Increasingly, the natural environment of the far north is being invaded by exotic plants, many of which have escaped from urban gardens.

By replacing potentially invasive species with local native plants you can have a beautiful looking garden while contributing toward the conservation and restoration of the natural environment.

Here’s a sample of local native plants that will look great in your garden.

**GARDENING WITH NATIVES**

Cape York Lily  
*Curcuma australasica*

Also known as Native Tumeric, the Cape York Lily grows to 1m high with long lasting spectacular flowers, yellow with pink bracts.

Backscratcher Ginger  
*Tapeinochilos ananassae*

Fantastic long lasting flowers that look like they are made of wax. The flowers are actually yellow but are surrounded by bright red bracts which are usually mistaken for the flower. Spiral leaf stems are also very attractive.

**WHY GO NATIVE?**

Benefits of using LOCAL native plants in your garden include:

- Adaptation to the local climate, soil type and tolerance of the wet and dry seasons.
- Lower water and fertiliser requirements than many exotic species.
- Attracting native fauna to the garden by providing a source of food and shelter.
- Local plants do not ‘escape’ from gardens to become environmental weeds.
- Contribute to wildlife corridors that enable wildlife to move from one area of bushland to another.

By planting native plants in your garden you will assist in the preservation of the natural landscape and restore natural biodiversity.

**FIND A NATIVE PLANT NURSERY NEAR YOU**

Cairns Native Plant Nurseries...
NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES

This is only a sample of local native plants that are well suited to a garden in the wet tropics. Search the web for ‘Cairns Native Plant Nurseries’ to find out more.

Basket Grass / Matt Rush
Lomandra longifolia & Lomandra histrix
Clumping plant with an attractive flower spike and thin, strap like leaves. Suits most soil types and grows 1m - 1.5m in full sun to part shade.

Native Lasiandra
Melastoma malabathricum
A fast growing and adaptable shrub for full sun, mauve flowers followed by a fleshy berry that’s edible.

Fan Palm
Licuala ramsayi
One of Australia’s most beautiful native palms, it is best grown in a shady spot in moist, fertile soil.

Rainforest Flax Lily
Dianella atraxis
Clumping lily, Blue flowers followed by small blue fruits eaten by a variety of birds. Makes a very good border plant.

Centipede Fern
Blechnum orientale
Fern with pink to bronze new fronds turning green as they age. Likes morning sun or dappled shade. Common name refers to shape of fronds.

Hairpin Banksia
Banksia spinulosa
Attractive shrub that generally grows up to 3m in full sun. Can grow tall and scraggly if planted in a space with insufficient sunlight.

Scarlet Bloodroot
Haemodorum coccineum
Grass-like perennial herb to about 1 m high. Strap like leaves with bright red flowers for sunny position.

Native Gardenia
Randia audasii
One of the many native gardenias. Shrub or small tree, fragrant cream flowers. Prefers afternoon shade when young.

Australian Native Violet
Viola hederacea
Shade loving violet, pale purple flowers grows along the ground, commonly used as a groundcover between pavers and garden edges.