



# VERGE LANDSCAPING WITH A DIFFERENCE!

This guide provides assistance in verge design for Shire of Capel residents in urban areas.

Street verges account for a surprisingly large amount of land in the Shire and allow room for services such as water and power, increase public space and can visually link a streetscape.

Many of the Shire's verges are covered by lawn, which requires significant maintenance and uses large amounts of water and fertiliser.

In a drying climate, it is important now more than ever to identify ways in which we can reduce our water use and replace large areas of lawn with mulch and native plant species.

Over-applied fertilisers also impact on our environment, with nutrients running off into storm-water drains, ending up in our rivers, wetlands and eventually in Geographe Bay.

You can make a positive difference to the environment with your verge, with a landscaping design that is water wise, beautiful and reflects the natural heritage of the area. It can also save you time and money!

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## Who's responsible for the verge?

The Shire is responsible for street trees and managing the verge requirements in the case of hazardous or unsuitable installations, but maintenance of a verge treatment is the householders' responsibility.

You therefore have the choice of what to do with your verge, provided it meets the Shire's requirements.

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## Nature Verge Installation Form

I, (name of applicant).....

request permission to install landscaping treatment on the verge adjacent to:

(property address)

.....

During installation and upon completion of the work I agree to maintain the verge installation so as not to cause a hazard, including watering and maintaining any overflow on site.

Applicant signature:.....

Date:.....

### Contact details:

Postal Address: (if different from above)

.....

Email:.....

Phone numbers:.....

Please show dimensions of the area to be landscaped, approximate position of the proposed plants, the type and layout of reticulation (if any) and paving, noting any existing features (services, crossover, street tree, footpath, bin space, road, etc) on landscape sketch overleaf.

Please attach proposed species list (including locality and height at maturity if not from the approved species list).

### Shire Officer to complete

Permission is given for the verge proposal as in this submitted sketch to be installed.

Signature Shire Officer.....

## Watering

Local plants are adapted to our dry climate and low rainfall and need some stress to perform their best. Overwatering leads to shorter lived plants with excessive growth and less prolific flowering. Overwatering can also encourage diseases that lead to root rot, as well as leaching nutrients out of the soil.

If irrigation is required the best type to use is adjustable dripper/trickle systems or subsurface irrigation. This reduces evaporation loss and prevents overwatering.

For new plants water:

- once or twice a week in the first few weeks after planting.
- once or twice a week in the summer period for the first 1-2 years until plants are established.

For established plants, only water when there is a heat wave, when subsurface soil is dry or when signs of stress are apparent.

Check out [www.watercorporation.com.au](http://www.watercorporation.com.au) for information on your sprinkler roster. Always follow water restrictions.



## Fertilisers

Our local native plants are adapted to soils that are low in nutrients, so generally do not require fertiliser. If you do wish to apply fertiliser, slow-release, low phosphorus fertilisers are the best to use.

*The Shire of Capel would like to thank the City of Busselton for allowing it to use its Nature Verge publication as the basis for this booklet.*

## Why choose local native plants?

Local native plants and wildflowers are not only beautiful; they have a range of other benefits:

- The wildflowers, shrubs and trees of the Shire of Capel are suited to the local soils and climate conditions.

Local native plants support the range of living things (or biodiversity) within our area. They provide shelter and food for birds, butterflies, insects, frogs and mammals, and provide corridors of movement between areas of bushland.

- Local native plants are easier to care for than introduced plants. They require less fertiliser, water and pruning than introduced plants, so they can save you time and money and leave you more time to enjoy your garden.

- Most of the weeds existing in our environment today originated from gardens. Planting local native plants eliminates the risk of weeds ending up in our bushland.

- Local native plants help develop and maintain the unique natural character that is strongly valued in the Shire of Capel.

*Did you know* the Shire can provide plants for verges? This includes street trees if there are no overhead power lines. One tree or two shrubs can be provided for an average verge frontage and more plants could be considered for a corner block.

Most Dalyellup residents receive a street tree as part of the development conditions and as such would not be eligible for free plants (some residents in Dalyellup may be eligible, contact the Shire for details). Rural properties are exempt from this offer.

