



national   
tree day  
**PLANET ARK**  **TOYOTA**

*Preschools*  
Guide

# national tree day

[treeday.planetark.org](http://treeday.planetark.org)

Each year, preschools' involvement in Planet Ark's Schools Tree Day has helped plant the seed of environmental consciousness from a young age. It is also a great way to accomplish Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) environmental and community outcomes. New connections with the community can be developed too, which is always a special and rewarding experience for the children too.

At Planet Ark we are constantly impressed and delighted to see the projects undertaken by preschools, kindergartens, and childcare centres to date, and congratulate you on your efforts. To make Tree Day even easier, we have built this Preschools Guide based on feedback we get each year. Some activities have already been implemented by existing preschools, and some are simply suggestions. We hope you enjoy crafting a rewarding experience.



**Paul Klymenko**  
Planet Ark, CEO

National Tree Day is organised by Planet Ark in partnership with Toyota Australia



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# ABOUT NATIONAL TREE DAY

Founded by Planet Ark in 1996, National Tree Day has become Australia's largest planting and nature care event. Each year hundreds of thousands of people plant around a million seedlings, bringing communities together to beautify neighbourhoods that are native wildlife friendly. As a concerted national initiative, the impact of everyone's combined efforts can become more visible to inspire more of us to enrich and in turn be enriched by our local environment.

## Why get involved?

- Achieve what the Early Years Learning Framework has described as a positive play space that invites “exploration, discovery and connection with nature.”
- Showcase your preschool's commitment to sustainability and the environment by being part of a national initiative that makes a difference.
- Get to know, and be known by, the local community – either your local council or a community group.
- Planet Ark and Toyota's research from the last two years has shown a myriad of benefits resulting from time in nature, including improved academic achievement, creativity, mental and physical health.

# GETTING STARTED

## Activities you can run as part of Schools Tree Day

There are a myriad of activities beyond planting events that you can register under Tree Day. Here are some ideas:

### Native Planting Event

Beautify your learning environment with a fun, hands on learning activity. Raise awareness about the importance of caring for nature. The event also helps children, parents and staff learn about our unique native species. In fact, your new native plants should attract native birds and other wildlife.

Consider planting in honour of a loved one – students may wish to dedicate their plant to a beloved friend, relative, or retired teacher.

Prioritise local native plants, which are perfectly suited to the local soil type and climate, making them easier and less resource-intensive to care for. To find plants native to your local area call your council or local Landcare group.

### Fund your Tree Day activity

Need plants and other resources? Contact your local landcare/bushcare group or council to see if they can support your activity. The National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000 may be able to help you find contacts in your area.

Many nurseries also have special offers for registered Tree Day events – find them at [tuesday.planetark.org/coords/resources.cfm](https://www.planetark.org/coords/resources.cfm)

### Get an expert in from the community

To help you care for our environment, it's good to seek expert advice from your local council



or bushcare group to arrange a presentation, demonstration or workshop about native plants and animals. It's also a great opportunity for the children to get any sticky questions answered, while fulfilling EYLF learning outcome 2 (Community Engagement). Call the National Tree Day hotline on 1300 88 5000 for help finding contacts in your area.

### **Bring native wildlife to the children**

Discover the wildlife that lives in your local natural spaces and what may return to the schools thanks to your planting project. **Find a mobile zoo** that can come to you, fully enclosed with native animals that are friendly and safe. Interacting with animals is a memorable way to encourage children to help build habitat through planting. It also helps develop an understanding among students about how one action impacts another, and how one tree affects more than just what you immediately see.

### **Growing nature-wise minds in the classroom**

If growing a garden is difficult due to technical reasons, your children can still learn about nature and how plants grow. Consider growing edible seedlings for children to take home and involve their family in a fun, beneficial and delicious project. You can combine the Tree Day message with recycling by growing seedlings in egg cartons or yogurt containers

Get involved in our **schools competition**.

