your decision to start a nature strip garden.
☐ YES ☐ NO
10. Can your garden design still thrive without modifying or removing existing trees on the nature strip? (Refer to page 15 for further information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
11. Street trees: Have you ensured that you have included a planting exclusion zone around street trees? (Refer to page 27 for more information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
12. Have you confirmed that your nature strip garden does/ will not contain any prohibited equipment? (Refer to page 30 for more information).
☐ YES ☐ NO
13. Are you aware that as per Victoria's Road Safety Road Rules 2017, cars are not to be parked on nature strips? Fines may apply and vehicle owners held liable for any damage.
☐ YES ☐ NO



A nature strip garden planting using native plants local to Ballarat. Photo credit: Lee Harrison.

Introduction

Welcome to the City of Ballarat's Nature Strip Garden Guidelines.

Creating thriving nature strips is dependent on good design, preparation, installation and maintenance. These guidelines can help you with each stage of the process!

Nature strips are more than just buffers between pedestrians and vehicle traffic – they are a collective opportunity for you and your neighbours to create vibrant, green streetscapes filled with plants and wildflowers.

Much of the habitat for wildlife has been lost in the region. Planting native plants supports local wildlife and insects. Nature strip gardens can create vital new habitat refuges to help wildlife to thrive and move through the city and the region.

Transforming our nature strips into a habitat garden is a small gesture that makes a big difference. Well-designed and maintained nature strip gardens provide many social, environmental and economic benefits for the whole community. The City of Ballarat encourages residents to be involved in the greening and care of their nature strip and nature strip gardens.

To adhere to the [Community Local Laws 2017](#) relating to the planting of nature strips, residents need to follow requirements outlined in this Guideline. The requirements address the challenges of nature strip planting, such as avoiding underground infrastructure, maintaining vehicle site lines and ensuring the viability of planted vegetation.

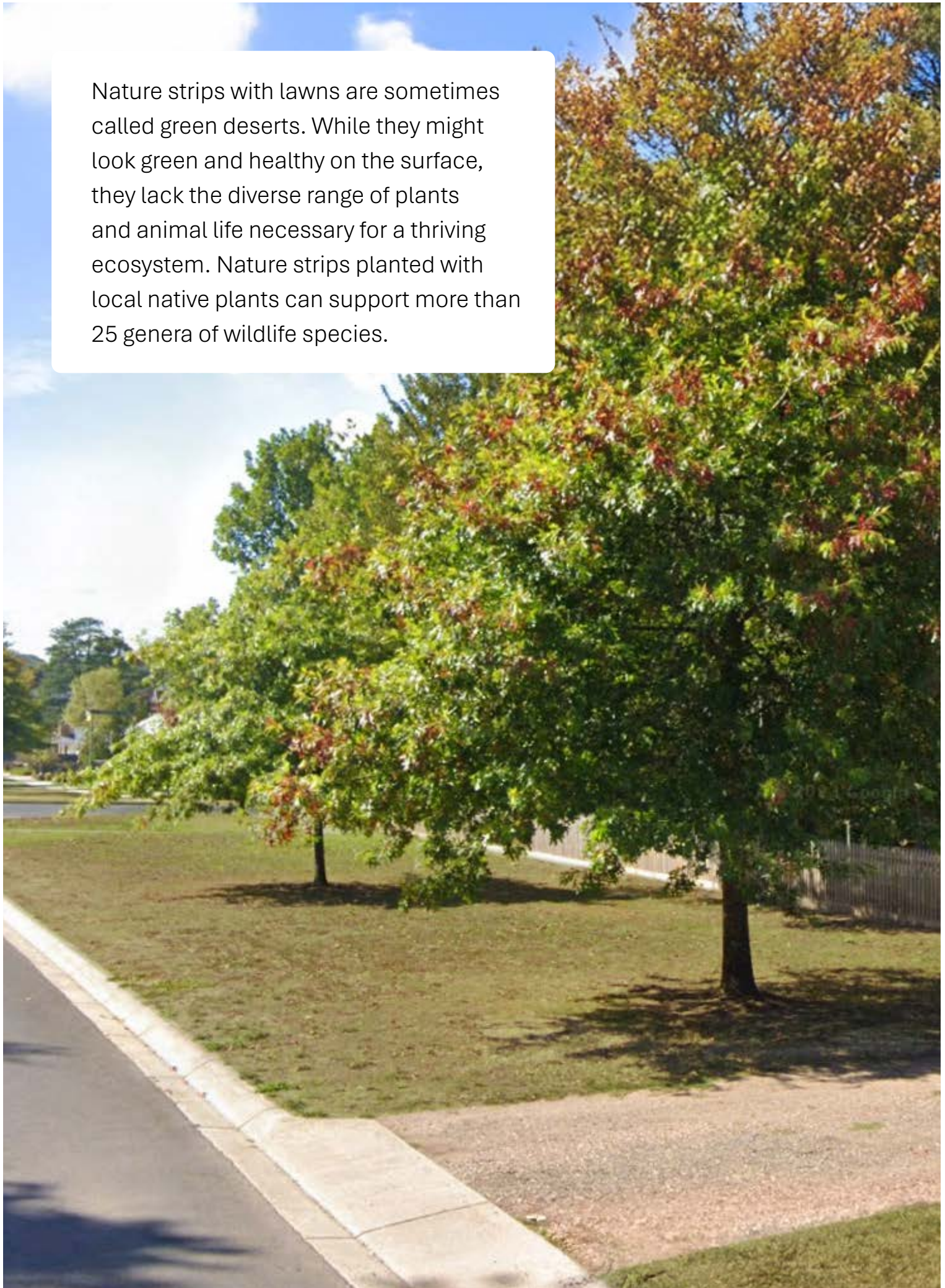
Since more than a third of our public green space consists of nature strips, the small actions of individual residents can collectively lead to significant positive change. By following the principles outlined in these guidelines, you will be ensuring community safety and amenity, as well as enabling important environmental benefits.

Some of the benefits of planting nature strips with local native grass tussocks, wildflowers and low shrubs and groundcovers include:

- Promotes a healthier ecosystem and helps create habitat connections between urban landscapes and nature reserves.
- Reduced urban heat impact - green spaces layered with vegetation help cool our urban areas making them more comfortable for everyone.
- Reduced overland flooding - plants and trees enhance soil absorption and reduce run-off, mitigating flooding during storm events which may be intensified by a changing climate.
- Community partnerships - by planting and maintaining nature strips together, we can create a greener, more resilient and connected community.

We would like to acknowledge the advice and resources provided by City of Greater Geelong officers in the production of this guideline.

Nature strips with lawns are sometimes called green deserts. While they might look green and healthy on the surface, they lack the diverse range of plants and animal life necessary for a thriving ecosystem. Nature strips planted with local native plants can support more than 25 genera of wildlife species.



What is a nature strip?

For the purpose of these guidelines, a nature strip is defined as an area of land located between the property boundary and the back of the kerb, excluding the footpath. In some cases, where no footpath is present, the nature strip area can be defined as being a minimum of 1.8 metres from the property boundary to the back of the kerb.

In many cases, a nature strip contains a street tree and accommodates services such as gas, water, power and internet. They also provide clear viewing lines for pedestrians and vehicles, a stable area for postal and waste collection services and safe entry and exit clearances for motor vehicles.

Nature strips are public land and are not part of residential property leases. However, it is well recognised that a shared maintenance approach between government and the community provides the maximum opportunity for individual and city-wide benefits.

Most of Ballarat's pre-1960s suburbs and streets are within a series of heritage precincts which include not only houses and properties, but also the streets, the bluestone and brick stormwater channels and culverts as well as street trees. Guidance is provided in these guidelines so that your nature strip garden is generally sympathetic with your heritage precinct's historic features. (See details on page 17).

In some instances, where urban nature strip gardens are not maintained by residents, they will be slashed by the City of Ballarat annually for the purpose of visual amenity. In rural areas, the roadside slashing may occur for road safety or strategic fire breaks, although in some locations these areas are the responsibility of VicRoads or another Road Authority (as specified in the demarcation agreements).

What is a nature strip garden?

A nature strip garden is planted within the nature strip. It can include wildflowers, grass tussocks, low shrubs or ground covers maintained at a height, depending on where it is located in Ballarat, to ensure safety and access between the road and footpath. It can be prepared to reduce the ongoing maintenance of lawn cutting. These gardens are typically created and maintained by residents to beautify streets, attract wildlife, such as butterflies and birds, and to foster neighbourly connections.



Why do biodiverse native gardens matter?

Some of the benefits of planting nature strips with local native grasses, shrubs and ground covers include:

Social benefits

- Nature strips contribute to creating beautiful streets
- Nature strips with places to rest, play or meet neighbours provides for social connection, contributing to health and wellbeing
- Local native plants enhance the sense of place and showcase the unique flora of your area
- Pedestrian comfort will encourage active transport.

Economic benefits

- Improve property values
- Reduce energy bills through cooling the city climate.

Ecological benefits

- A green and biodiverse landscape can help clean the air and cool our city
- Reduce flooding through enhanced soil absorption and reduced runoff
- Increase ground water recharge through soil water absorption
- A place for native wildlife and plant habitat, also increasing the presence of pollinators and natural pest controllers that will benefit our gardens
- Create habitat connections between urban landscapes and Ballarat's nature reserves.

Join up with your neighbours to enhance your street's biodiversity potential and increase the positive impact on the community.

Before you begin

To ensure you create the most successful nature strip garden possible, there are a few things to consider before you start planting.

Legislation and authority

The City of Ballarat's authority to manage roads is provided through the *Road Management Act (2004)* and *Road Safety Act (1986)* and their related regulations. This guideline is consistent with obligations under the [Road Management Act \(2004\)](#) and the [City of Ballarat Local Law](#).

Inclusions

These guidelines are applicable to nature strips in urban areas that are located on City of Ballarat managed public roads.

Exclusions

These guidelines do not apply to:

- Urban nature strips with remnant native vegetation (refer to page 28)
- Nature strips on a road not managed by the City of Ballarat, or an arterial road managed by the Department of Transport and Planning
- Rural roadsides – Rural roadsides are managed in accordance with the City of Ballarat's Road Management Plan.

Steps to take

1. TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Talk to your neighbours and let them know your plans and see what they think. Are they happy with what you plan to do? Talking to them before you begin may provide you with some great ideas and helps avoid any future issues.

2. STAY SAFE

While we're keen for the community to get out and create attractive landscapes that complement the biodiversity of their local area and streetscapes, safety is an important consideration when planting on public land.

Gardeners must:

- Maintain safe access for pedestrians – even during construction – and never leave gardening equipment, such as shovels or picks, on the footpath or in areas where pedestrians walk
- Never work from the road itself when planting a nature strip garden
- Wear sturdy enclosed shoes and gloves when working with soil and plant life (and don't forget about sun protection)
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment per product guidelines
- Never use mechanical aids when digging in your nature strip garden, only hand tools.

3. ASK YOUR LANDLORDS PERMISSION

If renting, notify your property owner or landlord of your intention to modify the nature strip.

4. CONSIDER YOUR LOCATION

Materials and plantings should be selected to work with the shape of the land. Nature strips across the City of Ballarat vary widely, the nature strip garden needs to be tailored to the specific location:

- Plants should be chosen based on their likely height/width at maturity (see species list and plant dimensions page 35)
- The environmental conditions of the nature strip at each location will vary according to soils and orientation of the site. Future versions of these guidelines may include local resource guidance that will help you decide which plants will thrive on your nature strip.

