

Grassland Garden Series



**BOTANICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Gauteng



Know, grow, protect, and enjoy South Africa's indigenous plants

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10 Steps to Getting Started

1. Select a site that receives at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day
2. Clear any existing unwanted vegetation
3. Work a carbon-rich compost into your soil
4. Contour the soil to form mounds and swales, as this will help with rainwater infiltration
5. Add larger hardscape such as rocks and logs into the garden
6. Select grassland species which are suitable for your area and will provide different functions within the garden
7. Place your plants before planting and begin planting once you are happy with the desired layout
8. Add smaller hardscape such as gravel between your plants
9. Mulch well to reduce weed emergence and to enhance long-term soil fertility in your garden
10. Water well to settle the soil and ensure good contact with the roots of your newly-planted plants

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Maintaining your grassland

1. Limit soil disturbance

Soil disturbance enhances erosion and the emergence of weeds and other pioneer species. Lightly digging over your garden may be necessary at the start of the garden to relieve soil compaction however, following planting disturbance should be kept to a minimum.

2. Apply mulch

In conjunction with limiting soil disturbance, mulching enhances the activity of soil organisms which enhance soil aeration and nutrient cycling. Mulching enhances soil fertility by providing a food source to microbes which increase nutrient availability for plants as they facilitate the decay of mulched material. In addition, mulching reduces fluctuations in soil temperature, enhances rainwater infiltration, and reduces weed emergence.

3. Weed regularly

Regular weeding reduces the negative competition effects of weeds on your indigenous plants and reduces the production of new weed seeds.

4. Where possible, burn

Grassland species are adapted to fire. Fire promotes new growth in many grassland species, while burning dried plant residues increases the rate of mineralisation allowing plants to take up nutrients more easily from the soil. Where burning is not possible, such as in urban areas, grassland gardens can be mowed in winter with a brush cutter or grass whip to cut down dead material and facilitate new growth.

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Eucomis autumnalis

Eucomis autumnalis is a large, deciduous bulb indigenous to grasslands across most of South Africa.

The species is commonly called the pineapple lily due to the resemblance of the inflorescence to the fruit of a pineapple.

The bulb produces a rosette of large, fleshy leaves at the beginning of spring. The leaves have a tendency to flatten surrounding plants, an adaptation which allows this relatively short plant to survive amongst taller grassland species.

Height:	Up to 60cm in flower
Flowering:	Late summer
Flower colour:	Green, Cream, Yellow
Frost:	Frost hardy
Irrigation:	High tolerance in summer, moderate tolerance in winter
Soil type:	Sandy, Loam
Propagation:	Seeds, offsets, and leaf-cuttings
Difficulty:	Easy to grow
Conservation:	Least concern



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Aloe peglerae

Aloe peglerae is a small, stemless aloe species restricted to the crests and northern slopes of the Magaliesberg and Witwatersrand.

This species is well adapted to harsh conditions, growing in shallow, sandy soils on top of rock sheets. Like most aloes, it is an important food-source for nectar feeders in winter.

The species is under severe threat due to the illegal collection of mature specimens from the wild and should only be sourced from reputable growers.

Height:	Up to 60cm in flower
Flowering:	Winter
Flower colour:	Red to white bicolour
Frost:	Frost tolerant
Irrigation:	Moderate tolerance in summer, no tolerance in winter
Soil type:	Sandy
Propagation:	Seeds
Difficulty:	Difficult
Conservation:	Critically endangered



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