

# Some of the Benefits of Plants & Gardens are Listed Below

Some material supplied by courtesy of Fleming's Nurseries and there is more on their web site too. [www.flemings.com.au](http://www.flemings.com.au)

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Learn \* Grow \* Live

The surroundings in which we live affect us on four different levels.

- Health
- Social
- Economic
- Environmental

## Health

Greenery and natural surroundings are a proven, positive life enhancer.

Patients exposed to views of nature require less medication, are less stressed and are happier in their outlook, leading to better health overall.

Experiencing nature can improve children's behaviour and reduce symptoms of ADD.

Children play more creatively in a natural environment and parents are more likely to join in playing with children.

Views of nature can relate to feelings of:

- Satisfaction
- Wellbeing
- Coping
- Personal effectiveness
- Optimism

Green surroundings reduce mental tiredness while enhancing concentration and attention, leading to an improved ability to cope and make positive decisions.

### FACT:

Two trees are needed to supply the oxygen needs of each person.

A typical person consumes about 175 kilograms of oxygen a year.

A healthy, 10.5 metre tree can produce about 118 kilograms of oxygen a year. Trees reduce exposure to ultraviolet light, lessening the risk of associated health problems such as skin cancers and cataracts.

*Better Health*

*Longer Life*

## **Social**

### **Road Safety**

Tree lined streets are perceived as narrower, resulting in reduced speeds.

Trees along streets provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles.

### **Public Safety**

Areas with higher levels of planting experience lower levels of crime.

*Greenery helps people to relax and renew, reducing aggression ... lessening violence*

- The proximity of trees to dwellings has an effect on residents' use of outdoor space - the closer the trees, the higher the usage
- Many more people are involved in social activities in green environs than in areas that have few or no trees and shrubs
- Gardens and other plantings contribute to residents feeling safer, more supported and satisfied with their surroundings
- Green spaces bring residents together more often, promoting chance meetings and encounters. Residents get to know one another, producing stronger, more cohesive neighbourhoods.

FACT:

Surveys of landscaped and non-landscaped community areas have shown that the incidence of crime, vandalism and graffiti is many times lower in areas planted out with greenery.

## **Economic**

A garden adds to the aesthetic appeal of your home and neighbourhood, AND it adds REAL MONETARY VALUE to your home.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Roads with good tree canopy cover are protected from the sun and last longer. This saves us all money!

## **FACT:**

The value of property can be up to 20% higher in areas planted with trees when compared with similar areas that have few trees.

## **FACT:**

A well planned landscape can reduce your heating and cooling costs by up to 20%.

Consuming less fossil fuel to heat and cool our homes minimizes the impact on our environment.

## **Environmental**

Tree canopy on private land is declining at a rate of 5% per year.

500 trees are required to absorb the 5 tonnes of greenhouse gas emitted by a 4 cylinder car driven 20,000 kilometres

- Trees intercept and slow storm water, decreasing the likelihood of flooding and erosion, and improving water quality
- Large trees have a greater benefit in terms of reducing pollution than small trees
- Trees, shrubs, sedges and grasses have a positive effect on the environment by the transpiration of water and the emission of oxygen by photosynthesis
- Plantings around buildings are a proven method of reducing the demand for artificial heating and cooling with a resultant, and important, lower use of fossil fuels.
- Greenery provides 'white noise' reducing the effects of man-made sounds

Haven't we all driven around looking for that shady spot to park on a hot summer day?

Trees and other plantings can reduce asphalt temperatures of car parks by as much as 13°C, and room temperatures by 17°C.

## **FACT:**

Trees and shrubs absorb polluting chemicals such as nitrous oxide and ozone through their leaves, while releasing oxygen through photosynthesis.

## **Where will the children play?**

Quality landscapes with plenty of greenlife are critical to the future wellbeing of our urban environment and everyone can assist in the creation of that environment.

The best gardens, streets and parklands start with a good plan. Engaging a professional landscape architect or garden designer is an excellent method by

which you can bring your ideas to life. The professionals in these bodies are trained to consider fully all the aspects of landscape design such as climate, aspect, soils, drainage, environmental impact, selecting the right plants and of course, they are up to date with the latest contemporary designs.

Industry bodies such as the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects ([www.aila.org.au](http://www.aila.org.au)) or Landscape Victoria ([www.liav.com.au](http://www.liav.com.au)) are an excellent place to start seeking out such professional advice.

For the total do-it-yourselfer, magazines, television and radio, public shows and your local nursery are a great source of ideas and inspiration.

It's important to select the right plant for the right position and your local garden centre is an ideal place to seek advice on what will be suitable for your garden. They also stock a huge range of products such as pavers, pots, mulches and sculptures to help create a stunning landscape or your own quiet hideaway.

Websites such as those published by the nursery and garden industry [www.ngiv.com.au](http://www.ngiv.com.au) or [www.ngia.com.au](http://www.ngia.com.au) are full of comprehensive information on all aspects of gardens and gardening.

We need to plan our landscapes so we and future generations can enjoy a quality way of life in communities that combine sustainability, workability and positive benefits for all.

*Words reproduced by courtesy of Wes Flemings, Fleming's Nurseries. [www.flemings.com.au](http://www.flemings.com.au)*

## **Greening the great indoors**

A CSIRO study estimated urban pollution costs are \$12 billion a year. According to the EPA urban pollution kills 1400 people per year in Sydney alone.