If the diagrams in this guide do not reflect the situation outside your property, please contact the City of Ballarat's Customer Service on 5320 5500 or email info@ballarat.vic.gov.au

4. STEEP SLOPES

In areas of steep terrain, do not use mulch, barks, pebbles, small rocks or other ground toppings. Heavy rain may wash material onto footpaths, roads or drains causing safety issues that could require costly maintenance.

5. SWALES AND WATER SENSITIVE DESIGN TREATMENTS

Drainage channels, including swales and Water Sensitive Urban Design Treatments are City of Ballarat drainage assets.

- If the nature strip contains a drainage channel (culvert/ swale), only general maintenance activities such as mowing of grass can be carried out by the resident/ property owner or management body. No modifications are allowed on these nature strips.
- If the nature strip contains a Water Sensitive Urban Design treatment the resident/property owner or management body must not interfere with it in any way, this includes general maintenance activities. No modifications are allowed on these nature strips.



6. BUSH FIRE AREAS

Much of Victoria is classed as a Designated Bushfire Area. For advice on gardens and landscaping in bushfire areas, refer to the following CFA publications:

- [Landscaping for Bushfire - Garden Design and Plant Selection](#)
- [Plant Selection Key Interactive | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\)](#)

7. ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE PROTECTION

Certain locations in our community have significant vegetation, native and exotic, that we need to protect and preserve. Before you look to develop your nature strip garden, please check whether your area has any of the following planning overlays and what the requirements are:

- Heritage Protection
- Vegetation Protection
- Environmental Significance
- Significant Landscape

If your property is covered by an overlay, or you are not sure and need help, contact the City of Ballarat on info@ballarat.vic.gov.au, 5320 5500 and ask to speak to our Statutory Planning team. To view a visual representation of overlays, check out [Visualising Ballarat](#).

8. ARTERIAL ROADS

If your nature strip is on an arterial road, please contact the Department of Transport and Planning to seek permission for your proposed renovation. The City of Ballarat cannot provide permission for works on nature strips on arterial roads (for more information refer to [VicRoads - Freeway and arterial roads](#))

9. LEAVE ENOUGH SPACE

When it comes to planning the layout of a nature strip garden, please consider the other essential ways nature strips are used.

PEDESTRIANS If the nature strip on your street does not have a formal footpath, always leave a grass strip that is 1.8m wide between your property and the edge of your nature strip garden. This will ensure that there is land available for future construction of footpaths or pathways.

CAR DOORS Your nature strip garden must have a clearance of 0.6m from the roadside edge of the kerb to allow those using on-street parking to open their car door. If you wish to plant within this space, the use of groundcovers with a low profile is permitted. You should opt for species that are very flexible and hardy, as these plants are likely to be stepped on from time to time.

KERBSIDE BINS Leave enough clear space on the nature strip for kerbside bins to be placed and collected safely.

SERVICES If your nature strip has a service cabinet, fireplug, utility service pit or pole, a bus stop pole or even a letterbox, you need to leave appropriate clearances around these services (refer to page 20).

10. DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Our nature strip gardens often contain services above and below ground, such as electricity, water, sewer and telecommunications cables. You should therefore request a Before You Dig Australia (formerly Dial Before you Dig) report before you break ground.

Before You Dig Australia is a free national referral service designed to assist in preventing damage and disruption to Australia's vast infrastructure networks, which provide the essential services we use every day. If damage is caused to public utility services due to nature strip gardening activities, you must report this immediately to the appropriate service provider for repairs. The cost for any repair work may be charged back to you. Find out more at byda.com.au

11. REMEMBER IT IS A PUBLIC SPACE

While nature strips are a great way to increase plantings near your property, it is important to remember they are a public space. It is possible that the nature strip garden may be damaged from time to time or needs to be removed on occasion due to access to infrastructure, changing infrastructure needs or similar.

Any works that are required to be undertaken by the City of Ballarat or other service authorities will take priority, including the requirement to provide care for trees and other street assets. It is the responsibility of the gardener to reinstate any damaged component of the nature strip garden.

12. HERITAGE PRECINCTS

If the nature strip is in a heritage overlay the planting height requirements are different from none heritage areas, see plant heights on page 17. You can determine if you are in a heritage precinct by viewing the precinct map (page 13).

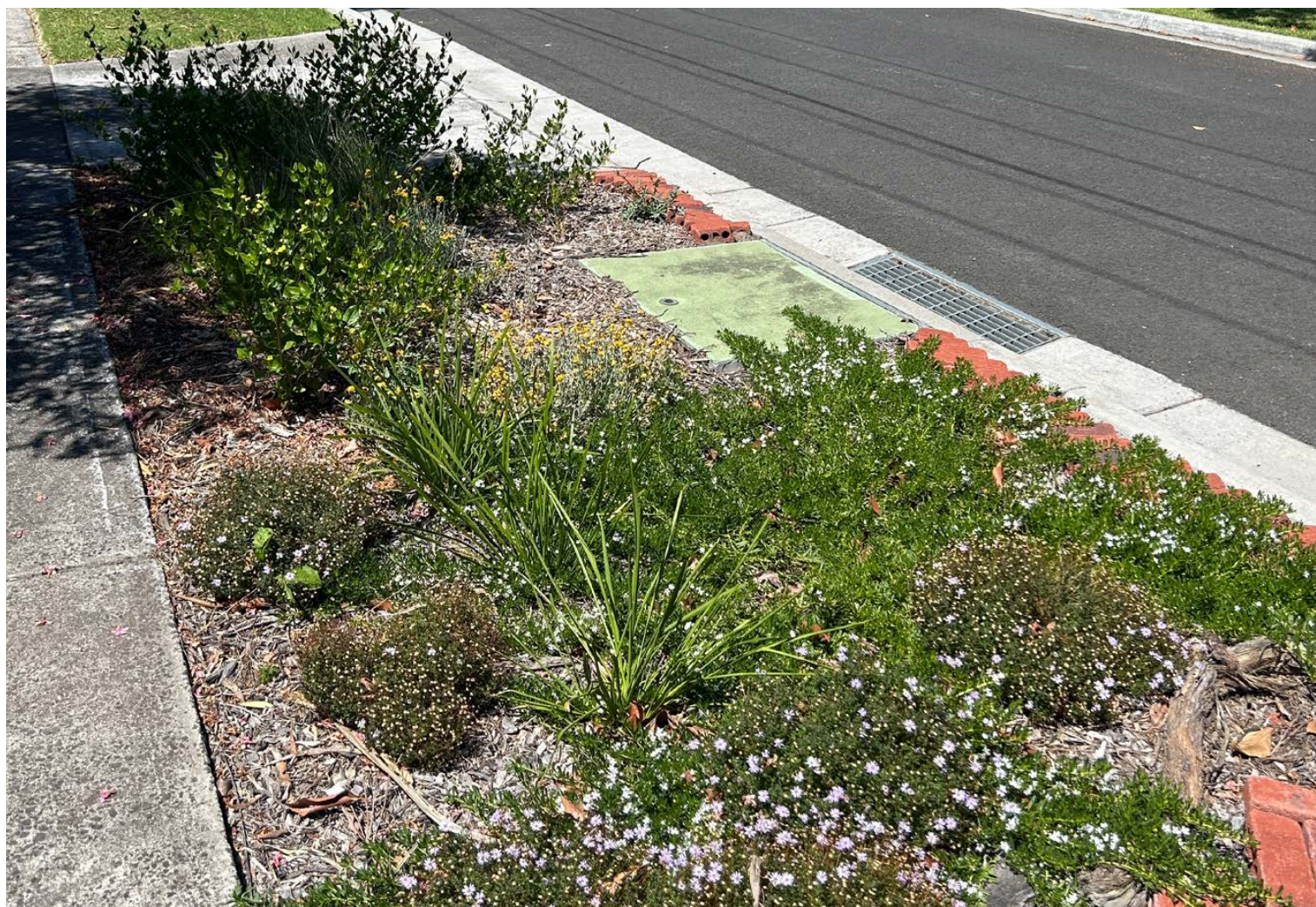
Most of Ballarat's historic residential streets are characterised by the wide bluestone channels next to open and wide grassy nature strips in which our renowned and beautiful street trees were planted. Some of the early streets did not have grassy nature strips but just featured gravel which was the original road finish. Over time, the centre sections of the city's gravel roads were asphalted, and the margins were left for native plants to re-establish or intentionally covered with grass/turf as shown in the series of historic photographs of Ballarat's streets from 1910 to the 1970s (below).

Nature strip gardens in our heritage precincts which still show the historic character, gardens have the potential to obscure the simplicity of the historic character. Ensure that your nature strip garden design is clearly differentiated from a heritage style garden. A variety of garden types can be suitable, including gardens using native plants (see recommended plant list page 35). Apply the following guidance:

- Follow the height requirements for heritage precincts listed on page 17
- When designing a nature strip garden in a heritage precinct, choose plants and a planting design that will not obscure the view between the house and the street at maturity
- No alterations changing grass to gravel are allowed in a heritage precinct.



A beautiful example of a heritage house in the heritage precinct. Please refer to page 11 for advice on nature strip gardens in heritage precincts.



Low nature strip gardens (up to 40 cm) are permissible on nature strips in the heritage precinct. The nature strip garden pictured includes large areas of Cut Leaf Daisy. This beautiful daisy supports native insects including butterflies and native bees.

[illegible]



13. WHEN IS A LOCAL LAW PERMIT REQUIRED?

Nature strip gardens that meet the requirements described in this guideline are permissible. In accordance with Community Local Law 2017 you need to register your nature strip garden and agree to the Nature Strip Garden Guidelines.

Click [here](#)

I want to make changes to my nature strip that do not comply with the nature strip guidelines that require extensive work (hand excavation or mechanical).

A permit is required, fees apply. Click [here](#)

I want to install a planter box.

A permit is required, fees apply. Click [here](#)

I want to alter my grass lawn to gravel.

A permit is required, fees apply. Click [here](#)

I want to undertake major excavations of any part of the road reserve.

You must apply to the coordinating road authority. For roads managed by the City of Ballarat you can apply for the permit online. Visit [Works Within Roads Reserve | City of Ballarat](#)

For more information on fees and requirements refer to the [City of Ballarat nature strips webpage](#).

14. WORKS WITHIN ROADS RESERVE PERMIT

To undertake major excavations of any part of the road reserve you must apply to the coordinating road authority. For roads managed by the City of Ballarat you can apply for the permit online [Works Within Roads Reserve | City of Ballarat](#).

15. SERVICE AUTHORITY WORKS

From time-to-time service authorities need to dig up the nature strip to work on their infrastructure.

When this occurs, they are required to replace damaged footpaths and driveways and re-level the nature strip with loam and grass seed. Residents with alternative nature strips will be required to reinstate the surface themselves.

Roles and responsibilities

When it comes to nature strips and nature strip gardens, we have certain roles and responsibilities.