Have each child make their own nature collage, made from things like fallen leaves, twigs etc, whilst also learning the names and tactile characteristics of various plants. Don't have enough leaves? Try leaf rubbings or leaf prints with paint.

If your outdoor play area has plants, get the kids go on a nature hunt while also learning new words. For example, get them to find something rough, smooth, a certain colour, with a berry, a seed, or something woody.

Try a tree-mendous yoga pose!

Choose seeds and plants that are easy to grow and care for, and keep in mind where they will likely end up (ie. sunny vs shady spot). Plants that have something distinctive about them can form particularly strong memories.

### **Get the parents involved**

Raise opportunity for further involvement and support, both physical and monetary, from children's parents. For example, have a 'Wear Green' day - invite children to wear a green item of clothing ie. ribbon, green tie etc to school to raise awareness with parents that your centre cares.

### **Integrate nature into song and story time**

Complement your Tree Day activity by bringing nature into the culture of your class. With songs, learning the names of native animals and plants is easy. Try:

#### **Songs:**

"The kookaburra song" by Marion Sinclair,  
"Feathers, fur or fins" album, by Don Spencer  
Jambu Tree Kids  
"Home amongst the gum trees."

#### **Books about trees**

*This Tree, 1, 2, 3.* By Alison Formento.  
*In My Tree.* By Sara Gillingham and Lorena Siminovich.  
*This Tree Counts!* By Alison Formento.  
*Last Tree.* By Mark Wilson. (Set in Victoria and about a eucalyptus tree).  
*The Magnificent Tree.* By Nick Bland.  
*Last Tree in the City.* By Peter Carnavas. **(E-version available for free)**  
*The Curious Garden.* By Peter Brown.  
*The Tiny Seed.* By Eric Carle.  
*Tess's Tree.* By Jess Brallier.



### Books about Australian animals

Diary of a wombat. By Jackie French.

### Books about Indigenous Australia

*The Naked Boy and the Crocodile.* By Andy Griffiths.

*Kangaroos Hop.* By Ros Moriarty.

*Ten Scared Fish.* By Ros Moriarty.

(The sale of the above two books raises money for the Indi Kindi program, which supports literacy for Indigenous children.)

*Ernie dances to the didgeridoo.* By Alison Lester.

### Interactive rhymes

Enliven your favourite nature poems and nursery rhymes with puppets, accompanying “choreography” to assist in the learning of new words, or props if you can find them. If you have trouble finding some good poems, or if some are too long, try extracts instead, or edit a well known poem like we’ve done below!

#### Weary Will

The strongest creature for his size  
But least equipped for combat  
That dwells beneath Australian skies  
Is Weary Will the Wombat.

He digs his homestead underground,  
He’s neither shrewd nor clever;  
For kangaroos can leap and bound  
But wombats dig forever.

The boundary rider’s netting fence  
Excites his irritation;  
It is to his untutored sense  
His pet abomination.

And when to pass it he desires,  
Upon his task he’ll centre  
And dig a hole beneath the wires  
Through which the dingoes enter.

And when to block the hole they strain  
With logs and stones and rubble,  
Bill Wombat digs it out again  
Without the slightest trouble.

The boundary rider bows to fate,  
Admits he’s made a blunder  
And rigs a little swinging gate  
To let Bill Wombat under.

So most contentedly he goes  
Between his haunt and burrow:  
He does the only thing he knows,  
And does it very thorough.

From the book, *The Animals Noah Forgot.* By A. B. Patterson.

#### I’m a watering can

I’m a watering can  
Short and stout,  
Here is my handle, here is my spout,  
Help my plants all grow up,  
From a sprout,  
Tip me over pour me out!

#### Christmas where the gum trees grow

Christmas where the gum trees grow, there is no  
frost and there is no snow,  
Christmas in Australia’s hot,  
cold and frosty’s what it’s not,  
when the bloom of the jacaranda tree is here,  
Christmas time is near

Extract from poem by Lesley Sabogal.

