

Kōwhai (*Sophora tetraptera*)

Planting a kererū-friendly garden

Do's

Design a plan for planting in your garden, here are some things to include in your planning:

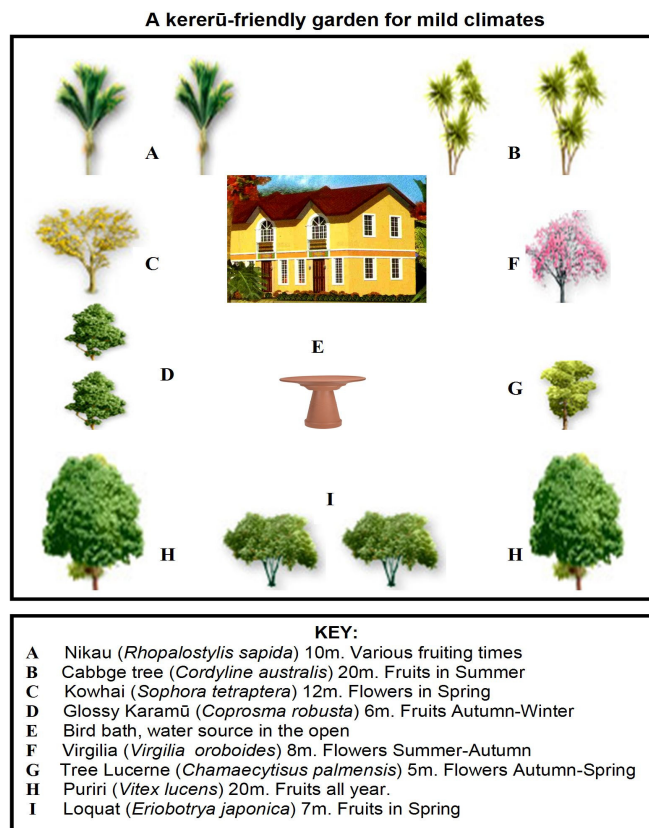
1. Assess what you have.
2. Plan for what you want.
3. Measure your site.
4. Think about the right time of year to plant.
5. Select the right quantity of suitable plants, e.g., size and shape of tree.
6. Select trees that fruit or flower at different times of the year, and therefore provide food year round. If you have room, plant 1–2 trees of each species.
7. Check with your local council about tree protection rules.
8. Decide on the plants' location – try to plant trees in your garden where they would grow naturally (hillside, streamside, etc) and space them appropriately.
9. Remove grass and weeds from the planting area.
10. Prepare the planting hole by digging a hole that is bigger than the root.
11. Nurture and protect your new plants from frost, browsing animals, and competition from other plants.

Also

- Select the best plants for the climate you live in, e.g., puriri (*Vitex lucens*) prefers mild climates and only grows naturally in the top of the North Island.
- Know the conditions your selected plants prefer to live in, e.g., rich moist soil, shade, or open spaces.
- Find out from your local council if there are any planting restrictions on your property – having a large tree on your property may not be permitted.
- Look at the Kererū Discovery website for a list of the foods kererū like to eat. <http://www.kererudiscovery.org.nz/Diet-Table.doc>
- You can source your plants from a specialised native nursery or garden centre, using the native nurseries directory <http://www.bush.org.nz/nursery/az.html>
- Contact your local council; they might assist with community planting projects.
- Think long term – miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*) can take 20 years to mature.
- Consider your neighbours – kahikatea (*Dacrydium dacrydioides*) can reach 60m.
- Control pests – fruit trees can attract possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) a serious browser and predator of native flora and fauna.
- Think about other native birds by planting trees for nectar-feeding species like tūī (*Prothemadera novaeseelandiae*) and kākā (*Nestor meridionalis*).
- Discourage aggressive birds from using your garden, for e.g., the myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) and rainbow lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) in Auckland.
- Think about a water source out in the open for thirsty kererū.
- Keep your cat inside at night, and attach a bell to their collar to prevent hunting.
- Make sure your windows have curtains to prevent birds flying into windows.
- Keep your dog on a chain.
- Talk to your neighbours about planting in their gardens to create a kererū-friendly street.

Don'ts

- Don't plant trees that could be environmental weeds or compete with native trees in nearby bush reserves, check the Massey University website if you are not sure if you have an unwanted species in your garden <http://weeds.massey.ac.nz/>
- Don't use bird feeders to attract birds, birds flocking to a food source could attract predators.
- Don't expect kererū to come straight to your garden if they haven't been there before. Kererū are attracted to areas with a favourite food source.
- Don't cut down big trees just because kererū don't eat from them, kererū like to sit in tall trees like pohutakawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*).
- Don't try to touch or interact with a kererū. As much as we love kererū, they are a protected wild species and should be left alone.



Useful Books

Wellington Gardens - Successful gardening for Wellington, Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa. 2000. Jon Muller, with photos by John Cheese. David Bateman Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand. ISBN 1-86953-450-6.

The Ultimate Book For All New Zealand Gardeners. 1996. Edited by Geoff Bryant. David Bateman Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand. ISBN 1-86953-320-8.

A Guide to the Identification of New Zealand Common Weeds in Colour . 1997. Upritchard E. A. New Zealand Plant Protection Society. ISBN 0-9597676-1-4.

Which Native Tree? A simple guide to the identification of New Zealand native trees. 1999. Crowe, A.. Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd. ISBN 0-14028-547-4

Which Native Plant Can I Grow Here? 1997. Crowe, A.. Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd. ISBN 0-143018-96-4.