City of Ballarat responsibilities

The City of Ballarat's responsibilities include:

- Planting and maintenance of street trees
- Maintaining City of Ballarat assets adjacent to nature strips, such as footpaths, signage, pedestrian crossings and roads, and ensuring that there is access to other City of Ballarat assets, such as stormwater drains
- Applying the Local Law and these guidelines to ensure that nature strip gardens planted by residents comply with any specifications and other conditions
- Investigating complaints of non-compliant nature strip gardens
- In some instances, urban nature strips not maintained by residents will be mowed by the City of Ballarat for the purpose of safety in consultation with the adjacent landholder. In rural areas, the roadside slashing may occur for road safety or strategic fire breaks, although in some locations these areas are the responsibility of VicRoads or another Road Authority (as specified in the demarcation agreements).

Property owner/occupier expectations

Property owner/occupiers are expected to:

- Dial before you dig, see page 17
- Remove litter and weeds from the nature strip area
- Remove leaf fall, fallen fruits and general tree debris from footpath and Zone C
- Maintain lawn grass to be level between the kerb and footpath (no potholes)
- Keep nature strip garden plant growth within the permitted growth envelope
- Only plant nature strip gardens in ways that are consistent with these guidelines
- Not obscure hydrants, fire plugs, access pits or similar with plantings in the short and long term
- Restore the nature strip garden following any third-party maintenance, including City of Ballarat works or those of other service authorities. Services may be dug up without notification to the adjacent residents

- Remove the nature strip garden if they move, unless they have agreed with the new owner/occupier that they would like the garden to remain
- Ensure that no damage to City of Ballarat or third-party managed assets is caused by the construction, maintenance or lack of maintenance of a nature strip garden
- Pay for any service damage caused by nature strip gardening activities
- Undertake any re-establishment work or costs associated with planting and maintenance of nature strip gardens.

Compliance

The City of Ballarat's Local Law provides for the enforcement of these guidelines. Failure to comply may lead to one or more of the following outcomes:

- A notice to comply with design guidelines and/or maintenance requirements may be issued. The City of Ballarat will seek to work with residents/owners or management bodies to achieve compliance
- The City of Ballarat may carry out works where there is either an imminent risk to the public or a failure to comply with directions. Costs will be recovered from the resident/owner or management body
- The resident/owner or management body may be required to reinstate the nature strip to the default grass surface at their own cost
- Infringement notices may be issued and/or court prosecutions may occur.



Photo credit: Jac Semmler.

Nature strips suitable for gardens

The diagram below shows you the areas within a nature strip that you can plant. Plants must remain on the nature strip and cannot extend onto the kerb or footpath.

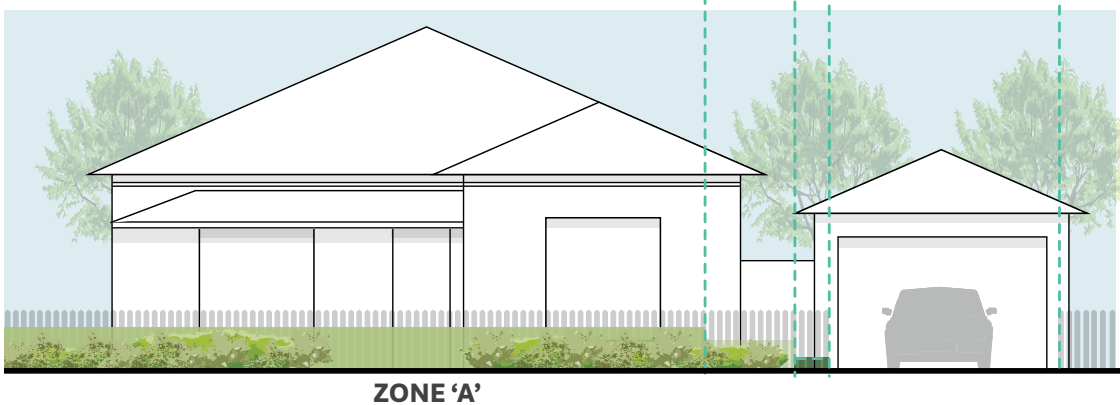
Plants must also be kept clear of all nature strip infrastructure above the ground (Refer to page 20) and below the ground (see 'Dial Before You Dig' on page 11).

The area is broken down into three parts – Zone A, Zone B and Zone C – with different height limits allowed for mature plants in each.

Zones that are proposed for use in the City of Ballarat

Non-heritage Areas	Heritage Precinct
Zone A (other) < 80cm	Zone A (heritage) < 40cm
Zone B (other) < 50cm	Zone B (heritage) < 40cm
Zone C (other) < 20cm	Zone C (heritage) < 20cm

FRONT VIEW



TOP VIEW

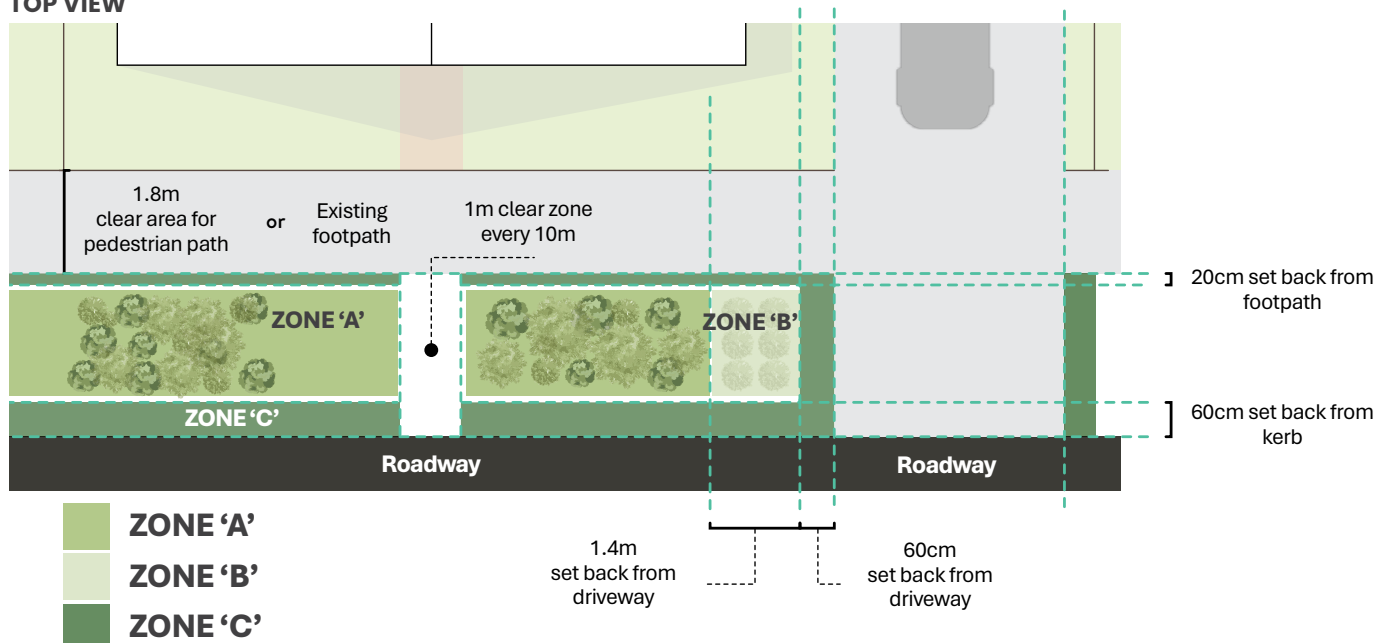


Figure 1. The nature strip area where gardens can be planted.



Height restrictions are designed to ensure visibility and safety of young children.

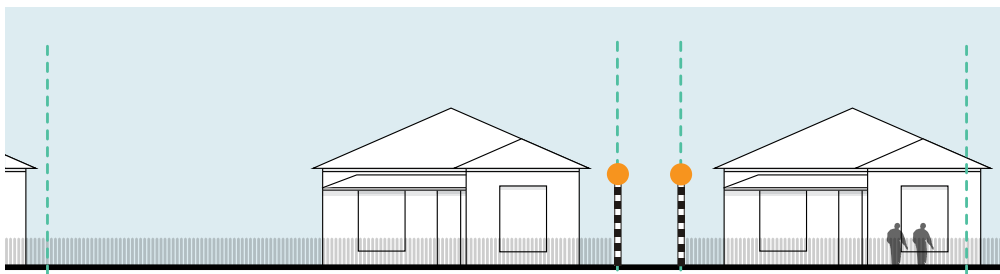
Areas that can be planted

The City of Ballarat is responsible for managing the entire road reserve, including nature strips. The City of Ballarat encourages residents to create nature strip gardens provided they follow the advice in these guidelines.

Not all nature strip gardens will be the same. A nature strip will have limitations if it is:

- within 20m of traffic lights
- within 10m of an intersection
- within 20m of a pedestrian or school crossing.

FRONT VIEW



TOP VIEW

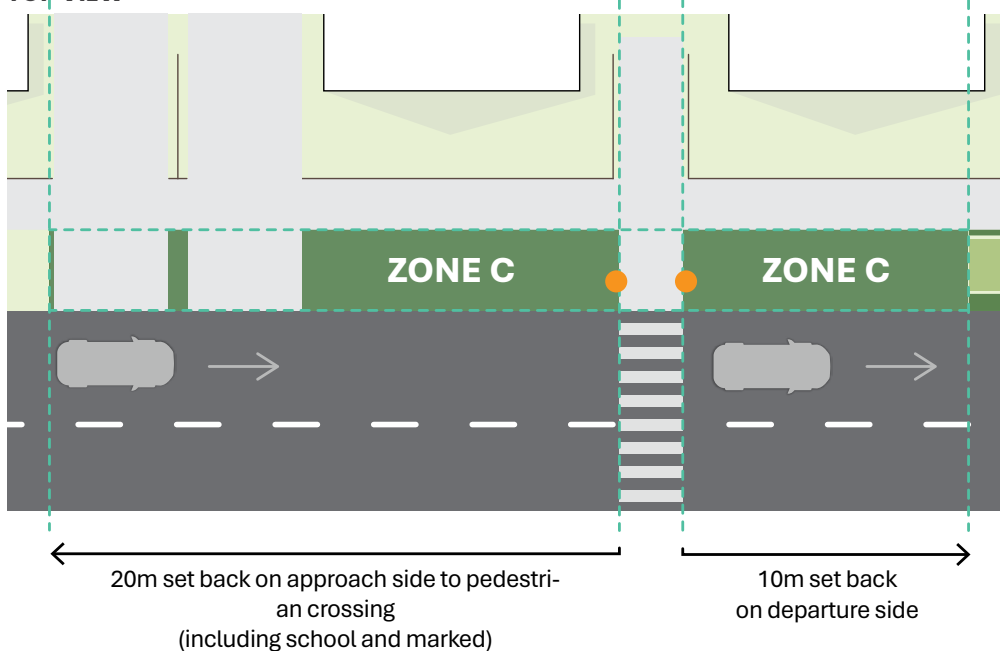


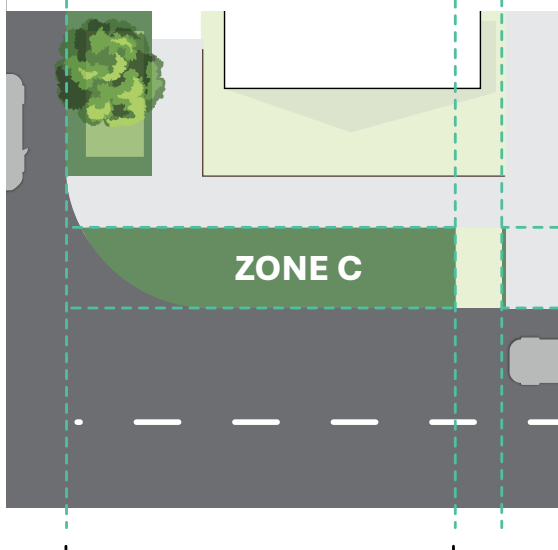
Figure 2. Diagram showing a nature strip abutting a pedestrian crossing, approach and departure.



