

# Pick of the bunch

**Pick of the Bunch** is where you can share your photos of native plants. To contribute, email images to [pickofthebunch@hotmail.com](mailto:pickofthebunch@hotmail.com). This selection from Neil Marriott.



## ***Banksia spinulosa*** – gold form

*Banksia spinulosa* in its multitude of forms is always a superb and reliable banksia for the garden. Normally growing 1.5–2 m high and wide, some forms from forests can get to 3 m or more (for example ssp. *cunninghamii*) or dwarf and stunted on exposed coastal headlands. One of the very best of these is *Banksia* 'Birthday Candles'. Hardy to cold wet winters and frosts, and hot dry summers once established, all forms grow best in a sunny to dappled shade site in acid sandy loam to clay-loam. They can struggle during drought but respond to occasional summer watering during long dry spells. The spectacular display of massed flower spikes from autumn right through the cold of winter to spring makes a wonderful show and provides copious nectar for honey-eating birds. Very hardy and ideal for beginners or experienced gardeners alike.



## ***Grevillea magnifica***

Many people ask me just what is my favourite grevillea, but with over 500 to choose from it is rather daunting to select one or two. However *Grevillea magnifica* would have to be one of the very best, with massed showy bottle-brush flowers on long canes above the foliage for over six months of the year. Coming from around the bases of the isolated granite outcrops in the central and southern wheatbelts of Western Australia, *Grevillea magnifica* has evolved to withstand very wet winters due to the often considerable runoff from the granite hills, followed by very hot, dry summers. In the garden it must have a well drained sunny position, but once established it will thrive and grow to 2–3 m in several years.



## ***Grevillea bipinnatifida*** – 'Chittering Valley'

Another of the very best of all grevilleas, *Grevillea bipinnatifida* has been around for decades. However many of the early introductions were of average flower. This form, discovered in the Chittering Valley north-east of Perth in the Darling Range only grows to around 0.5 m x 1 m and flowers continuously throughout the year with large showy racemes of orange-red flowers. It is extremely hardy, growing in a wide range of conditions from full sun to dappled shade, and can be cut right back to the ground if it ever needs rejuvenation.

## ***Grevillea preissii* ssp. *glabrilimba***

Growing naturally in exposed coastal areas north of Perth, WA, *Grevillea preissii* ssp. *glabrilimba* is an ideal choice for similar sites in Victoria, and is just as happy in the dry inland of the state. It makes a bold silver mound to around 1.5 m with lovely soft divided leaves and masses of brilliant red flowers throughout winter and spring, attracting numerous honeyeaters to the garden. Even when not in flower it makes an attractive foliage contrast, and is one of the few grevilleas that is just at home in alkaline or acid soils.

