

# Schools Getting Started Guide



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



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# ALL ABOUT NATIONAL TREE DAY

This guide is aimed at assisting in planning schools Tree Day activities. For a guide to planning council Tree Day activities or community Tree Day activities, 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 nature protection event. Co-founded by Olivia Newton-John and Planet Ark in 1996, these days have become landmark events nationwide. Since its conception, more than 2.8 million volunteers have planted over 17 million native trees and shrubs and restored many thousands of hectares of unique Australian landscape to enable local native plants & animals to flourish

National Tree Day is a "call to action" to all Australians to get involved in volunteering to help protect and preserve their local environment. Many volunteers are encouraged by the fact that 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.

In 2012, the National Tree Day campaign will focus on the importance of connecting with nature for kids' health, wellbeing and development.

## Why should your school get involved?

Each year approximately 2500 schools participate in Schools Tree Day. 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 provides a range of teachers resources that can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/teachers>.

- Beautify your school
- Develop your school environmental management plan (SEMP)
- Connect with the local community – either within your school or by providing assistance on a community environmental project
- Be part of a national environmental activity and really make a difference!
- Get your students outside connecting with nature.

# GETTING STARTED

## Schools Tree Day – choosing a date

In 2012, Schools Tree Day will be held on Friday 27 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 activity with us to be covered by our insurance and to be part of the national tally. This can be done via our **website** at <http://treeday.planetark.org> or by calling the National Tree Day Hotline at **1300 88 5000**.



## Other activities

Schools Tree Day isn't just about planting trees – you can still register a Tree Day event if you're participating in activities that support your environmental education program but not holding a planting session. Other activities include:

### Lesson plans and learning activities

Planet Ark have developed curriculum-based lesson plans that teachers can download from the **National Tree Day website** at <http://treeday.planetark.org/teachers>. 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 to 11 week in-depth biodiversity investigation for Stage 3 students and can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/teachers/lesson-plans.cfm>.

Environmental factsheets can also be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/information/factsheets.cfm>.

### Presentations 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 plants that are indigenous to the area. They're likely to do it free of charge and usually have very insightful 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 their survival. The students then return to their school equipped with 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 Activity Guide, found at <http://treeday.planetark.org/schools>.**

# PLANNING A SCHOOLS TREE DAY PLANTING OR REJUVENATION 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. 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 or rejuvenate.** 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.** Your school may want to hold a Tree Day activity on a day other than Schools Tree Day or National Tree Day – or maybe even register activities for a number of days. Where possible, please call the National Tree Day Hotline on **1300 88 5000** if there are any changes to your Tree Day activity date. You can also login to <http://treeday.planetark.org> to make these changes yourself.

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/insurance>.

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

- Register online at <http://treeday.planetark.org/join> and save paper!
- Send us a School Site Registration Form (downloadable from our [website](http://treeday.planetark.org/coords/coord-forms.cfm) at <http://treeday.planetark.org/coords/coord-forms.cfm>)
- 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 activity. It also means that we can keep a record of your efforts and results to be included in state and national totals.

Please note: If you register your event less than 10 days before the actual day, we will not be able to send you support materials in time for your event.

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

- By planting native trees and shrubs, students help provide food and shelter for local native wildlife.
- Students can find out if they can help to solve any particular environmental problems in their local area by planting native species.
- Download Planet Ark's curriculum-based lesson plans at <http://treeday.planetark.org/teachers> to educate students about endangered ecosystems, biodiversity, different landcare methods and more!
- 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. This can be downloaded at <http://treeday.planetark.org/teachers/lesson-plans.cfm>
- 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).
- 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. Some may even be able to provide buckets and shovels for the day or help with preparing the site and maintenance.

**Please be sure to get in touch with your local council or support group as early as possible**, especially when ordering plants is 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/coords/resources.cfm> and check the Offers of Help page. Note: you must be logged in as a Coordinator to view contact details for nurseries and other organisations making offers of help.

Planet Ark recommends that you only plant local natives. Local natives are perfectly suited to the local soil type and climate, and they're also great for wildlife. To find plants native to your local area call your council or Planet Arks hotline **1300 88 5000**.

## 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/coords/posters-brochures.cfm>

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/coord-forms.cfm>)
- '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/coord-forms.cfm> 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. A copy of this completed form must be returned to Planet Ark. 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

## **Schools Tree Day Case Study – Bert Oldfield Public School, NSW**

Bert Oldfield Public School, named after the famous Australian wicket keeper, has been showing they care about much more than just sport. This school in Seven Hills, NSW has been consistently making efforts to reduce the damage incurred by land clearing, grazing and drought. Since 2002, its students and teachers have not only been doing their part in the preservation of the threatened Cumberland Plain Woodlands in Greater Western Sydney but also transforming their expansive school grounds into a native wildlife paradise.

The Cumberland Plain Woodlands have been listed as an endangered ecological community, its survival threatened by clearance for agriculture, housing, and dumped refuse or sewer discharge. Bert Oldfield Public School seeks to establish an awareness of the environment in its children, with hopes that it will spread to the rest of the human community.

The school has always had an interest in the environment and beautifying the school grounds. In 2002, they applied for a grant from Blacktown City Council as part of the Community Environment Support Program. The grant for \$2,748 was approved to establish a Permaculture Garden in the school grounds, consisting of three large vegetable beds, a lizard garden, composting bins, fruit trees, a tyre bed for herbs, and flowering shrubs that attract bees and butterflies all year around. The school's garden club, The Grub Club,

maintain these aspects of their school, which include the trees planted on Schools Tree Day.

For Schools Tree Day 2010, Bert Oldfield Primary had a great day of planting despite the cold weather and rain. They planted 40 new native trees in the school's Cumberland Forest reservation corridor with a wide range of gardening tools kindly donated by a local business.

In 2010, staff from Planet Ark were lucky enough to take a tour of the school and view their outdoor classroom and all the beautiful gardens. An environmental mural had also been designed for the students, illustrating all their hopes and dreams for a sustainable future.

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

**Mailing Address:** Level 3, 15-17 Young St,  
Sydney NSW 2000

**Facebook Page:**  
[www.facebook.com/NationalTreeDay](http://www.facebook.com/NationalTreeDay)



# RESOURCES PROVIDED BY PLANET ARK

1. Schools National Tree Day Getting Started Guide
2. Schools National Tree Day Activity 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
14. Colouring and activity sheets

