

# Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens



Photograph (above): John Gregurke

## Austral Stork's-bill

### *Pelargonium australe*

#### FAST FACTS

##### Groundcover

Family:	Geraniaceae
	Geranium
Size:	50cm H x 1m W
Position:	Sunny
Soil:	Well drained
Flowers:	Summer
Fruits:	Narrow capsules
Care:	Prune after flowering

An Australian native groundcover from the Ballarat area, **Austral Stork's-bill** (*Pelargonium australe*) is a quick-growing plant that will fill up a space about 1m wide and 50cm high over summer.

**Leaves:** Austral Stork's-bill has heart shaped leaves that are softly hairy and a lovely bright green tinged with red.

**Flowers:** It flowers in summer, with lots of 5-petalled white or pale pink flowers with dark veins radiating from the centre.

**Planting:** Austral Stork's-bill is quite tough and will grow really well in your garden if you plant it within a few days of purchase.

It likes a sunny position with good drainage. Plant it in a hole not much larger than the potting tube and give it a good ½ bucket of water as soon as you plant it.

Once it's settled in, Austral Stork's-bill doesn't like much water, so plant it where the roots won't stay wet for too long.

**Care:** During the hot summer months and after flowering, Austral Stork's-bill will start to look a bit straggly, so give it a prune by cutting off most of the older leaves and flower stems. You'll then notice that it has a lot of small fresh young leaves growing from its base. These will grow into a lovely small rounded mound quite quickly.

**Butterflies:** Some of our native butterflies enjoy feeding on these flowers, so consider leaving some flowers when pruning.