

VINES

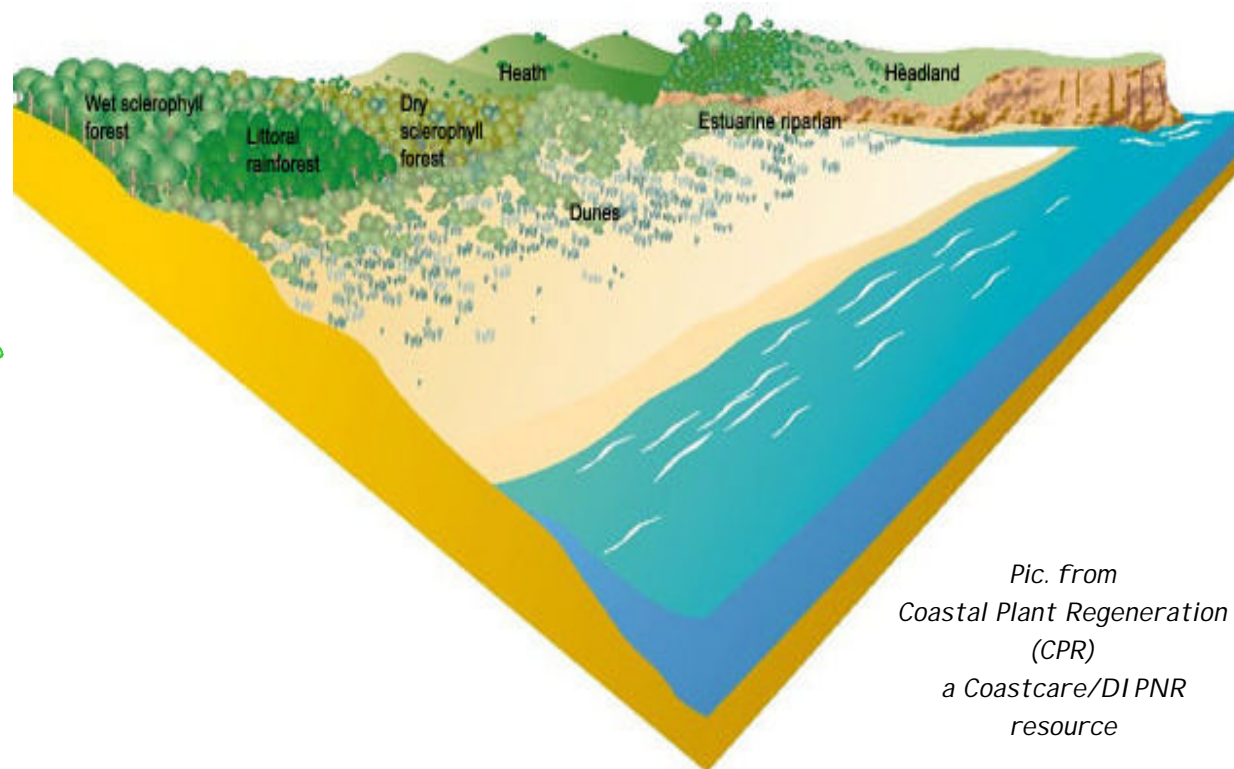
Less vigorous vines (*) could be planted with the groundcovers/ ferns /grasses.

More vigorous vines should only be planted when canopy has established, and trees and shrubs are at least 2-3 metres tall.

Most of the vine species mentioned in the Rainforest Bushfood Garden would grow in a seaside garden once sufficient shelter had been created, but what happens to the more vigorous vines, like the Native Grape species, once they grow into the canopy is that the leaves burn with sun and wind exposure, giving an unattractive appearance in a garden situation. For this reason, it would probably be better to plant the understory vine species once the trees and shrubs were established. Species like *Dioscorea transversa*- **Native Yam***, *Eustrephus latifolius*- **Wombat Berry*** and *Passiflora herbertiana*- **Native Passionfruit** would grow in the shaded conditions below the canopy along with the following:

Billardiera scandens- **Common Appleberry, Dumplings*** This small climber/creeper can be found in a variety of forest types throughout the Lake Macquarie region from coastal heath to rainforest edges. It has small greenish fruit which is only edible when it turns a translucent brown. The name, Appleberry, describes the taste quite well (like apple sauce), and in appearance the fruit is like the Kiwi Berry which has recently hit the market.