## The Shire of Capel encourages the use of the following local native plant species.

Species	Flow-ers	Colour	Soil	Notes
<b>Trees</b>				
Agonis flexuosa (WA peppermint)	Oct/Dec	White	Sand/gravel	6-8 m, Ringtail possum habitat
Corymbia ficifolia (red flowering gum)	Dec/May	Red/orange	Sand/loam/gravel	5-8 m, prefers some protection
Eucalyptus caesia (silver princess)	May/Sep	Pink/red	Sand/loam/granite	2-6 m, pendulous branches
Melaleuca lanceolata (Rottnest ti-tree)	Jan/Sep	White	Sand/limestone	2-8 m, tolerates salt and wind, interesting shapes
Melaleuca preissiana (moonah)	Nov - Jan	Cream / white	Sand/swamps	2-9 m
Melaleuca viminea (mohan)	Jul/Nov	Cream / white	Sand/clay	1-5 m, suitable for smaller areas
<b>Shrubs</b>				
Billardiera fusiformis (Australian bluebell)	All year	Blue	Variable	Delicate hanging flowers. Twining shrub
Calothamnus sanguineus (silky-leaved bloodflower)	Mar-Jul	Red	Sand/gravel	One sided bottlebrush like flowers, pine like foliage
Calytrix flavescens (summer starflower)	Dec-Jan	Yellow	Sand	Delicate shrub grows to 50cm
Dampiera linearis (common Dampiera)	Aug-Dec	Blue	Sand/gravel	Lovely, brilliant blue flowers
Darwinia citriodora (lemon-scented Darwinia)	Aug-Oct	Red/orange	Gravel/granite	Widely cultivated, perfumed foliage
Eromophila glabra spp	Various	Various	Various	Variable species with tube like flowers
Frankenia pauciflora (sea heath)	Jan-Feb	Pink/white	Sand	Hardy plant
Hypocalymma angustifolium (white myrtle)	Jun-Oct	White/cream	Sand/clay/near water-courses	Delicate foliage with stems covered in flower

## Planting out

Lay plants out in pots where you want to plant them. Keep in mind the size and shape the plants will become.

Dig a bowl-shaped hole twice as wide and slightly deeper than the pot. Loosen soil in and around the hole so the roots will have an open, light soil to grow into.

Thoroughly water the plant, hole and surrounding soil before planting. Remove the plant from the pot. If the plant is root-bound, make a few vertical cuts through the root ball with secateurs.

Place the plant in the centre of hole and backfill with surrounding moist soil. Press the soil in gently and firmly to remove air pockets. Place plant deep enough to form a shallow depression around it.

This will protect the plant from drying out by directing water towards the roots. Spread a layer of suitable mulch.

## Mulching

The best type of mulch is coarse organic material eg. natural leaf litter or mulched street tree loppings, as it lets water easily penetrate through to the soil and prevents evaporation.

Lay a depth of 5-10cm to prevent weed establishment but still allowing water to penetrate.

Avoid mulching too close to the plant stem, as the constant humidity encourages plant diseases.

Organic mulches need renewing seasonally as they break down over time. They are best applied in spring and early summer.

Avoid some packaged mulches as they contain high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus which aren't suitable for WA plants.

## Shire requirements continued.

Natural mulch material will be considered as long as it can be contained within a designated area. Mulching height must be set below the kerb height to retain the material in the verge. Adjacent road and path infrastructure is to be maintained free of mulch or other landscaping material by the resident.

Pedestrians must have an easily managed access along the verge (parallel to the road) with allowance for access to any footpath. To maintain pedestrian access where no footpath is present, a distance of 1.2m from the back of kerb shall be kept free of plants excluding grass or prostrate ground covers with similar height to lawn species.

No vertical element will be allowed within the road verge. Vertical elements include such things as poles, letterboxes, stakes, i.e. anything that will create a safety hazard or that would cause sight line issues. All hardscape materials shall be flush with the kerbline, crossover or surrounding soil levels.

Ground levels are to be retained within the levels of surrounding kerbline and footpath infrastructure.

All reticulation, if necessary, requires the sprinklers and valve boxes to be set at ground level height, all other reticulation infrastructure to be covered with a minimum of 300mm compacted material. There must be no trip hazards created by reticulation.

The resident is responsible for maintaining the reticulation system and ensuring that ground levels are maintained flush with the adjacent soil levels.

The Shire of Capel will consider alternatives if there are extenuating circumstances that affect the landowner's ability to comply with the conditions as set out above.

Verge treatments are subject to the Shire's *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfares and Public Places Local Law and Road Verge Policy 7.7.*

**To avoid damage to services that may lie within your verge, seek Dial Before You Dig information prior to starting work. Phone 1100 or use the website:**



Melaleuca



Silky Leaved Bloodflower

Cushion Bush



Pimelea



Coral Vine

Purple Flag

Species	Flowers	Colour	Soil	Notes
<b>Shrubs (continued)</b>				
Hypocalymma robustum (Swan River myrtle)	Jun-Nov	Pink/red	Sand/gravel	One of our most vibrant spring wild-flowers
Leucophyta brownii (cushion bush)	Dec-Feb	Yellow	Sand	Silvery-grey foliage, good border plant
Melaleuca trichophylla	Aug-Dec	Pink/purple	Sand/gravel	Vibrant cotton ball-like flowers
Pimelea ferruginea	Aug-Feb	Pink	Sand/limestone/granite	Cushion-like habit
<b>Strap-leaved shrubs</b>				
Conostylis aculeata (prickly conostylis)	Aug-Nov	Yellow	Variable	Small plant with multiple flower heads
Conostylis candicans (grey cottonhead)	Sept-Oct	Yellow	Sand/limestone	Compact
Ficinia nodosa (knotted club rush)	Oct-Jan	Brown/cream	Sand/granite/limestone/wetlands	Common along the coast, reed like foliage
Anigozanthos flavidus (tall kangaroo paw)	Nov-Jan	Green/red	Sand/clay/gravel	Flowers can grow to 2m tall
Dianella brevicaulis	Oct-Dec	Blue/purple	Sand/clay	Distinctive foliage
Patersonia occidentalis (purple flag)	Aug-Jan	Purple	Various	Large open petals on long stems
<b>Groundcovers</b>				
Carpobrotus virescens (pigface)	Sept-Jan	Purple	Coastal	Succulent creeper grey-green leaves
Hardenbergia comptoniana (native wisteria)	Jul-Oct	Blue	Sand	Produces wonderful displays
Kennedia coccinea (coral vine)	Sept-Nov	Red	Sand	Brilliant red flowers
Myporum parvifolium (creeping Boobialla)	Oct-Mar	White	Various	Spreads out well