FRONT VIEW



TOP VIEW



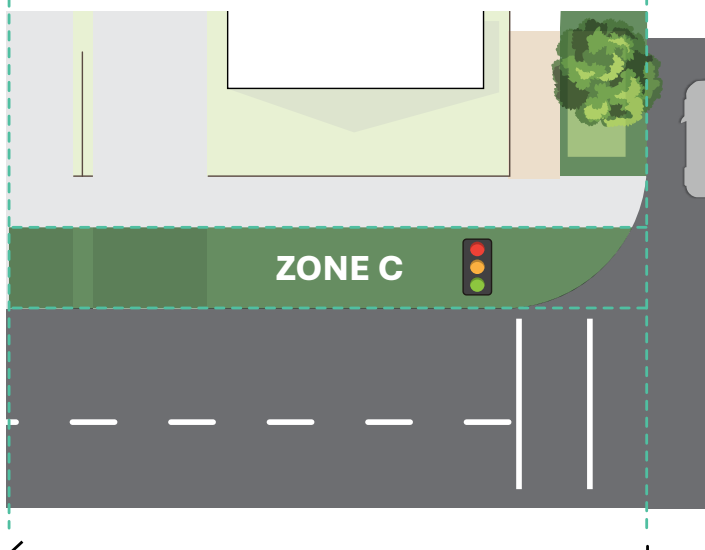
10m set back from
unsignalised intersection

Figure 3. A diagram showing a nature strip abutting an unsignalised intersection.

FRONT VIEW

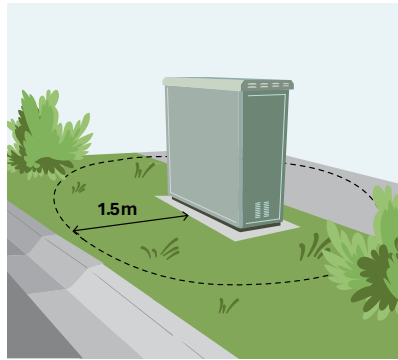


TOP VIEW



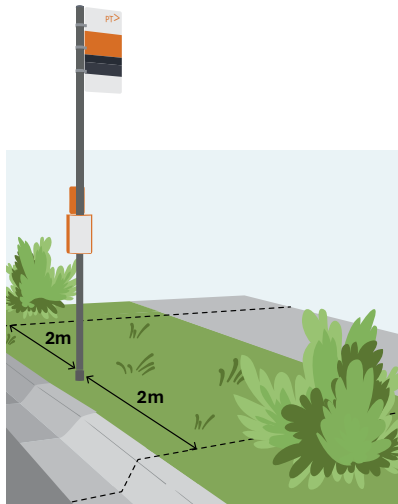
20m set back from
signalised intersection

Figure 4. A diagram showing a nature strip abutting a signalised intersection.



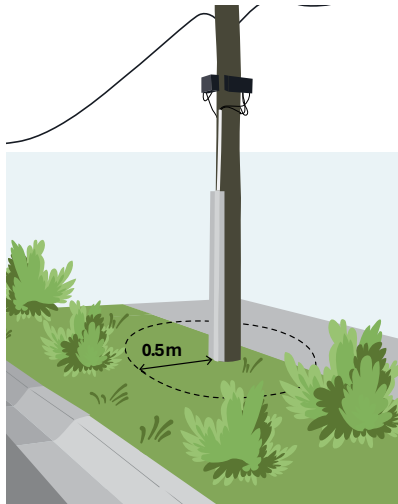
1. Service Cabinet

1.5m clearance



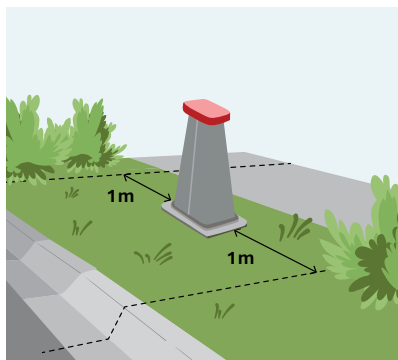
2. Bus Stop Pole

2.0m clearance from
kerbside to property
boundary



3. Service Pit or Pole

0.5m clearance



4. Fire Hydrant

1.0m clearance
from kerbside to
property boundary

Figure 5. Minimum clearances required around above ground infrastructure.

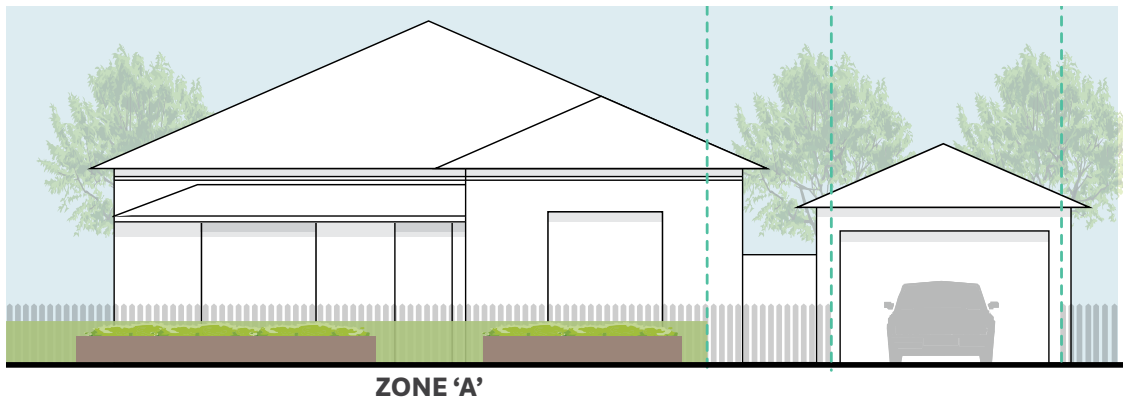
Planter boxes

Edible and fruit-bearing plants are only allowed if they are planted in planter boxes. Planter boxes are permitted within 'Zone A' of the planting area (refer to figure 6 below) under the following conditions:

- Planter boxes must be a solid and sturdy construction
- Planter boxes must comply with heritage precinct requirements
- Planter boxes can only be installed on nature strips with kerb and channel (i.e. gutter).

Refer to the [Nature Strips | City of Ballarat](#) for requirements listed in the Planter Box Fact Sheet and to apply for a planter box permit.

FRONT VIEW



TOP VIEW

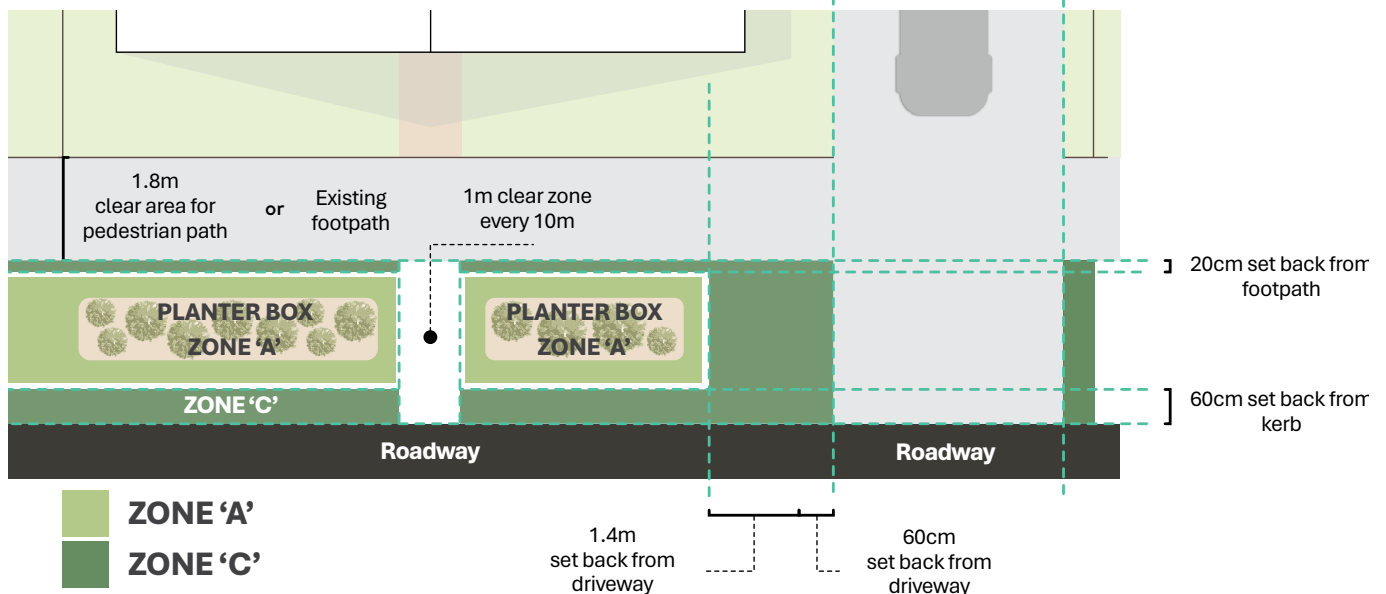


Figure 6. The nature strip area including raised garden beds.



If your plan doesn't meet the guidelines

If your ideas for a nature strip garden don't meet the guidelines or your nature strip is ineligible, consider joining or forming a community garden or nature volunteer group. Find out more at:

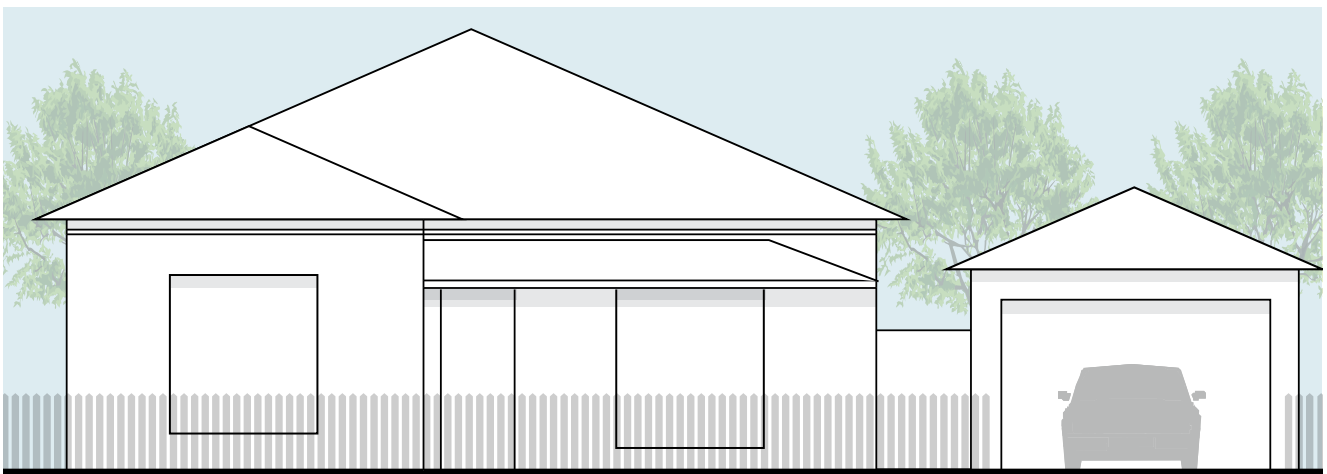
- 1. Community gardens - Local Food Coalition | City of Ballarat**
- 2. Join a Landcare or Friends of Group**

Nature strips not suitable for gardens

If your nature strip is not suitable for establishing a garden, the community still needs you to maintain your nature strip.

