

**National
TreeDay®**
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Schools Getting Started Guide



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



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All About National Tree Day

This guide is aimed at assisting in planning schools Tree Day sites. For a guide to planning council Tree Day sites or community Tree Day sites, visit the National Tree Day website at <http://treeday.planetark.org>.

What is National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day?

National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day, proudly sponsored by Toyota, make up Australia's biggest community tree-planting and nature protection event. Co-founded by Olivia Newton-John and Planet Ark in 1996, these days have become landmark events nation-wide. Each year, 2500 schools participate in Schools Tree Day, showing their ongoing interest and care for the local environment.

National Tree Day is a "call to action" to all Australians to get involved in volunteering to help protect and care for their local environment. Many volunteers are encouraged by the fact that National Tree Day is a national event. By joining together with the rest of the country, the volunteers are able to measure the significant environmental impact of all their combined efforts across Australia.

The theme for National Tree Day 2010 is "life is better with trees" - a reminder of the many ways that life really is better with trees.

Why should your school get involved?

Schools Tree Day is a fun way to learn! It offers an opportunity to:

- achieve learning outcomes in the key areas of studies of Society & Environment and Science. Tree Day has also been incorporated into Art, Poetry, Maths, English, Communication, Horticulture, Technology (woodwork) and Work & Community

(life skills) studies. Planet Ark provide a range of teachers resources that can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>

- beautify your school
- develop your school environmental management plan (SEMP)
- connect with the local community – either within your school or for the school students to assist on a community environmental project
- be part of a national environmental activity and really make a difference!

Getting Started

Schools Tree Day – choosing a date

In 2010, Schools Tree Day will be held on Friday 30th July. We understand that this date may not suit every school because of prior commitments or weather conditions. If this is the case, register your site on a date where as many student volunteers can get involved, or alternatively hold several tree days so that each grade can participate in the event. Planet Ark has arranged volunteer insurance coverage all year round to enable planting at convenience to both your environment and your school.

Whenever you hold your Schools Tree Day event, you still need to **register** your site with us to be covered by our insurance and to be part of the national tally. This can be done via our **website** or by calling the National Tree Day Hotline at 1300 88 5000.

Other activities

Schools Tree Day isn't just about planting trees – there are many activities that you can get involved in that support your environmental education program in a fun and dynamic way. Other activities include:



Lesson plans and learning activities

Planet Ark have developed curriculum-based lesson plans that teachers can download from <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>. These resources are designed to educate students about endangered ecosystems, biodiversity, different landcare methods and more!

For schools that would like to engage in an extended learning program, have a look at Planet Ark's 'Earth Alive' biodiversity program which fits the national curriculum. It is a 9-11 week in-depth biodiversity investigation for Stage 3 students and can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.

Environmental factsheets can also be downloaded from <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.

Presentation from rangers and other bushcare members

Organise a ranger or bushcare member to give a presentation at your school to teach students about local wildlife and environmental care. They're likely to do it free of charge and usually have very insightful and unusual knowledge about the local area. Alternatively, a ranger or bushcare member could guide you and your students around a local park or bush reserve. This provides students with a hands-on, interactive experience with nature that will be distinct and memorable.

Start a Tree Troopers program

Some schools have arranged a Tree Troopers program with their local council. This involves having a small group of students and a teacher attend a training session, run by a qualified environmentalist who is provided by the council. The session is designed to educate young people about the process involved in planting native trees and how to ensure its survival. The students then return to their school equipped with tree-planting knowledge and expertise which they can now share with their fellow students.

These are just a few ideas. There is a whole range of activities that you could set up to celebrate

Schools Tree Day. Use your imagination! There are many fun and interactive activities you can engage in to educate your pupils about the environment.

For more ideas, check out our Schools National Tree Day Activities Guide, found at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.

Planning Your Schools Tree Day Activity

7 easy steps to get your school involved:

- 1. Nominate a teacher or parent who is willing to oversee preparation for the day.** This can be a K-6 teacher or a Year 7-12 teacher of Science, Geography, PD/H/PE or Design and Technology.
- 2. Pick a spot for students to plant trees.** This can be at the school or in the local community. Perhaps there is an existing revegetation program that your school could get involved with? Talk to your local council or environment group. For help with local contacts, call the National Tree Day Hotline at **1300 88 5000**.
- 3. Pick a day to plant your trees.** Your school may want to hold a tree planting event on a day other than Schools Tree Day or National Tree Day – or maybe even register sites for a number of days!

