

# GROUND COVERS

**Groundcovers are extremely useful, not only to cover bare areas, but to use as 'living mulch'. These plants will keep weeds at bay, and can reduce the rate of water evaporating from the soil. They will also shelter the root systems of other plants, allowing a 'cool root run', which is very important for the health and happiness of many plant species.**

**The following groundcovers have proven their worth in Canberra gardens:**

***Acacia prostrate forms*** – many groundcover forms of Wattles are available, but can be very slow to propagate from cuttings, so they may not always be available in nurseries. Some reliable types include prostrate forms of *A. howittii*, *A. pravissima*, and *A. cardiophylla*.

***Ajuga reptans*** – a hardy exotic carpeting plant for shady positions. Dark green/purple foliage and spikes of blue/mauve flowers in the warmer months.

***Convolvulus sabatius*** – a vigorous trailer with masses of pale blue flowers throughout summer. Great for growing over retaining walls in warm, sunny spots.

***Dampiera diversifolia*** - a WA species growing to 5cm x 1m. Stunning royal blue flowers late spring. Needs extra water in summer. Grows best amongst large rocks (likes a cool root run in summer and radiant heat from the rock in winter). Full sun - part shade position.

***Grevillea 'Raptor'*** – a fast growing groundcover to 20cm x 2m. Ruby red new growth and crimson toothbrush flowers make it a very colourful plant. Loves well drained soil in full sun or part shade.

***Grevillea 'Bronze Rambler'*** - very drought and frost hardy *Grevillea*, growing to 40cm x 2m wide. Very good for covering large areas. Loves good drainage. Long-lasting flowers are a fantastic source of nectar for birds.

***Grevillea lanigera 'Mt Tamboritha'*** – a very tough groundcover with cream and crimson flowers throughout winter and spring. Grows to 20cm x 1.2m. Fast growing and very hardy to drought and frost. Full sun or part shade in well-drained soil.

***Grevillea 'Royal Mantle'*** - a dense, vigorous groundcover to 20cm x 2m. Pink toothbrush flowers in spring. Loves good drainage and extra water in summer. Tolerates full sun but can look better in part shade.

***Kunzea species 'Badja Carpet'*** – an extremely tough groundcover from Northeast of Cooma. Fine grey/green foliage and cream flowers in spring/summer. Very drought and frost hardy. Grows to 30cm x 2m in any soil type. Great for stabilising banks and slopes.

***Myoporum parvifolium* – Creeping Boobialla** – a very fast growing blanketing plant, 10cm x 2m. Very hardy in dry spots, in either full sun or part shade. Great for use as 'living mulch' or a low traffic lawn substitute. Has strong fire retardant properties. Many forms available (white flowers, pink flowers, fine leaf, long leaf, wide leaf).

***Rosmarinus officinalis (prostrate)*** – a trailing form of Rosemary with blue flowers produced over a long period. Very drought hardy once established. Good food source for bee-eating birds.



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***Scaevola 'Sunfan'*** – a hardy, clumping groundcover to 30cm x 1m wide. Lime green foliage and mauve flowers spring and summer. Very reliable in all well-drained soils. Frost and drought hardy once established. Full sun is preferred for best growth and flowering.

***Scleranthus biflorus*** - a cushion-forming local groundcover with moss-like bright green foliage. Loves ample water. Full sun is required for a dense habit.

***Viola hederacea* – Native Violet** – a vigorous groundcover local to the ACT. Full sun or full shade. Lovely mauve flowers most of the year. Prefers a moist position.



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