This means your nature strip will need to be one of the permitted surface treatments listed on page 29. While the nature strip is a public space, the owner/occupier is responsible for mowing and litter removal.

FRONT VIEW



TOP VIEW

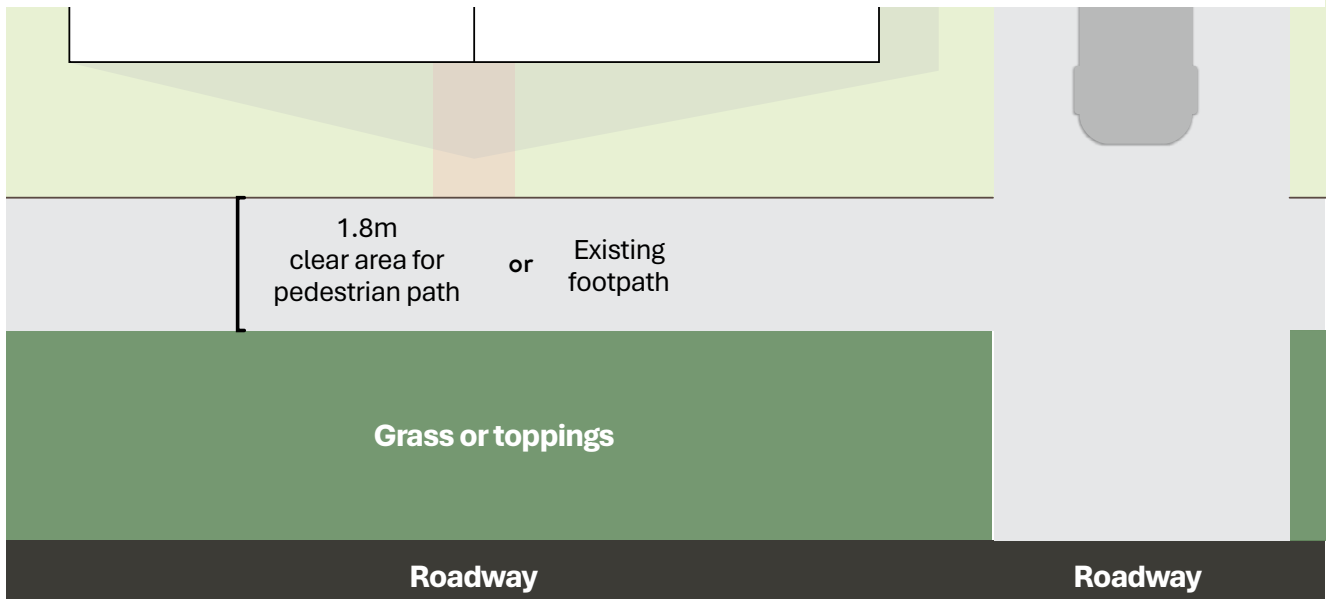


Figure 7. A standard nature strip

Nature strips garden plantings

If your nature strip is suitable for planting, low-growing ground covers, wildflowers, native grasses and small shrubs are allowed provided they are maintained to a maximum height of 0.4m (heritage zone) and 0.8m (outside heritage areas).

Plants native to Ballarat are recommended for planting in nature strip gardens. Native plants have evolved to the local conditions over thousands of years, are resilient and provide essential resources for local wildlife. Exotic plants are plants from other parts of the world - they do not always provide useful resources for wildlife and can be invasive.

Nature strips vary widely in their width and in the shape of the landscape. Choose plants carefully so that at maturity the plants do not cause issues for passersby and lines of sight for drivers (see page 17 for planting zone requirements), including the height of plants allowed in each zone.

What you can plant

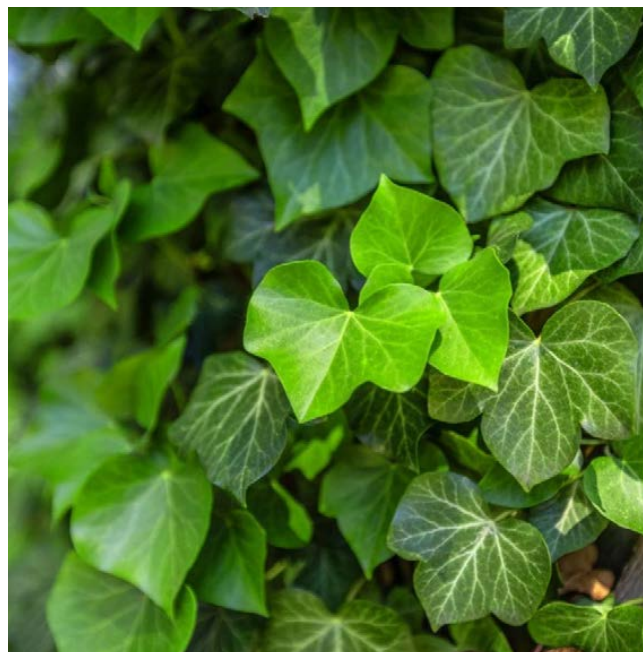
For plant selection guidance see the following resources:

- Select plants from the recommended plant list on page 35.

Prohibited plants

Residents are not permitted to plant any plant species that include the following characteristics:

- Thorny plants that pose risk to community safety
- Vines are not allowed on narrow nature strips (<4m wide). On wider nature strips where there are structures, such as fences or shrubs, they can be planted and must be pruned in order to maintain line of sight for drivers of pedestrians on paths.
- Are invasive, poisonous, dangerous or illegal. More information on prohibited plants can be found on the following websites:
 - [Weeds | Agriculture Victoria](#)
 - [Your guide to weeds of Central Victoria](#)
 - Some of the most common noxious weeds that have been found for sale online are the [Victorian State prohibited weeds \(SPW\)](#), the highest category of noxious weeds. If you see a SPW you can report it [here](#).



Ivy is a dense, invasive ground cover or climber, it smothers vegetation and prevents natural regeneration.

Invasive plants not suitable for nature strips

Some common invasive plants that should not be planted in nature strip gardens include the following plants.

Agapanthus. This plant is an environmental weed and grows to a size that can cause safety issues on roadsides.



Gazania (G. liniaris and rigens and their hybrids). This plant has become widespread across Victoria and is often mistaken for indigenous wildflowers. This plant can invade roadsides, reserves and farmland.



Native plants not suitable for narrow nature strips (under 2m)

The following large tussock forming native plants can sometimes cause long term issues with driver sight-lines, pedestrian passage and maintenance. While plants listed below are not suitable for narrow nature strip gardens, they are important plants which can be included on wide nature strip garden plantings.

Spiny-headed Mat-rush, *Lomandra longifolia*.



Common Tussock-grass, *Poa labillardieri*. This species forms vital habitat for many local species and should be included in nature strip gardens on nature strips greater than 3m. Avoid planting this grass on narrower nature strips to avoid safety issues.



Avoid overusing synthetic fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides

To support healthy waterways and local biodiversity, minimise or avoid using synthetic fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides on your nature strip. Residents can register on the City of Ballarat Spray Free register if they choose. City of Ballarat staff have been trained in safe chemical handling and usage and follow the manufacturer's instructions along with the recommendations of the national regulator.

When preparing a nature strip garden, comprehensive weed control is vital (refer to page 34 for steps in the creation of a nature strip garden). The use of mulching techniques using plastic and cardboard can be effective. During the excavation of the surface soil ensure that invasive species such as couch are thoroughly removed. By following these steps herbicide use can be minimised. Effective weed control during the establishment of nature strip gardens can result in reduced maintenance issues in the future.



Street trees

Street trees are not to be planted or pruned by the public. Canopy trees in our streets and parks have many benefits including cooling our neighbourhoods, improving health and wellbeing, and cleaning the air.

Please contact the City of Ballarat about street tree planting and maintenance. You can ask for a new tree on your nature strip or to replace a dead or vandalised tree at [eServices](#).

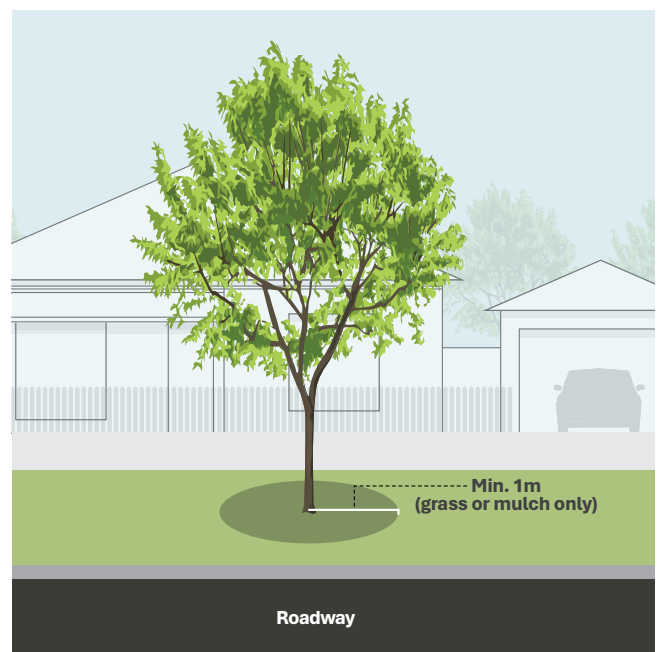


Diagram shows the minimum required space between nature strip garden plantings and street trees.

Existing native vegetation

Some nature strips in urban areas and many rural roadsides support native vegetation. Roadside vegetation is any vegetation growing between the edge of the road and the property boundary. All existing native vegetation is protected on our roadsides. You need to obtain consent to remove vegetation within the road reserve. If the vegetation is native, a planning permit may be required as well.

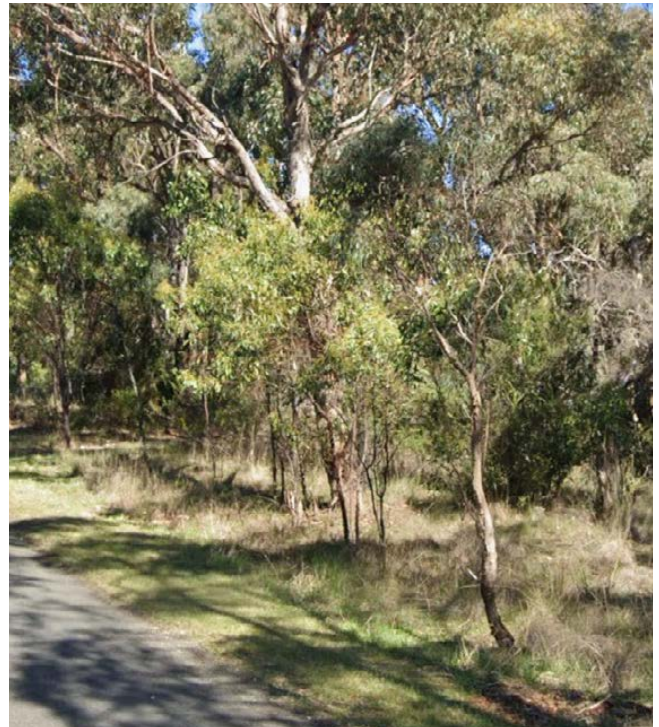
Works within the road reserve permit

The City of Ballarat has an obligation to protect remnant indigenous vegetation. The vegetation currently on your nature strip may determine what, if any, nature strip landscaping is permitted. See page 14 for information on a Works Within the Road Reserve permit. Unsure if you have native vegetation on your nature strip? Please contact the City of Ballarat's Customer Service on 5320 5500 or email info@ballarat.vic.gov.au.