Very coarse wood chips should be used as they last longer and retain moisture more effectively than fine mulch.



Ensure the height of the mulch is below the curb or footpath height to stop it spreading out.



## What are the Shire's requirements?

The verge landscaping should be water wise and use species that are not considered environmental weeds. The Shire encourages the use of local native plants (see attached species list).

Plants should be less than 75cm at maturity (excluding street trees) and not contain sharp edges or poisonous properties.

**It will be the landowner's responsibility to maintain the 75cm plant height restriction.**

Taller species may be considered if situated adjacent to the landowner's property boundary to minimise any sight line issues.

Trees should be planted centrally between property boundaries and the kerbline (service corridor), at least 1m from any existing dual use path, 1.5m from crossovers and 6m from a street light. If there is no existing path, trees should be positioned taking into consideration of future path installation.

Trees are required to be sufficient distance from adjoining property boundaries to minimise neighborly conflicts over trees overhanging property boundaries.

Verge planting must not restrict vehicle or pedestrian sight lines.

**Trees to be selected only from the approved tree list.**

Pavers, asphalt or concrete will be considered as part of your verge development. These products must be professionally laid, with no trip points, non slip and bedded flush with surrounding infrastructure.

**No loose stone aggregates will be considered (e.g. pea gravel, quartz stone).**

Materials that can be and are water bound and compacted will be considered as a verge treatment.

Compacted materials must not contain stone greater than 20mm. The resident will be responsible to maintain the surface free of loose material that may cause a trip or slip hazard.

**Compacted crushed limestone, gravel and crushed aggregate will be considered.**

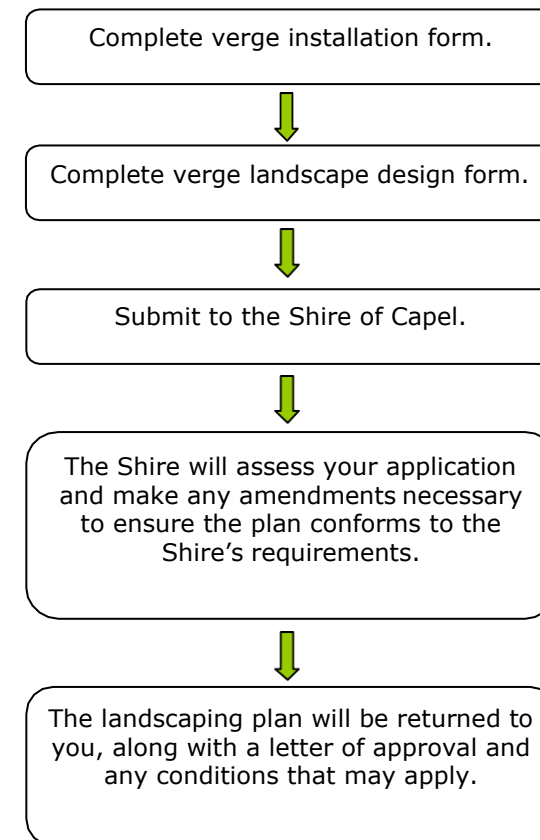
Hardscapes should typically cover no more than a third of the verge area and must not create storm water runoff issues for pedestrians, road users or other residents.

## The Process

Installing a verge treatment of any type requires permission from the Shire so that we can ensure that designs are not hazardous and do not interfere with pedestrian safety or motorists line of sight.

Please submit the attached verge installation form prior to undertaking any works.

Officers are available for assistance and there is no submission fee.



## Request for Street Tree Form

I, (name of applicant).....

request the Shire of Capel to install a verge tree at the property below:

(property address)

.....

Applicant signature:.....

Date:.....

### Contact details:

Postal Address: (if different from above)

.....

Email:.....

Phone numbers:.....

### Shire Officer to complete

Verge tree has been / will not be planted. Customer has been notified of outcome.

Signature Shire Officer.....

Date:.....

Mulch will retain moisture in the root zone while suppressing weed growth.



Native plants will keep your yard looking green all your round with minimal watering & maintenance.



Many native low shrubs will spread out as they grow.