This year, Planet Ark has arranged public liability and volunteer insurance cover for all participants in any National Tree Day activity throughout the year.

For schools, all you need is a roll call and you and your students will be insured in any Tree Day activity you choose. For more specific details about insurance for schools, visit <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.



4. Register your school for Tree Day. There are 3 easy ways to register:

- a. Register online at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords> and save paper!
- b. Send us a School Site Registration Form (downloadable from our [website](#))
- c. Register over the phone by calling 1300 88 5000

Once you've registered, Planet Ark will be able to send you support materials for your Tree Day. It also means that we can keep a record of your efforts and results to be included in state and national totals.

5. Structure the experience around a simple lesson on trees:

- a. By planting native trees and shrubs, students help provide food and shelter for local native wildlife.
- b. Students can find out if they can help to solve any particular environmental problems in their local area by planting native species.
- c. Download Planet Ark's curriculum-based lesson plans at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools> to educate students about endangered ecosystems, biodiversity, different landcare methods and more!
- d. Students can engage in an extended learning program such as 'Earth Alive'. This Stage 3 program is a thorough, hands-on biodiversity investigation that helps students understand how to preserve the environment during a term period.
- e. Students can plant native trees to offset the yearly carbon dioxide emissions produced by their family car. 17 native trees, over a 30 year lifetime, can offset the emissions produced by an average year of car use (for details, visit the [Greenfleet](#) website), or this same amount can be offset within one year by planting 200 native trees (for details, visit the [TreeSmart](#) website).
- f. Students can plant a tree to honour a beloved friend or relative, a retired teacher

or former pupil – or even to celebrate the birth of a new family member.

6. Ask the local community for assistance.

Your local community nursery, Council Tree Officer, [Bushcare](#) or [Landcare](#) group may be able to help by supplying native seedlings or seeds. Perhaps they can also provide buckets and shovels for the day or help with preparing the site and maintenance? Your local Lions or Rotary club may help by providing a sausage or veggieburger sizzle on the day!

Please be sure to get in touch with your local council or other group as early as possible, especially when ordering plants are concerned, to avoid disappointment.

Still not sure where to find plants? Our National Tree Day Hotline on **1300 88 5000** can advise on local contacts in your area or visit <http://treeday.planetark.org> for links on who can help you.

7. Gather what you need on the day.

Remember to allocate someone to conduct planting demonstrations for your students. Show your young volunteers how to plant trees, shrubs or grasses and make sure they are comfortable with this before you leave them to plant on their own. It is vital that you do this to help the plants survive. Planet Ark's poster "How to Plant a Tree" can be a useful resource to have at your site. This can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>

Here is a list of essential tools you will need at the site:

- Native trees, shrubs or grass seedlings
- Mulch - very important! Mulch helps to reduce competition from weeds and prevents loss of moisture from the soil.
- Trowels or small shovels
- Gardening gloves
- Wheelbarrows for transporting seedlings, equipment and mulch
- Stakes and tree guards or used milk cartons to protect seedlings
- Access to a water source



- Garden hoses, watering cans or buckets for watering
- Rubbish bins or bags to keep the site clean
- Copies of the 'Accident/Incident Report Form'
- Risk Assessment documentation (this is to minimise the chance of any accidents or incidents occurring – download our guidelines at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords>)
- 'Results Registration Form' to help Planet Ark count the number of trees planted and volunteers at your site (this can also be completed [online](#))

All forms are available at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords> or by calling the National Tree Day Hotline at 1300 88 5000.

Forms

(all forms can be downloaded from our [website](#))

Volunteer Registration form

These are only necessary if you have people other than your students at the Tree Day site. Anyone who isn't on the class roll needs to fill in a Volunteer Registration form before planting so that they are covered by Planet Ark's Volunteer and Public Liability insurance. Children on the class roll will automatically be covered.

Photo-release form

So that we can share your Tree Day photos with the world! You can upload photos to our Tree Day photo gallery by logging in and going to the coordinator page at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords>.

Results form

Make your efforts count and let us know your results from the day! You can also enter your results online by logging in at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords>, or over the phone by calling the Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000.

Stories to inspire you

Carlton Primary School, Victoria

Environmental education at Carlton Primary School, Victoria, plays a vital role in the development of both its students and the community. The school lies in the heart of Carlton, its large school grounds providing valuable space in a highly urbanised area with limited parklands. The trees that they plant each year not only serve themselves, but the community as well.