Firewood collection in road reserve

Native vegetation, logs and associated fallen branches and leaf litter provide important habitat for our wild plants and animals and are protected under legislation.

You may not collect firewood from any roadsides or reserves or from roads managed by Council and VicRoads. There are specific sites around Ballarat where firewood can be collected in spring and autumn. Visit this website to check firewood collection dates and locations [Firewood collection in your region](#).



Surface landscaping

Consider the type of surface treatments you will apply to your nature strip. For a standard nature strip, this is traditionally grass. However, nature strip gardens may need other treatments, such as mulches, to help support plant growth.

Permitted surface treatments

Drought hardy native or exotic lawns

Grassed nature strips are the most common form of nature strips in urban areas of Ballarat. The use of drought tolerant grasses provides a low maintenance treatment that requires reduced periodic mowing to maintain. Drought tolerant grasses, such as Couch or Kikuyu, are allowed.

If you are re-establishing a grassed nature strip due to failure or poor performance of your existing grass, consider your choice of grass species.

Choose drought tolerant native grasses as, once established, these will remain in good health with little to no watering. Use of some native grasses can provide a soft lawn like appearance and drought tolerance, others form tussocks. Recommended native species include Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*), Wallaby grass (*Rytidosperma* sp.), Red-leg Grass (*Bothriochloa macra*) and Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*). These species require only periodic weeding and can tolerate occasional mowing to assist with maintenance if desired.

Alternatively, clumping low growing, strap-leaved native/indigenous plants can be planted, such as Black anther flax-lily (*Dianella admixta*), Carex (*Carex* sp.) and Spiny-headed mat rush (*Lomandra longifolia*), mixed with Common Tussock-grass (*Poa labillardierei*), to create a low maintenance, functional area that does not require mowing. Larger tussock, forming species are not suitable for narrow nature strips. Larger growing strap-leaved plants listed above are only suitable for nature strips 2m or wider.

Permeable surfaces - nature strip alterations

The City of Ballarat recognises that nature strip alterations are sometimes driven by necessity - some residents require a solid surface for mobility or other safety related reasons. Some residents may not be physically able to perform the maintenance requirements on a grassed nature strip or nature strip garden. In these instances, the application of an appropriately compacted gravel may be appropriate.

Surfaces must allow water to filter through to reach the underlying surface prior to entering the drainage system, reducing pollution and the impacts of stormwater. Permeable surfaces must only be applied to nature strips that are flat and level, with minimal chance for surface material run-off. The property owner and occupier are responsible for ensuring that any nearby assets (such as footpaths or roads) are free from debris, and that the surface is appropriately installed and maintained to ensure it does not pose a hazard to the community or nearby assets.

Permitted surfaces include:

- Fine gravel mulches (7.5cm depth) with a maximum particle size of less than 1cm, such as washed granitic sand, Tuscan topping and crushed rock
- Existing turf to a depth of 7.5-10cm must be removed before back filling
- Excavation should not negatively impact any trees with great care taken around roots, not cutting of roots any greater than 3cm in diameter
- Aggregate must be trafficable. This means it must be compacted and have a particle size less than 10mm
- Nature strips with gravel must remain level with all constructed infrastructure, e.g. kerb, utility pits, crossovers, etc and be free of trip hazards, e.g. pavers, edging etc
- Organic mulch (7.5cm depth) includes graded bark or multi-bark mix that is resistant to disturbances by wind and rain and is properly contained and compacted to avoid spreading onto footpaths or gutters.

Prohibited surface materials

The following materials are not permitted:

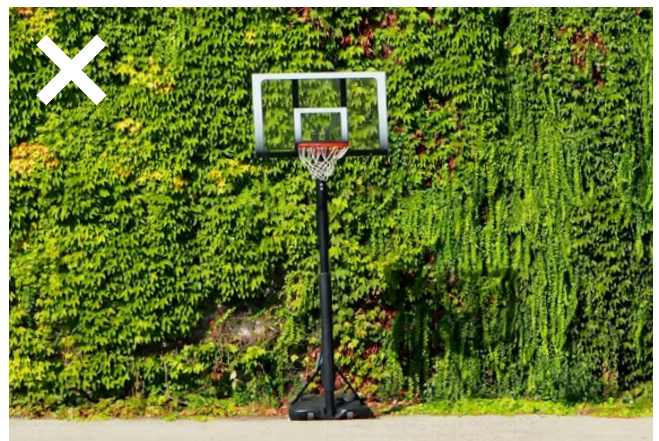
- Loose stones and pebbles 10mm or larger
- Chunky woodchips, or similar, that are unstable underfoot after compaction
- Permeable surfaces listed above on a nature strip which is on a significant slope
- Synthetic turf
- Impermeable surfaces – that is, hard surfaces that do not allow water to pass through (e.g. concrete) – are not permitted for nature strips.



Prohibited equipment and materials

The following is not permitted in a nature strip garden:

- Letter boxes
- Star pickets
- Water tanks
- Nets
- Bollards
- Retaining walls
- Lighting and electrical wiring
- Sporting equipment
- Irrigation systems
- Compost bins and fencing
- Temporary or permanent electric wiring such as for the lighting of trees
- Permanent covering such as concrete or asphalt
- Any large items or structures, other than approved (i.e. garden ornaments/sculptures)





Many Victorian insects are threatened. Beautiful native nature strips can provide vital habitats. Photo credit: Tract.

What you need to know

If we consider that these guidelines have not been complied with or that a particular nature strip garden is creating a nuisance, risk to safety, or is interfering with City of Ballarat assets or the environment, then we will require either rectification of the garden so that it complies, or removal of the garden at the property owner's

cost. Residents are reminded that planting a nature strip garden is at their own risk, and they are responsible for its maintenance and safety.

This guideline supports the City of Ballarat *Community Local Law 2017*. Nature strip gardens must comply with this guideline.

Reporting gardens that do not comply with this guideline

To report a nature strip garden that does not comply with the above guidelines, contact the City of Ballarat on 5320 5500 or at [Complaint | City of Ballarat](#). You can also use the [Snap and Solve app](#).

If you receive a compliance notice for a nature strip garden that does not comply, the notice will outline what alterations need to be made to your garden. You can phone the City of Ballarat to discuss your notice in greater detail.

Design considerations

For residents wanting to undertake a nature strip renovation, there are several options available. The option you choose will depend on the motivation(s) behind your project. Consider the following suggestions.

Providing access to road through nature strip garden

- Access paths (1m wide) must be provided at 10m intervals along the garden.

Best practices for biodiverse nature strip gardens

- Prioritise native plants with year-round flowering to support continuous biodiversity
- Plant multiple individuals of fewer native species known to attract native insects (e.g., *Wahlenbergia*, *Myoporum*) rather than many different single specimens. High species diversity is still encouraged over large areas
- Cluster the same species together to enhance plant success, support insect foraging and improve visual appeal
- Expand efforts by creating continuous nature strip gardens along streets with community group support.
- Native grass, groundcovers or low-flowering gardens are still beneficial, providing more habitat than standard lawns
- For lawn areas, reduce mowing frequency and use mosaic mowing to preserve flowering plants.

Narrow nature strips (under 2m)

The plant choice for nature strips should consider the plant's width and landscape context. Plants that will become wide at maturity may not be suitable for narrow nature strips.

Wider nature strips (over 2m)

Wider nature strips can accommodate plants that will grow wider at maturity. The height requirements associated with the nature strip zone must still apply.

Orientation to the sun

Consider these climatic conditions when designing your garden layout.

- North or west-facing nature strip gardens flourish with sun loving, low-water-use natives
- South or east-facing nature strip gardens will be more shaded and may require shade-tolerant species. Another important consideration is the shade cast by existing street trees. Ideally, residents should create gardens in areas with access to sufficient light. If the shade is heavy, choose shade tolerant species and be sure to remove excessive seasonal leaf fall, as too many leaves can suppress plant growth
- Consider the wind direction. Tailor your plant choices based on how your garden interacts with prevailing winds.

Avoid planting a dense visual barrier

Aim to create nature strip garden plantings that do not obstruct drivers seeing children on the path behind the garden. A semi-transparent garden design can be achieved by carefully placing the plants, allowing for space between larger plants. Avoid dense hedge-like plantings.



Communities around Victoria are working together to re-wild their nature strips.

How to establish a nature strip garden

Soil type

Each nature strip is different with varying soil and environmental conditions depending on location and history of use. Many soils in Ballarat are either volcanic or sedimentary, though the soils of nature strips are often modified. Seeking help to determine what soil you have is a good place to start.

It is strongly recommended that you start small, at 2x2m, and trial the implementation method and planting selection. When your first garden has proved successful, you can confidently plan for its expansion

Mulching

It is recommended that the top 50mm of turf and soil is removed prior to any planting, to provide space for mulch. A good option is to then lay biodegradable weed matting or several layers of newspaper or cardboard, which is an effective means of reducing weed growth or the return of the turf. A mulch layer will help maintain soil moisture and assist with additional weed control. The mulch material selected must be stable under foot and remain contained within the nature strip (refer to page 30, for permitted surface materials).

For detailed advice on establishing a nature strip garden, please refer to the [Melbourne Pollinator Handbook](#).

Please note: City of Ballarat requirements can differ from the advice in this handbook. Always use the City of Ballarat's guidelines for locally allowable actions. Additional resources to help you create your nature strip garden can be found in the appendix, page 35.

The key steps in establishing a nature strip garden



1. A typical nature strip with lawn, a green desert
2. Start by removing the lawn from your nature strip. Dig out the top 50mm of soil to make space for mulch.
3. Control weeds with biodegradable matting, newspaper or cardboard that's pegged down. Followed by eco-safe herbicide if needed.
4. Improve soil if necessary with native plant friendly soil improvers, then plant your native tube stock.
5. Mulch around seedlings to retain moisture and suppress weeds.
6. Get involved! Gardening your nature strip can be fun and build community connections.
7. Enjoy the beauty your garden brings to the street.
8. Welcome wildlife - your native garden will attract birds and insects.

Appendix A

Recommended plants

We recommend selecting plants that are locally native (indigenous) to the Ballarat region. The City of Ballarat encourages our community to source the recommended plant species from one of our many amazing local nurseries specialising in indigenous planting of the Ballarat

region (see list in appendix). Recommended plants are shown in the table below for ease of reference. You can find an extensive list of key plants on the [Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens](#) website.