#### Spring awakening

Spring is the magical time  
When the rainbow lorikeets hum  
and the honey suckles blossom,  
When I actively bounce down the sand dunes  
And onto the pea green grass,  
The waratahs and the wattles bloom,  
And my heart opens to the riot of spring.  
I love this time when everything comes to life,  
Nature triumphs in the trees, swaying freely in the  
wind,  
Stealing my train of thought  
And making my imagination run wild.

Extract from poem by Lily Baker.



# 6 easy steps to get your preschool running an official Tree Day activity:

- 1. Nominate a teacher or parent to oversee the day.** If a parent is nominated, please ensure that the contact details provided to Planet Ark are for the parent, not the school.
- 2. Pick a spot for students to plant in or rejuvenate.**
- 3. Pick a day.** You can run your activity on any day that suits, however officially, Schools Tree Day is held on the last Friday of July. Planet Ark has arranged insurance coverage all year round should you need it.
- 4. Tell us!** When the details of your Schools Tree Day activity are confirmed, **register** it online or ring 1300 88 5000. You'll then be eligible to enter our Schools Competition, be counted part of the national results, and be covered by our insurance. Registered schools only need a roll call to be **insured** for Tree Day activities. We'll send you an official poster and the forms you need, or you can download them yourself. If you do want your poster in the mail, we just need ten days notice.
- 5. Prepare for your big day.** Allocate someone to show your little ones **how to plant** and make sure they are comfortable before you leave them to plant on their own.

## Checklist:

- Native seedlings
- Mulch to reduce competition from weeds and prevents loss of moisture from the soil,

reducing watering needs

- Trowels or small shovels
  - Gardening gloves
  - Wheelbarrows for transporting seedlings, equipment and mulch
  - Tree guards or used milk cartons to protect seedlings
  - Access to a water source
  - Either a hose, watering cans or buckets for watering
  - Rubbish bins or bags to keep the site clean
  - Copies of the 'Accident/Incident Report Form' just in case (these are part of your online toolkit you will download upon registering)
- 6. Be counted.** Tell us what you achieved on the day, by logging your results online or ringing us on 1300 88 5000. Show us snaps from your day by posting them to **our facebook page**.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: Tillys Play and Development Centre

“Over the past month we have been creating an environmental mural in our class room focusing on recycling, conservation, sustainability and natural ecosystems and the impacts human activity has on our environment. To finish off our classroom mural we actively engaged in Fridays National Tree Day on the 27th of July. As the site coordinator, I must say, it was the most rewarding and satisfying day I have had the pleasure to contribute to and participate in. We had so much community support, from local



businesses donating native shrubs and trees for our school grounds, and working in partnerships with the families from the Centre that volunteer to assist the children and educators, the day was so successful. After that we all picked up a shovel and began digging! It definitely empowered the children to make a difference and to be resourceful!

The children expressed so much interest into Tree planting, I have planned a whole NEW project looking at seedling cycles and Australian Native Flora and Fauna. The children worked as a team, getting their hands dirty, even naming one of the worms they found "JOE"! I'm so excited in watching the children embark on another journey, maintaining their new trees and shrubs with care, nurture and respect!" - *Courtney Glazebrook, Childcare Educator at Tillys Play and Development Centre in Muswellbrook*



## Stay in touch

National Tree Day Hotline:

**1300 88 5000**

National Tree Day Website:

<http://treeday.planetark.org>

Contact Email:

[treeday@planetark.org](mailto:treeday@planetark.org)

Mailing Address:

**Level 3, 15-17 Young St, Sydney 2000**

Facebook Community:

<http://www.facebook.com/NationalTreeDay>

## Preschools resources available online:

In your **organiser's toolkit** to download after registering:

- Adaptable A3 Poster
- General A3 Poster
- Photo Release Form
- Accident/Incident Form
- Results Form
- Adaptable media release

Elsewhere on the website:

- Preschools Activity Guide

**How to Plant a Tree Poster**

**How to Plant a Tree Video with Ranger Stacey**

**Lesson Plans**

**Colouring and activity sheets**

Free download of "**Last Tree in the City**"