Not all species will be immediately available, particularly when local provenance is required. Species not available could be propagated for future planting.



Pic. from
Coastal Plant Regeneration
(CPR)
a Coastcare/DI PNR
resource

FACTS SHEET No. 5 A Local Seaside Bushfood Garden

By Carl Fulton
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Pictures courtesy of Australian National Botanic Gardens website: www.anbg.gov.au
and Coastal Plant Regeneration (CPR) -Coastcare CD ver1 2003

This is the second in the series concerning the establishment of local bushfood gardens. For those who require more detail there are some excellent references in the LRO library:

- ? **Wild Food In Australia** by A. B. & J. W. Cribb,
- ? **Wild Food Plants of Australia** by Tim Low,
- ? **Wild Lime: Cooking from the bushfood garden** by Juleigh Robins,
- ? **Wild Foods of the Lower Hunter Valley** by Paul Melehan and Paul's course notes from the **Bushfoods Workshop** held at the LRO in July, 2003.

Also there is **Yamuloong Bushtucker Garden at Garden Suburb**, to explore,

Phone (02)49436877 / website: www.yamuloong.com.au

Landcarers who are working sites which are exposed, such as beachside or lake-side properties or reserves, will have difficulty in creating the rainforest-style bushfood garden outlined in the last Urban Landcarer, although there are local examples of stunted littoral rainforest communities surviving in extremely exposed sites, such as Illawong Park on Swansea Heads. Here the remnant rainforest species are dwarfed to about two metres by wind-shear, salt-spray and shallow soil, and are found growing amongst the banksias, tea-trees and wattles that you would normally associate with headland vegetation. It is possible to create a bushfood garden in these difficult sites, and some bushfoods such as *Carpobrotus glaucescens* / Pigface and *Tetragonia tetragonoides* /Warrigal Greens will even grow and thrive in the foredunes. Many of the edible plants in a coastal area, like the seaweeds, Samphire and Seablite would have to be harvested from the wild because conditions for their growth could not be duplicated in a garden. This is not something to be encouraged as the coastal zone is under considerable pressure as it is, as evidenced by the potential listing of salt marsh as an Endangered Ecological Community.

TREES and SHRUBS

In the seaside garden, the trees and shrubs form the skeleton of the garden and are essential to provide the shelter and microclimate necessary for more sensitive species to grow.

Acacia longifolia- Sydney Golden Wattle

Acacia sophorae- Coastal Wattle These wattles can be planted as pioneer species in exposed positions and will quickly create shelter for other slower growing plants. Although short-lived, they seed so readily that they replace themselves in the coastal landscape. The seed of the wattles is the edible part and can be either eaten raw or processed into cooked seed or grainy flour for damper.

Banksia aemula

Banksia integrifolia- Coastal Banksia

Banksia serrata- Old Man Banksia The banksias are almost mandatory in any coastal garden. Their gnarled shape and distinctive flower spikes, which attract many species of honeyeaters, are recognised by even the least plant-conscious person. All of these trees can grow into large specimens in time, but will be dwarfed if grown in the front-line of coastal gales. The flowers provide copious quantities of nectar for native fauna, and can be infused in water to provide a sweet drink.

Cupaniopsis anacardioides- Tuckeroo The Tuckeroo is a common tree in beachside and lakeside reserves, often in conjunction with the banksias mentioned above. It is one of the hardiest of the littoral rainforest species and like the banksias can grow into a medium/large tree if given a sheltered, moist site. The orange fruit which surrounds the seeds is supposedly edible, but I would prefer to leave it for the birds. The fruit I have tried in the local area has been dry and rather tasteless. Some of the other littoral rainforest bushfood species, like **Acmena smithii/Creek Lillipilly**, **Acronychia oblongifolia/Common Acronychia** and **Syzygium paniculatum/Magenta Lillipilly** would grow in seaside situations if they were planted after the wattles and banksias had created a suitable micro-climate.