Recommended plants list

Common name	Botanical name	Size (height by width in centimetres)	Density (plants/m ²)	Not local natives	Not suitable for narrow nature strips (<2m)	Plant type: dense cover or interplanting
Austral Bugle	Ajuga australis	30cm x 30cm, flower spike 50cm	9			Interplanting
Austral Stork's-bill	Pelargonium australe	50cm x 50cm	3-4			Interplanting
Black-eyed Susan	Tetradlea ciliata	100cm (keep pruned)	4			Interplanting
Bluebell	Wahlenbergia sp	30cm x 30cm	16			Interplanting
Blue Pincushion	Brunonia australis	30cm	16			Interplanting
Bulbine Lily	Bulbine bulbosa	20cm x 20cm	9			Interplanting
Button Everlasting	Coronidium scorpioides	20cm x 20cm	9			Interplanting
Common Billy-buttons	Craspedia variabilis	30-50cm X 30cm	4			Interplanting
Common Everlasting	Chrysocephalum apiculatum	20cm x 50cm	9			Interplanting
Chocolate lily	Arthropodium strictum	1.2m (clump forming)	9			Interplanting
Creeping Boobialla*	Myoporum parvifolium	10cm x 1m	4	X		Dense Cover
Creeping Bossiaea	Bossiaea prostrata	prostrate 1m x 1m	4			Dense Cover
Creeping Saltbush	Atriplex semibaccata	prostrate 1m x 2m	4	X		Dense Cover
Cut-leaf Daisy	Brachyscome multifida	20cm x 30cm	9			Dense Cover
Common Heath	Epacris impressa	1m x 1m	4		X	Dense Cover
Enfield Grevillea	Grevillea bedgoodiana	1m x 3m	4			Dense Cover
Fan Flower	Scaevola aemula	20cm x 50cm	4	X		Interplanting
Golden Everlasting	Xerochrysum bracteatum	40cm x 60cm	4			Interplanting
Hop Goodenia	Goodenia ovata	1m x 1m must be pruned to required height	1		X	Dense Cover

Common name	Botanical name	Size (height by width in centimetres)	Density (plants/m ²)	Not local natives	Not suitable for narrow nature strips (<2m)	Plant type: dense cover or interplanting
Inland Pigface	<i>Carpobrotus modestus</i>	10cm x 1-2m	4			Interplanting
Ivy-leaf or Native violet	<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Spreading	16			Interplanting
Karkalla	<i>Carpobrotus rossii</i>	10cm x 1m, spreading	4	X		Interplanting
Kidney-weed Prostrate (lawn plant)	<i>Dichondra repens</i>	1 x 1m, spreading	16			Low Ground-cover, Zone C
Lemon Beauty-heads	<i>Calocephalus citreus</i>	10-30cm x 30cm-1m	9			Interplanting
Lobe-seed Daisy	<i>Brachyscome dentata</i>	30cm x 30cm	9			Interplanting
Magenta Stork's-bill	<i>Pelargonium rodneyanum</i>	30cm x 30cm	16			Interplanting
Matted Bush-pea	<i>Pultenaea pedunculata</i>	10cm x 10cm				Dense Cover
Milky Beauty-heads	<i>Calocephalus lactueus</i>	20cm x 30cm	9			Interplanting
New Holland Daisy	<i>Vittadenia</i> sp.	30cm x 30cm	16			Interplanting
Nodding Saltbush	<i>Einadia nutans</i>	20cm x 1m	4	X		Dense Cover
Pink Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus erubescens</i>	Perennial with trailing and twining stems	4			Interplanting
Purple Coral Pea	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	2m x 4m	1 vine, ground cover			Dense Cover
Ruby Saltbush	<i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i> var. <i>tomentosa</i>	1.5m	4	X		Dense Cover
Running Postman	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	prostrate 1m x 1m	4			Low Ground-cover
Saloop	<i>Einadia hastata</i>	50cm x 50cm	4			Low Ground-cover
Slender Speedwell	<i>Veronica gracilis</i>	rhizomes 60cm long, stems 3–25 cm high, spreading	4			Interplanting
Sticky Everlasting	<i>Xerochrusum viscosum</i>	40cm x 40cm	4			Interplanting
Swamp Isotome	<i>Iostoma fluviatilis</i>	5cm x 1m	6 spreading			Interplanting
Tall Daisy	<i>Brachyscome diversifolia</i>	30cm x 30cm	6			Dense Cover
Trailing Goodenia	<i>Goodenia lanata</i>	30cm x 30cm	6 spreading			Interplanting
Tufted bluebell	<i>Wahlenbergia communis</i>	80cm x 30cm	16			Interplanting
Pale Vanilla-lily	<i>Arthropodium milleflorum</i>	30cm x 30cm, flower spike 50cm	16			Interplanting

Grasses and clumps

Common name	Botanical name	Size (height by width in centimetres)	Density (plants/m ²)	Not suitable for narrow nature strips (<2m)	Plant type: dense cover or interplanting
Black-anther Flax-lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i> var. <i>revoluta</i>	50cm x spreading	9	X	Dense Cover
Clustered Wallaby-grass	<i>Rytidosperma racemosum</i>	20cm x 20cm	16		Interplanting
Common Tussock-grass	<i>Poa labillardierei</i>	120cm x 1m	4	X	Interplanting
Common Wallaby-grass	<i>Rytidosperma caespitosum</i>	40cm x 40cm	16		Interplanting
Fine-lead tussock grass	<i>Poa sieberiana</i>	80cm x 40cm	16		Interplanting
Kangaroo grass	<i>Themeda triandra</i>	40cm x 40cm, stems 0.7-1m high	4		Interplanting
Knead Wallaby-grass	<i>Rytidosperma geniculatum</i>	15cm x 15cm	16		Interplanting
Knobby Club-sedge	<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	50cm x 50cm	4		Dense Cover
Many-flowered Mat-rush	<i>Lomandra multiflora</i>	30cm x 30cm	9		Dense Cover
Matted Flax-lily	<i>Dianella amoena</i>	20-30cm x 30cm	9	X	Interplanting
Milkmaids	<i>Burchardia umbrellata</i>	10 – 65 cm	16		Interplanting
Plume grass	<i>Dichelachne crinita</i>	1m	16	X	Interplanting
Silvertop wallaby grass	<i>Rytidosperma pallidum</i>	20cm x 20cm	16		Dense Cover
Silky Blue Grass	<i>Dichanthium sericum</i>	80cm	16		Dense Cover
Spiny Head Mat Rush	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	1m x 1m	1		Dense Cover
Small Mat-rush	<i>Lomandra nana</i>	15cm x 25cm	4		Interplanting
Soft Spear Grass	<i>Austrostipa mollis</i>	15cm x 10-20cm	9		Dense Cover
Tall sedge	<i>Carex appressa</i>	1.2m	9		Dense Cover
Grass Trigger plant	<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i>	30cm x 30cm	9		Interplanting
Velvet Tussock-grass	<i>Poa morrisii</i>	Leaf clump, 30x30cm flower spike 50cm	9		Dense Cover
Wattle Mat-rush	<i>Lomandra filiformis</i>	50cm x 50cm	9		Interplanting
Weeping Grass (lawn plant)	<i>Microlaena stipoides</i>	50cm x 30cm	9		Dense low cover, zone C, can be mowed
Windmill Grass	<i>Choris truncata</i>	30cm x 50cm	16		Interplanting

* Note: also see the resource list below for more information on plants suitable for nature strip gardens.

Appendix B

Resources

1. Gardens for Wildlife Ballarat

[Gardens for Wildlife Ballarat](#) is a community-based gardening program that provides advice and ideas to those interested in making more wildlife friendly spaces in urban gardens. Its website includes a [useful links page](#) with many resources.

2. Pollinator garden and corridors

- a. [The Melbourne Pollinator Corridor](#), see the [Melbourne Pollinator Handbook](#)
- b. Powerful Pollinators Planting Guides: [Western Victoria districtSF001-D-4.2-Pollinator-Guide-Western-District-VIC.pdf](#). **Important note: This resource includes species not suitable for nature strip gardens due to size of plants. Check plant heights against the requirements in the Ballarat nature strip guidelines. Some exotic species are also included, along with native species that may not be indigenous to Ballarat area.** Check with your local native nursery (see contacts below).

3. Ballarat plant lists

- a. [Indigenous plants for Ballarat gardens Indigenous plants for Ballarat gardens - Federation University Australia](#)

4. Local native nurseries

There is a range of nurseries in the wider Ballarat area and we love to hear about new ones to add to our list.

- Avalon Nursery, 41 Kopkes Road, Haddon 53424519 [Facebook link](#)
- Ballarat Wild Plants, 435 Joseph Street, Canadian by appointment 0409 388 014
- Birdsong Nursery & Gardens, 9 Baglin Street, Smythesdale [Facebook link](#)
- Formosa Gardens, 104 Leith Street, Ballarat 53356454 [Facebook link](#)
- Navigators, 410 Navigators Road Navigators, 0421 935 017. Closes during winter
- Spot on Pots and Nursery, 13-15 Wallis Street Delacombe, 53355368 [Facebook link](#)

5. Create your nature strip garden, resources and videos

- a. [Nature strip transformation](#): a useful resource from Bayside City Council, showing the stages of nature strip garden establishment. Also a how-to video showing one method of establishing nature strip gardens: creating a nature strip garden with [Zara \(Hobsons Bay Council\)](#). Please be aware that Hobsons Bay Council information presented in the video, varies from that of the City of Ballarat nature strip garden guidelines. Always use the City of Ballarat guidelines as your reference for works in our municipality.
- b. [Kate's Native Nature Strip](#) City of Hobsons Bay
- c. [Putting nature back into nature strips](#) (Knox Environment Society) includes useful information on establishing native grasses on nature strips.

6. [Take the no spray pledge](#)

Appendix C

Policy Context

Biodiversity strategy

The City of Ballarat's *Biodiversity Strategy – Healing Country Together 2024*. Plants and animals within the municipality area are threatened by several cumulative and increasing threats such as, invasive weeds and pest animals, climate change fragmentation and habitat loss, and natural disasters. A key threat facing threatened flora (plants) and fauna (animals) within the city of Ballarat is habitat loss, fragmentation and urban expansion. The publication of this guideline arises out of *Strategic direction 1, Immediate actions for biodiversity*:

Goal 3: More plants are in the ground to restore more habitat.

Action 5: Develop a Nature Strip Guideline to support gardens that provide habitat and ecological corridors through Urban Ballarat.

Glossary

Aggregate

Clusters of soil particles or rock fragments that bind together to influence soil structure and drainage¹.

Annual

A plant that completes its entire life cycle, from seed to maturity and seed production, within a single year¹.

Asset

A physical or natural resource considered valuable, such as infrastructure, trees, or other objects managed by a council².

Biodiversity

The variety of all living species, plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms, in a given environment¹.

Canopy

The uppermost layer of vegetation formed by tree crowns in a forest or treed area¹.

Compaction

A process by which soil particles are pressed together, reducing pore space and preventing air, water and root movement¹.

Compliance

Meeting rules, regulations, or standards set by authorities².

Density

The number of individuals (such as plants or animals) per unit area, commonly per square metre (m²) in ecology¹.

Drought tolerant

Describes plant species that can survive and remain healthy with limited water¹.

Ecological corridor

A strip of habitat that connects otherwise isolated areas, allowing wildlife to move and gene flow to occur between populations³.

Ecosystem

A complex network or community of living organisms and their physical environment, interacting as a system¹.

Enforcement

The process of ensuring compliance with laws, rules, or guidelines by an official authority².

