



## How to Attract Birds to Your Garden

Our native flora and fauna have evolved in association with one another and therefore are inter-dependent. Birds, more than any other group of animals, depend on trees for shelter, nesting, perching and food. In turn, many of the trees need native birds for insect control, seed dispersal and most importantly, pollination.

If you dream of a garden filled with birds, you will be pleased to know that the needs of these creatures are nowhere as diverse as the entertainment that they will provide you. Use native plants that provide nectar, seeds and fruit. Nectar producing plants can attract insects which also provide food for many bird species. Beware that using some cultivated grevilleas or other large flowering species may encourage "bully birds" such as Noisy Miner.

When designing your bird attracting garden, mimic a forest around a clearing. This may be as simple as several different sized trees around a lawn or entertainment area. Plant shrubs and grasses around the edges of the space and the birds will imagine they are on the edge of a forest. Make sure some of the shrubs are dense, to provide shelter and hiding away places. Dead trees or hollow logs will provide nesting sites for kingfishers, rosellas and owls. Trees and shrubs with thorny foliage provide good protection for small birds from predators.

Some good bird attracting native trees and shrubs in the Top End are:

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| Acacia species (Wattles)         | Glochidion xerocarpum                   |
| Asteromyrtus species             | Grevillea species                       |
| Banksia dentata                  | Maranthes corymbosa                     |
| Breynia cernua                   | Melaleuca species                       |
| Carallia brachiata               | Melicope elleryana (Euodia)             |
| Casuarina equisetifolia          | Peltophorum pterocarpum                 |
| Cordia subcordata                | Schefflera actinophylla (Umbrella Tree) |
| Corymbia bella (Ghost Gum)       | Syzygium species (Bush Apples)          |
| Erythrina variegata (Coral Tree) | Tamarindus indica (Tamarind)            |
| Eucalyptus species (Gums)        | Terminalia species                      |
| Ficus species (Figs)             | Xanthostemon species                    |