

Gladstone Regional Seed Library

What is it?

A seed library collection is where the library loans out seeds instead of books or DVDs.

How does it work?

Gladstone Regional Library members borrow seeds for free then plant and tend to their crops. The return on this long-term loan is not fresh produce but instead the return of some seeds from the yield. These seeds are then made available for members to plant next season

Seed Donations:

The library is happy to accept donated seeds. When giving a donation you will be required to fill in a seed donation form with as much details about the plant as possible. Gladstone Regional Libraries are not accountable for the content of seed donations and any errors in the information provided with them.

Information Handouts:

This range of information sheets and activities have been designed to provide basic information on the seeds available and help teachers and parents encourage and inspire their children's interest in nature.

Curriculum Ideas:

Science: parts of plants, what plants need to grow, seed germination, pollination by bees

Numeracy: Spatial awareness for design, making seed packets, weighing and counting seeds

Literacy: diary of plant growth, writing seed sowing instructions, plant care and harvesting

Art: Colour Wheel and colour theory, drawing pot layout/design, Perspective (direction the pot design will be seen)

History/geography: Climate/locale plant will grow, or where plant is originally from

Further Reading and References

The following resources contain more information about the topic:

1. <https://www.bhg.com>. (2019). Retrieved 5 September 2019, from <https://www.bhg.com/gardening/design/color/usin-g-the-color-wheel-in-gardening/>
2. Colour, K. (2019). Know Your Colour. Retrieved 5 September 2019, from <https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/know-your-colour/9436802>
3. J. Wiley. (2012). *Better homes and gardens quick color gardening*. Hoboken, NJ.
4. Durie, J. (2013). *Edible garden design*. Melbourne: Lantern.
5. Nolan, T. (2016). *Raised bed revolution: build it, fill it, plant it ... garden anywhere*. Minneapolis, MN: Cool Springs Press.

Seeds are freely available at all the Gladstone Regional Library branches:

- Agnes Water Library
- Boyne Tannum Community Centre
- Calliope Library
- Gladstone City Library
- Miriam Vale Library
- Mount Larcom Library
- Philips Street Family Precinct

For more information visit:

www.gladstonelibraries.qld.gov.au

Gladstone Regional Libraries

Seed Library DIY Collection

Container Gardening



Image: Container Plant
Source: the_name_is_karupu

Container Growing

Container growing is a great way to grow a bit of colour, or food, at home. This versatile way of gardening allows you to grow a garden even if you're renting, have no garden space, or don't have the water for a full garden.

Growing containers (pots) can be any size and shape to fit your need. They don't need to be your traditional plastic pot but can be anything that has, or can be given, drainage holes.

Items Required:

- Pot
- Growing media ($\frac{1}{3}$ Top soil, $\frac{1}{3}$ Organic matter or Manure, $\frac{1}{3}$ Potting mix if you want to mix your own)
- Gloves and mask
- Plants/seeds
- Water crystals (if not included in potting mix)
- Slow release fertiliser
- Watering Can
- Pot Saucer
- Pebbles to fill pot saucer

Note: filling the saucer with pebbles prevents the pot sitting in excess water but allows the water to evaporate increasing the humidity around the plants.

The Seed Library has a variety of seeds available for you to borrow to make your own stunning display of flowers or grow some of your own produce.

Seed Harvesting Tips

Methods of saving seeds will depend on the type of plant. Here are some general seed saving tips.

Dry Seeds

Harvest dry seeds from their plants when their pods or husks have dried. Some seeds can be picked before they are fully dried on the plants if rains threaten. Other plants, however, (i.e., *Mustard family*), will not finish ripening once they have been removed from the plant. Leaving seeds on the parent plant to full maturity and dryness is always preferable.

Wet Seeds

To clean wet seeds, scoop the seeds from the ripe fruit, pulp and all. Pour the seeds and pulp into a large, sloping bowl and add water. Healthy seeds will sink to the bottom of the bowl, while dead seeds and most of the pulp will float. Use your fingers to gently separate all the seeds from the pulp. Then, to remove the pulp and dead seeds, by repeating this rinsing process several times, the seeds can be gotten very clean

Once you have harvested the seeds, make sure to dry them thoroughly so they don't mold.

Check the library collection for more seed saving ideas.

Designing Your Pot Layout

A simple rule for planting pots that will contain a variety of plants is the; Thriller, Filler, Spiller method. Combining two or all three of these types of plants creates a visually pleasing design that utilises the most of the limited space.

Thrillers e.g. Sunflowers, Zinnia, Corn, Cosmos

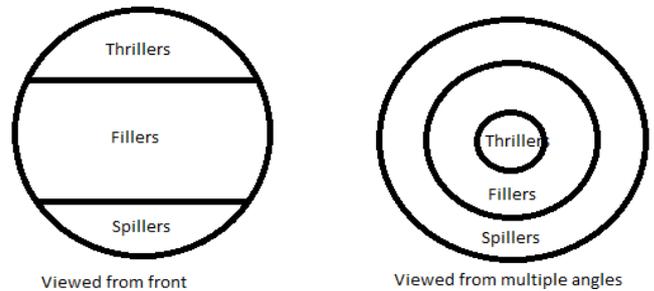
These are your taller/upright plants. Plant them towards the back if the pot is mainly to be viewed from one direction or in the middle if viewed from multiple directions.

Fillers e.g. Snapdragons, Carrots, Calendulas

These are the plants that can be termed "living mulch" and are low growing and "fill" the spaces not covered by your "Thriller" plants.

Spillers e.g. Strawberries, Pumpkins, Petunias

These plants spill over the edge of the pots creating a softer edge, and increasing the vertical aspect of your design



The Colour Wheel

Controlled use of colour in your designs can create a variety of effects. "Warm" colours, reds & yellows, creates a vibrant and exciting display while "Cool" colours, blues, pastels and silver create a calming and "Airy" feel.

Combining different colours from different sections of the colour wheel will create different effects (including a visually jarring clash), check the library collections for more information on colour theory.