Myoporum acuminatum- Boobialla

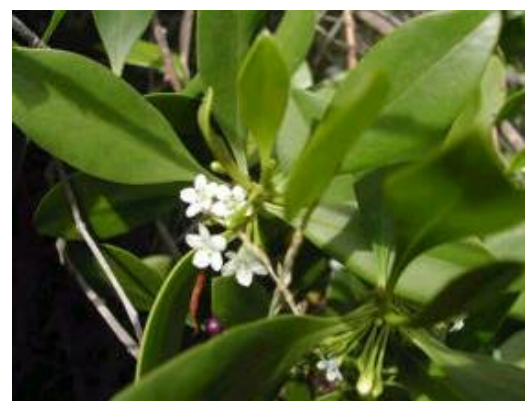
Myoporum insulare- Boobialla These shrubs/trees often grow just behind the tidal zone occupied by mangroves along with *Casuarina glauca*/Swamp Oak. The larger growing species, *Myoporum acuminatum*, can also be found in dunal situations and littoral rainforest. Both species can be mistaken for Bitou by newcomers to the weeding game as both have glossy green leaves, but on closer examination the leaves are quite distinct and Boobialla has white flowers and blue/black/purple edible fruit.



Acacia longifolia
(pic from www.anbg.gov.au)



Banksia serrata
(pic from www.anbg.gov.au)



Myoporum insulare (pic from CPR)

GROUNDCOVERS/ FERNS/ GRASSES

Some of the groundcovers and grasses mentioned in the **FACTS SHEET No. 4- A Local Rainforest Bushfood Garden** are also applicable to the seaside garden. This would include *Commelina cyanea*/Scurvy Weed, *Creeping Christian*, *Viola hederacea*/Native Violet (although both would need a somewhat sheltered and moist position), *Dianella caerulea*/Paroo Lily and *Lomandra longifolia* /Mat Rush.

Other useful plants would be:

Carpobrotus glaucescens- Pigface This plant forms dense mats on sand dunes in full sun and wind exposed sites. It is an attractive sand-trapping groundcover which is often used as a pioneer plant in dunal reconstruction and is quite easily propagated by division. It has pink/mauve flowers and an edible fruit.



Carpobrotus glaucescens (pic from CPR)

Sesuvium portulacastrum
(pic from CPR)



Sesuvium portulacastrum- Sea Purslane Sesuvium grows as a groundcovering plant in the *Casuarina glauca*/Swamp Oak zone of lakeside reserves, at Galgabba Point and Kooroora Bay for example. It has been used successfully as a groundcover in foreshore stabilization/reconstruction projects around the Lake, and would also grow in dunal situations. It is an attractive groundcover with glossy leaves and pink flowers. The leaves can be steamed as a vegetable.

Tetragonia tetragonoides- Warrigal Greens This is another of those bushtucker plants that have been used in commercial applications both here and overseas, and research continues into the tastiest varieties. Locally it can be found growing in many of our foreshore reserves, usually under *Casuarina glauca*/Swamp Oak. The leaves can be harvested, blanched or cooked like Spinach and either eaten as a vegetable or made into a pesto. The book, **Wild Lime** by Juleigh Robins (in the LRO library), has a recipe for Warrigal Greens and Macadamia Nut Pesto (yum yum)!



Tetragonia tetragonoides (pic from CPR)

Xanthorrhoea spp- Grass Trees The distinctive shape of the Grass Tree is a feature of many of the coastal heaths from Awabakal Nature Reserve to Catherine Hill Bay. The nectar obtainable from the large flower spike is the only bushtucker that can be harvested without destroying the plant. As with the banksias, the nectar can be used to make a sweet drink.