With the support of the council and several green groups, Carlton Primary has implemented many environmental education programs that are now in-built into the school curriculum. Supported by the City of Melbourne, students have grown a kitchen garden where fruit and vegetables ripen to be used in the school's commercial kitchen. This promotes healthy eating and awareness about what children are putting in their mouths and where it has come from.

Each Schools Tree Day, students continue to cultivate and add to this urban forest. Most students do not have a garden of their own at home, many living in high-rise flats. Activities such as Tree Day offer them an opportunity to engage with the natural environment and the community.

They have garnered funding from the Carlton Rotary Club, the University of Melbourne, green groups and the local council for their many green projects. Community support, material, physical and monetary, have led to the development of rain gardens and different wildlife returning to the urban area. Considering this inner-city area has limited space for the growth of plantlife, Carlton



Primary provides the community with a welcomed space that beautifies and softens their local area.

Clissold Reserve, New South Wales

At Clissold Reserve, the combined efforts of a school, council and bushcare group have led to encouraging steps towards the renewal of the endangered Shail/Sandstone Forest. This long-term project has helped educate the community about the importance of protecting the environment in an ongoing commitment that extends beyond National Tree Day.

In 2005, Penrith City Council and the Emu Heights Bushcare Group held their first National Tree Day event at the Reserve with great success. In the following year, Emu Heights Public School students were invited to assist in the planting and have continued their contributions each year since then on Schools Tree Day. The students show a deep enthusiasm for their efforts, visiting their trees often and photographing their growth and development. Their school lies adjacent to the reserve so is easily accessible for ongoing maintenance of the land.

So far, 11 different native species are now growing where once there were few struggling to survive. In the before and after photographs taken by site coordinator, Janet Rannard, from Penrith City Council, the grounds used to be bare, covered in dry ground cover and bark. In 2009, shrubs, trees and wildlife have returned to this part of the forest with volunteers helping water and maintain the land throughout the year. Educating students about the vital role they have in serving the environment has led to more volunteering from older siblings and parents.

The Schools Tree Day event at the Reserve has become an established date on the

calendar, as the Shail/Sandstone Forest still needs much care and revegetation. There have been astounding success rates in growth and vitality because all volunteers, young and old, were tutored properly about the correct methods in nurturing this environment.

Bertram Primary School, Western Australia

Opening in 2007, Bertram Primary School has encouraged sustainability initiatives from the get-go. Located in Bertram, south of Perth, Schools Tree Day is one of many programs established to educate its students about living environmentally-aware lives.

The school has been certified as a WasteWise school, with the Garden Flies student group making sure recycling, composting and garden activities are all taken care of on the school site. Students grow their own organic fruit and vegetables in the school's garden. When ripened, this fresh produce is used in cooking classes to promote healthy living and sustainable practices.

In their first year as Tree Day participants, Bertram Primary joined 11 other schools in a community planting event at the Baldivis Children's Forest. The project initially began as a single Schools Tree Day in 2000 but has since grown to a year-round project with enough corporate funding to employ two part time staff. Fifty students from Bertram Primary contributed to these efforts in 2008 by planting 150 trees and 120 shrubs and groundcover.

In 2009, they ran their own Tree Day event on school grounds. Their aim was to revegetate the swale, pulling out all unwanted weeds and planting native trees to beautify and manage the area. Members



from Conservation Volunteers Australia were on hand to provide expert advice and assistance in the preparation of the planting area, removing weeds and also educated students about how to maintain the site in the future. With their combined efforts, over 1700 native seedlings were planted to help revitalise the wetlands site.

To find out more about what other schools have done, visit <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.

National Tree Day Contact Details

National Tree Day Hotline: 1300 88 5000

National Tree Day Website: <http://treeday.planetark.org>

Contact Email: treeday@planetark.org

Mailing Address: Level 2, 15-17 Young St, Sydney 2000

Resources Provided by Planet Ark

1. Schools National Tree Day Getting Started Guide
2. Schools National Tree Day Activities Guide
3. Adaptable Media Release
4. Adaptable A3 Poster
5. General A3 Poster
6. How to Plant a Tree Poster
7. How to Plant a Tree Video with Ranger Stacey
8. Lesson Plans
9. Environmental Factsheets
10. 'Earth Alive' Biodiversity Program
11. Photo Release Form
12. Accident/Incident Form
13. Results Form

