



# Native fire retardant plants

## Landcare Fact Sheet No.9

Living in Lake Macquarie provides vast areas of natural bushland to enjoy, however it also presents the threat of bushfires. Planting native fire retardant species in your home garden can help to minimise fire hazards around your property, while retaining natural bushland habitats.

### Characteristics of Fire Retardant Plants

Some plants are generally more flammable than others and many native species are adapted to cope with fire. Fire retardant plants are not completely fire proof but they are less likely to ignite during moderate intensity bushfires.

Fire retardant plants have the following features making them harder to burn:

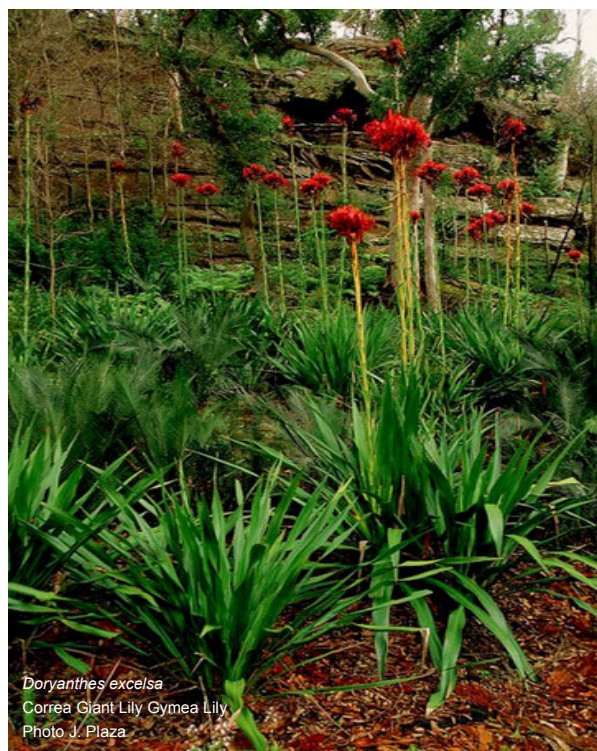
- high moisture content – leaves that are larger and thicker with smooth edges take more heat to dry out and ignite
- low volatile oil content of leaves
- smooth bark – trees with loose, fibrous or stringy bark can more easily ignite and encourage fire to spread through the crown of the trees.

Native tree species can also be helpful in property protection by forming a fire and wind break. The canopy acts as an 'ember curtain', catching flying embers and debris before they spread to homes or properties. It is important to note that no plant is fireproof and all plants will burn if they dry out and are exposed to enough heat.

### Native Fire Retardant Species

#### Trees

- *Acacia melanoxylon* - Blackwood
- *Alphitonia excelsa* - Red Ash
- *Acmena smithii* - Creek Lillipilly
- *Alectyron subcinereus* - Native Quince
- *Baloghia lucida* - Brush Bloodwood
- *Cassine australis* - Red Olive Berry
- *Cryptocarya glaucescens* - Jackwood
- *Casuarina glauca* - Swamp Oak
- *Diospyros australis* - Ebony Myrtle
- *Diploglottis australis* - Native Tamarind
- *Elaeocarpus obovatus* - Hard Quandong
- *Ficus macrophylla* - Moreton Bay Fig
- *Ficus oblique* - Small-leafed Fig
- *Ficus rubiginosa* - Port Jackson Fig
- *Glochidion ferdinandi* - Cheese Tree
- *Guioa semiglauca* - Guioa
- *Hymenosporum flavum* - Native Frangipani
- *Neolitsea dealbata* - White Bollygum



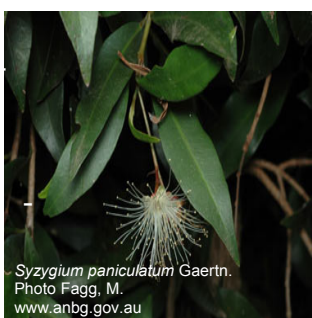
*Doryanthes excelsa*  
Correa Grant Lily Gynea Lily  
Photo J. Plaza

- *Pittosporum undulatum* - Sweet Pittosporum, Native Daphne
- *Podocarpus elatus*– Plum Pine
- *Pouteria (Planchonella) australis* - Black Apple
- *Synoum glandulosum* - False Rosewood
- *Syzygium paniculatum* - Magenta Lillipilly



### Shrubs and Herbs

- *Allocasuarina distyla* - Scrub She-oak
- *Backhousia myrtifolia* - Grey Myrtle
- *Breynia oblongifolia* - Coffee Bush
- *Carpobrotus glaucescens* - Pigface
- *Cordyline stricta* - Narrow-leaved palm lily
- *Crinum pedunculatum* - R.Br Swamp lily, river lily
- *Doryanthes excelsa* Correa Giant Lily Gynea Lily
- *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* - Blueberry Ash
- *Eupomatia laurina* - Bolwarra
- *Lomandra longifolia* - Spiny-headed Matrush
- *Myoporum acuminatum* - Boobiolla
- *Omalanthus nutans* - Bleeding Heart
- *Pittosporum revolutum* - Rough-fruited Pittosporum
- *Rapanea variabilis* - Muttonwood
- *Trema tomentosum* - Poison Peach
- *Wilkiea hugeliana* - Wilkiea



These species are listed as a guide for planting native fire retardant vegetation in your home garden, however not every plant mentioned is appropriate for all vegetation areas in Lake Macquarie. If interested in using fire retardant species at your Landcare site please contact the Landcare Resource Centre for planting recommendations specific to your site area.

### References and further information

- Trees in Newcastle, Fire Retardant Plants, TIN Topic # 13  
[www.treesinnewcastle.org.au/SiteFiles/treesinnewcastleorgau/TIN\\_Topic\\_13\\_-\\_Fire\\_Retardant\\_Plants.pdf](http://www.treesinnewcastle.org.au/SiteFiles/treesinnewcastleorgau/TIN_Topic_13_-_Fire_Retardant_Plants.pdf)
- Lake Macquarie Backyard Habitat Planting Guide  
[www.lakemac.com.au/downloads/408BCAFE6E12D47E321A27A6D9B043621D0DFAC0.pdf](http://www.lakemac.com.au/downloads/408BCAFE6E12D47E321A27A6D9B043621D0DFAC0.pdf)



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*Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council*