Previous work has found that plants effected reductions in office workers incidence of:

- Cough and fatigue by 37%
- Ear, nose and throat symptoms by 23%
- Sick leave by 60%
- Perception of pain
- Blood pressure
- Reports of anxiety, depression, hostility
- Intentions to quit

The presence of plants was shown to effect improvements in:

- Computer tests
- Item sorting tasks
- Creative thinking exercises

- Exam scores
- Job satisfaction
- Class room behavior in junior high school
- Mood in dementia patients

HAL funded University of Technology Sydney (UTS) research by Professor Margaret Burchett also shows there are close trends of the reduction of stress and depression in people whose offices have plants compared to those whose offices don't.

The conclusion then is that indoor plants promote health, reduce stress and enhance productivity in the work place.

Interestingly the research revealed that potting mix played a central role in removing volatile organic compounds (VOCs), indeed the potting mix bacteria were the main removal agents.

*Adapted from Hortlink produced by Horticulture Australia Ltd, Winter 2009.*

#### **Four Key Benefits of a Lawn are**

- Lawns help purify and cool the air. An average front lawn offers the same cooling effect as 2.5 air conditioners.
- Lawns are an important source of plant oxygen exchange. A 15m X 15m turf area will sustain oxygen requirements for a family of four.
- Lawns increase home & property value.
- Lawns assist dust stabilization.

*Courtesy of Turf Producers Association of Victoria.*

#### **Sensory Appeal – fragrance in the garden**

Floral and herbal scents have long been recognised for their health and wellbeing benefits, such as memory boosters, stress relievers and stimulants. So popular are these scents that almost two thirds (63%) of people in the UK purchase floral and herbal scented products on a monthly basis.

Despite this obvious belief in the benefits of scented products, research shows just 12% of people actually plant these scents in their gardens, with a quarter (25%) admitting they wouldn't know how to use them to benefit their health, if they did grow them.

To help people unlock the 'scentsational' benefits their garden can offer, a UK company **PlantforLife** teamed up with aromacologist Danièle Ryman and celebrity plantsman Chris Collins to offer advice and guidance on the benefits garden plants can bring. Here are their tips on scented plants which your

customers can grow in their garden and how best to use them to benefit their health. ***Can you use them to help you sell the plants?***

### **Roses**

Roses have been an important scent throughout history. The Romans scattered rose petals from ceilings at their banquets and placed roses on the statues of their favourite gods. The Egyptians also used rose petals at important religious ceremonies.

Rose is a calming scent and can help ease nerves. Try making a rose infusion by adding a handful of rose petals to half a pint of boiling water and leave to simmer for five minutes. Let the mixture cool, and then breathe in the fragrance for ten minutes for a calming effect.

### **Lavender**

Lavender is most commonly known for providing relaxation, aiding sleep and relieving stress. The Romans even added it to their bath water to benefit from its amazing properties. In Elizabethan times ladies would also sew lavender into their skirts for the scented perfume. For a stress busting remedy add a large pinch of lavender to half a pint of water and boil for ten minutes. Allow the mixture to cool slightly and then, placing a towel over your head, breathe in the steam from the mixture.

### **Hyacinth**

In the Victorian language of flowers the hyacinth flower symbolised sport or play, and the blue hyacinth signifies sincerity. Their scent is perfect for lifting your mood during the cold, winter months.

To help lift your mood simply place approximately five hyacinth flowers in a small bowl or vase and breathe in the scent for five to ten minutes.

### **Jasmine**

Jasmine is a stimulant and the perfume is so exquisite, women in China would roll jasmine blossoms into their hair to keep it smelling fragrant for days.

To stimulate your body and mind plant jasmine near windows to perfume the air, but be careful not to plant near your bedroom as the smell is a stimulant.

### **Gardenia**

Gardenia flowers have long been associated with passion and have been given as gifts to loved ones throughout history. It can be used for relaxation and can help calm nerves.

Try making a relaxing pot pourri mixture by drying out the flowers. Place them in a pot and leave around the house for a relaxing and calming scent.

### **Chamomile**

The flowers of the chamomile plant were sacred in ancient Egypt due to their amazing healing properties. This plant has been used to help with a number of ailments from digestion to headaches and has also been used as an antiseptic. Its most common use is for relaxation and many people drink chamomile tea for its calming properties.

## **Rosemary**

Rosemary has many amazing properties, including providing energy, stimulation and conditioning hair. The Greeks and Romans also used it to improve their concentration.

Try making your own shampoo by adding a large pinch of rosemary to a bowl of hot water, stir, and leave to cool for 20 minutes. After washing your hair rinse with the mixture to give your hair an extra shine.

## **Thyme**

Thyme was used by the ancient Egyptians as part of the embalming process. Romans also used it in medicine and before battle as they believed it encouraged bravery.

Including thyme in your diet is said to help ease aches and pains and smelling the plant can ease tiredness and lift your mood.

## **Mint**

Most people are aware that mint can help settle the stomach, but many are unaware that when used in a bath it can help to soften the skin. Add a handful of mint leaves to a hot bath to enjoy the wonderful scent, ease tiredness and condition the skin.

***By courtesy of HTA UK. [www.the-hta.org.uk/](http://www.the-hta.org.uk/)***