

SPRING 2012



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## NEWSLETTER



**S**pring has come on with a bang bringing quite warm days with only a touch of winter remaining in the early mornings. Everywhere you look gardens are starting to come alive with bursts of colour and new growth. It's time to get stuck in and get your hands dirty again and there's no better place to pick up all your garden supplies, plants and friendly advice than Nielsen's Native Nursery.

If you're looking for inspiration on how to plant out a native garden then a stroll through our display gardens is a must. At the moment it is a riot of colour everywhere you look with a pleasant blend of small trees, medium shrubs and groundcovers. To keep your native plants looking their best a yearly prune is advisable. After flowering every year take off about a quarter of the plant and feed with a slow release native fertiliser. This will ensure a bushy shrub and you will see much more flowering the following year.



Nielsen's Marine  
Mates

Ph: 07 3801 4222 Fax: 3801 4299  
Website: [www.nielsensmarinemates.com.au](http://www.nielsensmarinemates.com.au)  
Email: [nielsensmarinemates@bigpond.com](mailto:nielsensmarinemates@bigpond.com)

49-51 Beenleigh Redland Bay Road,  
Loganholme Qld 4129  
Ph: 07 3806 1414 Fax: 07 3806 1706  
Website: [www.nielsensnativenursery.net](http://www.nielsensnativenursery.net)  
Email: [bradn1097@bigpond.com](mailto:bradn1097@bigpond.com)



Lorikeet's Coffee Shop  
Ph/Fax: 3806 1313

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Our Ozothamnus (Rice Flower) is looking spectacular in the front garden and is a very low maintenance plant to grow. It comes in a few colours including dark pink, light pink, white and yellow. It's a fast growing, open shrub that does its best work in lots of sun and a well drained soil. The clusters of small rice-like flowers come about in late winter through to spring and stay on the plant for a long period of time; great for flower arrangements. The plant can get to around two metres tall however it can be kept lower with a quick snip. Apart from being drought tolerant once established Ozothamnus can also resist medium frost with no problems.



Another Aussie plant with amazing flowers is Alyogyne huegelii. This native hibiscus is a fast growing, open, round bush with dark green lobed leaves. However it's the blooms that really steal the show. The single hibiscus flowers are such an intense purple that the eye is immediately drawn to them in any garden. They appear in late winter through to summer and make an excellent specimen shrub in full sun to part shade in a well drained spot. You can even grow them in a pot. There are a few shades available so why not mix and match? If left unpruned it can reach a height of around 2 or 3 metres.



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You may be aware of Elkhorns. These native rainforest epiphytes have been around in Queensland gardens for many years. The Silver Elkhorn is a little bit different however. Whereas most Elks prefer a shady area to thrive *Platynerium veitchii* grows in full sun. It grows naturally in semi desert areas of Queensland and has evolved to the harsh conditions found there. Tie it to a tree, rock or fence and give it plenty of sunlight and a dose of Fish and Kelp a few times a month will keep it looking in great shape. Even though it can go for prolonged periods of drought it should not be allowed to dry out completely. The Silver Elkhorn will fill out to provide an eye catching display in your garden.



Spring is the perfect time to get stuck into the vege patch. Summer favourites such as tomatoes, cucumber, capsicum and corn can get planted out now so you'll have fresh tasty salads in a few months time. But first the soil. Preparing the ground is essential if you're to have a bumper crop so dig in compost or manures and fertilise with a good slow release like Organic Extra. The more you put in the more you get out. After the soil is bursting with nutrients add a 5cm layer of Lucerne mulch which will help retain moisture, keep the roots of the plants cool, suppress weeds and lets face it, make it look a whole lot nicer. Instead of watering the vege plants in with just water use a liquid fertiliser such as Flourish. Simply mix it up in a watering can and pour it on the seedlings. Then stand back and watch them grow!



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There's a new Agapanthus on the block. Agapanthus Bluestorm has just been released and shows a lot of promise. It has a compact growth of about 60cm high with flower spikes of 100cm most of the year. In fact it blooms 60% more than other blue varieties. Once the flowers are spent prune off the stems to promote longer flowering. This non-invasive form is very drought tolerant so it's perfect for the gardener with little time on their hands. Bluestorm makes an excellent mass planting, border plant or pot specimen. Plant into full sun or part shade in a well drained soil.



We have just received a new delivery of roses so there are lots to choose from. They are all bush varieties which get to a height of around 1m or so. Roses require a bit of work but it's worth it in the end to get large, perfumed blooms. Pruning back is very important as it helps reduce disease, encourages air circulation and lets more light in. Once the flowers are finished dead head them. Roses are plants that need a lot of nutrients to keep them healthy and in flower and we sell composts and fertilisers specifically tailored to their needs.



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Looking for a palm but don't want a huge tree? The Bottle palm is not only ornamental but only grows 3 to 4 m tall. The swollen trunk reaches a diameter of 60cm and the large, glossy fronds arch out beautifully. This interesting palm can be grown in pots or a well lit spot in the garden where height is an issue. Although a hardy tree once established, an occasional watering in dry, hot weather will be beneficial. Specific palm fertiliser is also available.



To many passion fruit is the taste of summer. You can easily grow your own and today there are new varieties available with improved yields and flavour. Panama Perfection is a cultivar with delicious tasting fruit from summer to winter and has a long and productive vine life. To get the best out of your passion fruit keep it well fed and in a fairly sunny position. If the vine is producing plenty of flowers but little fruit it can be a sign of boron deficiency which can be applied in the form of Borax. Lack of bees for pollination could also be the problem. Putting some bee attracting plants nearby such as lavender or Grevillea Billy Bonkers will help. We also have Panama Gold and a twin pack which retails at \$10.99.



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Sick of spraying for weeds only to have them pop up again a few weeks later? This is because herbicides kill the weeds but not the seeds. Weedless is a new pre-emergent herbicide that will degrade most surface deposited weed seeds reducing the number of seeds that will then germinate. A 2.5 litre bottle is \$29.99.



We have stocked up our pot area with new lines and statues available. One range many have been waiting on is the concrete, half wine barrels. These pots are made to look like old wooden wine barrels and come in three sizes. There are also troughs and small planters. Get in quick as they are quite popular.



**Happy gardening all!** .....Eliot Holzworth