

ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY.



## Bringing nature back

The Rockhampton Region is a great place and we want to ensure it stays that way, both now and in the future.

Trees, shrubs and grasses play an important role in our streets, parks and riparian corridors, as well as in our very own backyards. Not only do they provide food and shelter for wildlife, they give the Region its unique character and provide a cooler and more attractive environment for us to live in.

The Bringing Nature Back program is a key initiative under Rockhampton Regional Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

**Let's work together to protect, maintain and enhance our natural environment.**

### WHISKER PLANT

#### COMMON NAME

Whisker plant

#### BOTANICAL NAME

*Orthosiphon aristatus*  
(*Lamiaceae* family)

#### DESCRIPTION

An evergreen member of the mint family with showy blossoms. *Orthosiphon* refers to the upright tube shape of the flower and *aristatus* means 'with ears'.

#### HABIT

Bushy perennial plant growing to around 1m tall.

#### FLOWERS / FRUIT

Flowers from late summer to autumn, with flowers ranging from white through to pale pink and lavender.

#### LEAVES / STEMS

The dark green leaves are 5-10cm long, slightly glossy, narrowly ovate and deeply veined. The stems have a purple tone.

#### MAINTENANCE

Prefers a moist site in sun or semi-shade. Sensitive to frost. Fast growing and benefits from regular pruning.

#### ECOLOGY

Native to some tropical regions of Australia and South East Asia. It grows naturally in forest edges.



## PLANTING YOUR NATIVE

1. Ensure you have the right plant in the right place in your yard for the right reasons. Always think before you plant and consider the following:
  - What space do you have available in your yard for a new plant?
  - What constraints do you have in terms of potential height, overhanging branches and root systems in relation to your property or neighbouring boundary lines?
  - Are there any issues related to visibility from your driveway, intersection sight lines and access to your property?
  - Are there any overhead or underground services, including the service line to your home?
  - Is a 'Dial Before You Dig' check required to request information on underground cables and services on, or near your property?
  - What type of tree/shrub is best suited to your yard?
  - Do you want an evergreen or deciduous plant?
  - Does the mature plant's roots, branches, sap, flowers or fruits have the potential to obstruct buildings, fences, pools, footpaths, roads, foundations or vehicle paintwork?
  - If you require advice about planting in public areas, check Council's Tree Management Policy available via the website or contact Customer Service for more information on the local street tree planting guidelines.
2. Clear any grass or mulch to expose the soil.
3. Dig a hole twice the size and depth of the pot.
4. Mix fertiliser in with the soil in the hole.
5. Water the seedling and hole before planting.
6. Plant the seedling slightly below the ground level and back-fill the hole.
7. Make a small well around the plant to catch water.
8. Mulch around the plant, ensuring no mulch touches the stem.
9. Water thoroughly after planting.
10. Check in on your plant and water regularly:
  - Month 1 - twice a week
  - Month 2 & 3 - once a week
  - Beyond 3 months - once a month

### NATIVE PLANT PROGRAM

Trees, shrubs and grasses provide an important social, economic and environmental benefit to the community.

Council's Nursery provide a range of native plants that are made available to residents of the Rockhampton Region by the Environmental Sustainability unit at local events such as National Tree Day.

*Content acknowledgements:*

Native Plants Queensland ([www.npq.org.au](http://www.npq.org.au), 2022)

Banner photo: *Scrubby Creek* by Allannah Betts  
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