Fauna

The animals characteristic of a particular period, region, or environment¹.

Flora

The plants characteristic of a particular region, period, or environment¹.

Footpath

A constructed path for pedestrians alongside roads or through public spaces².

Gravitational flow

The movement of water or other materials caused by gravity, such as downhill water flow¹.

Groundcover

Low-growing plants that spread over the soil, protecting it from erosion and suppressing weeds¹.

Habitat corridor

A vegetated passage that allows wildlife to move between separated habitats³.

Heritage precinct

An area officially recognised for its historical or cultural significance and protected for its character².

Hydrozone

A landscaped area grouped by similar water requirements to improve irrigation efficiency⁴.

Indigenous (plants)

Plants that occur naturally and have evolved in a particular geographic region¹.

Infiltration

The process by which water enters and moves down through the soil surface¹.

Infringement

A violation of a law, rule, or regulation, often resulting in a penalty².

Interplant

To alternate or mix different plant types together in one growing area to achieve specific horticultural aims¹.

Local law

Legislation enacted by local government authorities to regulate matters within their jurisdiction².

Monoculture

The cultivation of a single crop species over a large area¹.

Mosaic mowing

A mowing technique where only selected patches are cut at a time to enhance biodiversity⁵.

Mulch

Material (such as bark, compost, or stones) placed over soil to retain moisture, suppress weeds, and improve conditions for plants¹.

Native vegetation

Plants that have evolved to occur naturally in an area, without human introduction¹.

Nutrient cycling

The movement and exchange of organic and inorganic matter back into the production of living matter¹.

Overlay (planning)

A land-use planning tool that applies extra controls (e.g., for heritage, vegetation, or flooding) to specific mapped areas⁶.

Pedestrian

A person travelling by foot².

Perennial

A plant that lives for more than two years and typically flowers and seeds multiple times during its lifespan¹.

Permeability

The ability of soil or surfaces to allow water or fluids to pass through¹.

Permeable

Capable of being penetrated by water or other fluids¹.

Planning permit

Official authorisation from a council to undertake certain developments or changes, subject to local planning policies².

Planting exclusion zone

An area around infrastructure or features (like street trees or utilities) where planting is not permitted².

Pollinator

An animal, often an insect or bird, that moves pollen between flowering plants, enabling fruit and seed production¹.

Remediation

The action taken to repair or restore environmental damage, such as cleaning up contaminated land².

Remnant vegetation

Native vegetation remaining after most original vegetation has been cleared or altered³.

Reserve (land)

An area of land specifically set aside for conservation, recreation, or other public purposes².

Restoration (ecology)

The process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed¹.

Revegetation

The process of replanting and rebuilding the vegetation of a disturbed site¹.

Rhizomatous

Describing plants that spread via rhizomes, horizontal underground stems that can produce new roots and shoots¹.

Runoff

Water that flows over the land surface, usually after rainfall or irrigation, instead of soaking into the ground¹.

Species diversity

The number and variety of different species present in a particular area¹.

Stormwater

Surface water that originates from precipitation (rainfall) and flows over land into drains or waterways¹.

Strategic fire break

A managed strip of land cleared or kept free of fuel to slow or stop the spread of wildfire⁷.

Swale

A shallow, often vegetated channel designed to manage water runoff and increase its infiltration¹.

Tap root

A dominant central root from which other roots sprout laterally, typically deep-growing¹.

Tussock

A type of grass that grows in clumps or groups as single plants, rather than forming a flat even mass¹.

Underground utilities

Utility services such as water, sewer, electricity, or communications infrastructure located below ground².

Urban heat island

An urban area that is significantly warmer than surrounding rural areas due to human activities and structures¹.

Verge

Another term for nature strip: the strip of land between a road and property boundary².

Water sensitive urban design (WSUD)

Urban planning approaches that integrate water cycle management into development to enhance environmental outcomes⁸.

Weed matting

A woven or non-woven material placed on soil to block weeds while allowing water and air movement¹.

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2025, various entries, viewed 17 September 2025.
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4. US EPA, 2021, Water Efficient Landscaping: Hydrozone Design, viewed 17 September 2025.
5. NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2024, Mosaic mowing for biodiversity, viewed 17 September 2025.
6. Victorian Government, 2023, Victoria Planning Provisions: Overlays, viewed 17 September 2025.
7. Country Fire Authority Victoria, 2023, Fire break guidelines, viewed 17 September 2025.

Digital Resources

Website references

CFA Landscaping for bushfire, Garden design and plant selection

[cfa.vic.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/447/CFA%20Landscaping%20for%20Bushfire%20\(Versions%203\).pdf.aspx?Embed=Y](http://cfa.vic.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/447/CFA%20Landscaping%20for%20Bushfire%20(Versions%203).pdf.aspx?Embed=Y)

CFA plant selection key interactive tool

cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property/landscaping/plant-selection-key

Community Local Laws 2017

ballarat.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-03/community_local_law_2017_1.pdf

Complaints about nature strips, go to City of Ballarat customer service, select community feedback

eservices.ballarat.vic.gov.au/ePathway/Production/Web/CustomerService/CustomerServiceType.aspx

Dial Before You Dig

byda.com.au

Firewood collection in your region, Forest fire management Victoria

ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood/firewood-collection-in-your-region

Freeway and arterial roads, map of DTP managed roads

experience.arcgis.com/experience/068ac885fc3f47d4aecfea22c22c4e54

Gardens for Wildlife Ballarat Gardens for Wildlife Ballarat

gardensforwildlifeballarat.com/

Heritage planning permits, City of Ballarat

ballarat.vic.gov.au/property/statutory-planning/planning/heritage-planning-permits

Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens

federation.edu.au/institutes-and-schools/iiss/engagement/indigenous-plants-for-ballarat-gardens

Melbourne Pollinator

theheartgardeningproject.org.au/

Melbourne Pollinator Handbook

theheartgardeningproject.org.au/shop/p/melbourne-pollinator-corridor-handbook

Nature strips, City of Ballarat

ballarat.vic.gov.au/naturestrips

Street trees, City of Ballarat - go to request for service page and look for 'trees'

ballarat.vic.gov.au/ePathway/Production/Web/CustomerService/CustomerServiceType.aspx

Powerful Pollinators Planting Guides: Western Victoria district

wheenbeefoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SF001-D-4.2-Pollinator-Guide-Western-District-VIC.pdf

Take the no spray pledge

invertebratesaustralia.org/no-spray-spring

Visualising Ballarat

visualisingballarat.org.au/

Weeds of Victoria, Agriculture Victoria

agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds

Works within roads reserve permit, City of Ballarat

ballarat.vic.gov.au/city/roads-and-drains/works-within-roads-reserve

Your guide to weeds of Central Victoria

bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/plans-strategies-and-documents/your-guide-weeds-central-victoria

Video guides

Nature strip transformation

bayside.vic.gov.au/our-community/environment-and-sustainability/gardens-wildlife-nature-strip-transformation

Creating a native nature strip with Zara

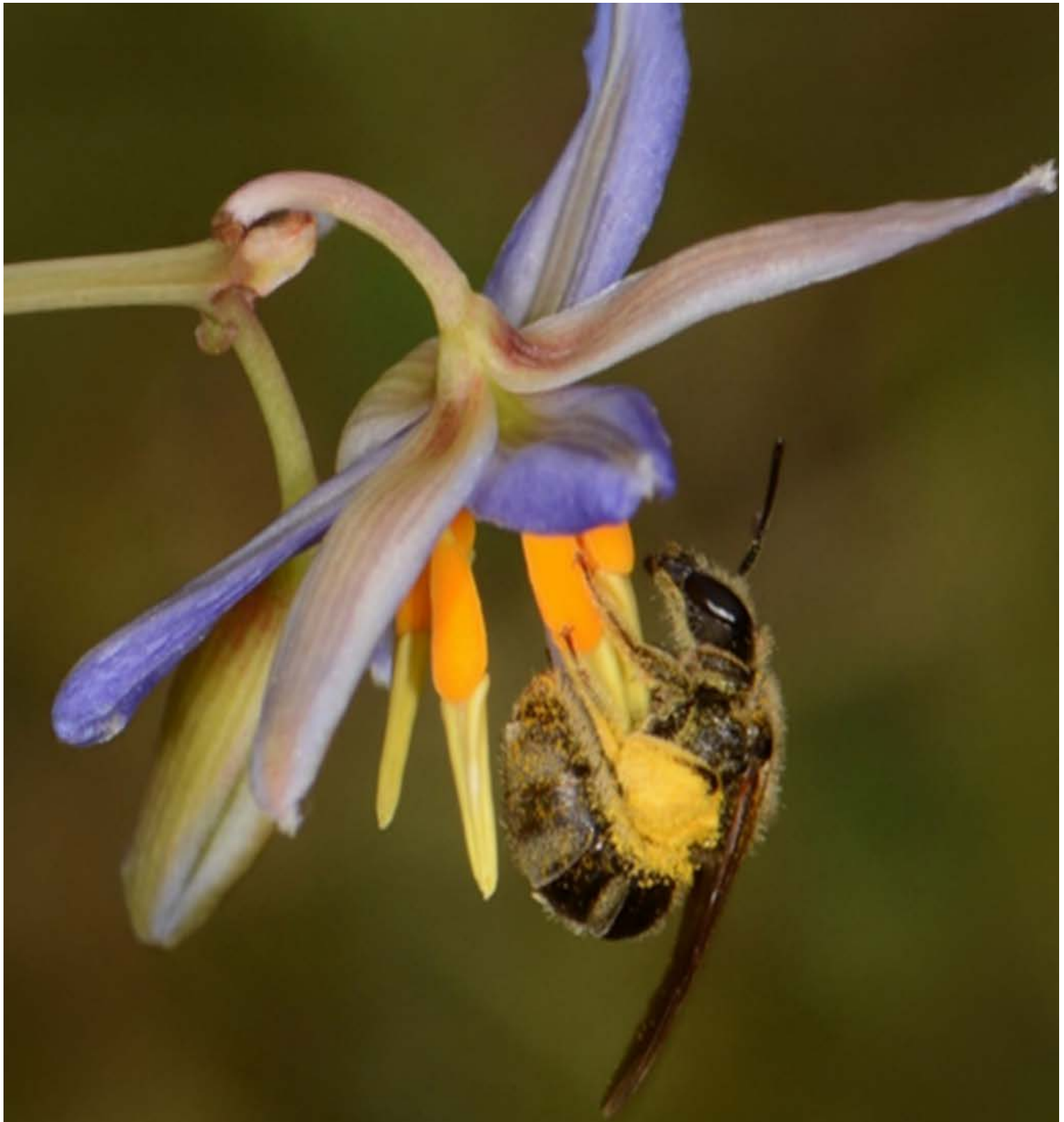
youtube.com/watch?v=JpmWv85d9Ug

Kate's nature strip garden

youtube.com/watch?v=EETtKL8G3ww

Putting nature into nature strips, Knox Environment Society

kes.org.au/homeandgarden/naturestriplantings/putting-nature-into-nature-strips



Nature strip gardens are essential for our precious pollinators.

Here a native Woolly Sweat Bee (*Lasioglossum lanarium*) pollinating a native flax lily flower (c) John Walter, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC), uploaded by John Walter. Nature strip gardens can create corridors for wildlife to move across Ballarat.



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All information correct at time of publication.