



national  
tree day

PLANET ARK TOYOTA

Workplace  
Activity Guide

# Workplace Activity Guide

Planet Ark's National Tree Day and Schools Tree Day combine to make Australia's biggest community tree planting and nature care event. Thousands of committed individuals, families and groups return year after year to participate in Tree Day – a testament to the genuine appeal of the day.

Businesses, government departments and other workplaces play a central role in National Tree Day. Every year, many workplaces run their own National Tree Day events and activities, while many more provide valuable financial and in-kind support to Tree Day events run by schools, environment and community groups, and other groups across the country. National Tree Day makes a great team-building event for staff and acts as an entry point for greater community involvement and environmental awareness.

This Workplace Activity Guide outlines a range of activities that have already been implemented by some workplaces, as well as ideas for other Tree Day activities and ways that workplaces can make their activity dynamic and engaging. Your workplace may choose to run one activity on or close to Tree Day, or run a series of activities in the lead up to Tree Day to build momentum and interest among staff.

Planet Ark would like to thank the workplaces, large and small, that have contributed to the success of National Tree Day over the years.



**Paul Klymenko**  
**Planet Ark CEO**

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



# National Tree Day – The Value of Nature

Research released by Planet Ark in the run up to National Tree Day 2014 clearly demonstrates both the value and the benefits of bringing nature into the workplace.

The findings of the research show that:

- Australians would be willing to give up an average of \$3,674\* pay to be able to work in a place with regular contact with nature.
- 28% of workers can't see any natural elements from their workspace including windows to the outside, indoor plants, or the nature-inspired artworks.
- Having plants in the workplace: helps workers recover from stress and tiredness more quickly; reduces the presence of VOCs and airborne bacteria; and increases productivity and creativity.

These findings are just some of the reasons to bring nature to work.

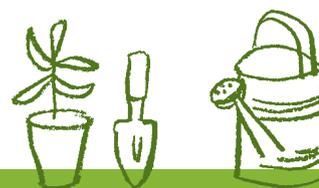
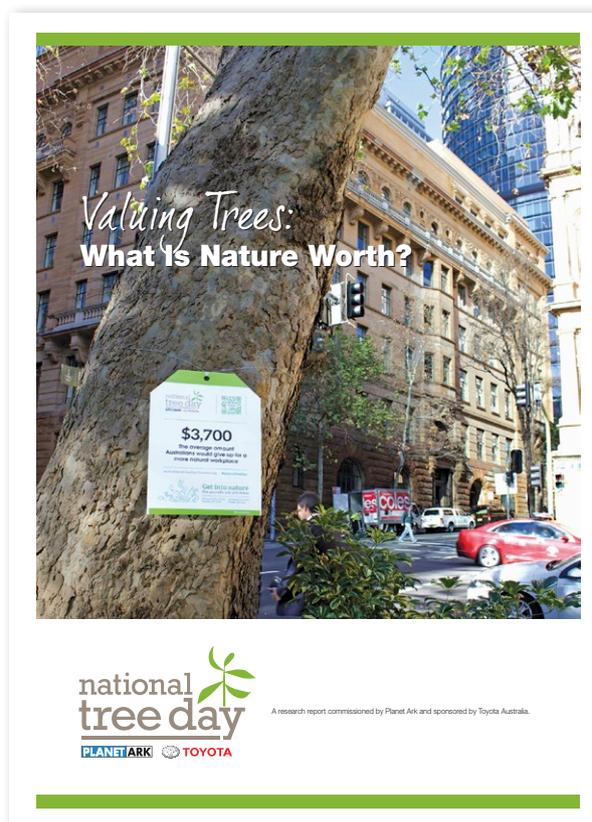
There are many ways to get involved in National Tree Day at the workplace. Get outside and plant some trees, hold a green morning tea or host a plant giveaway. Outlined below are some of the ideas.

Once you decide on what to do make sure you register your activity with Planet Ark so that your achievements are added to the national totals.

## View the Research

The research report titled **Valuing Trees – What is Nature Worth?**, provides more information and findings.

[TreeDay.PlanetArk.org/research](http://TreeDay.PlanetArk.org/research)



# National Tree Day Workplace Activities

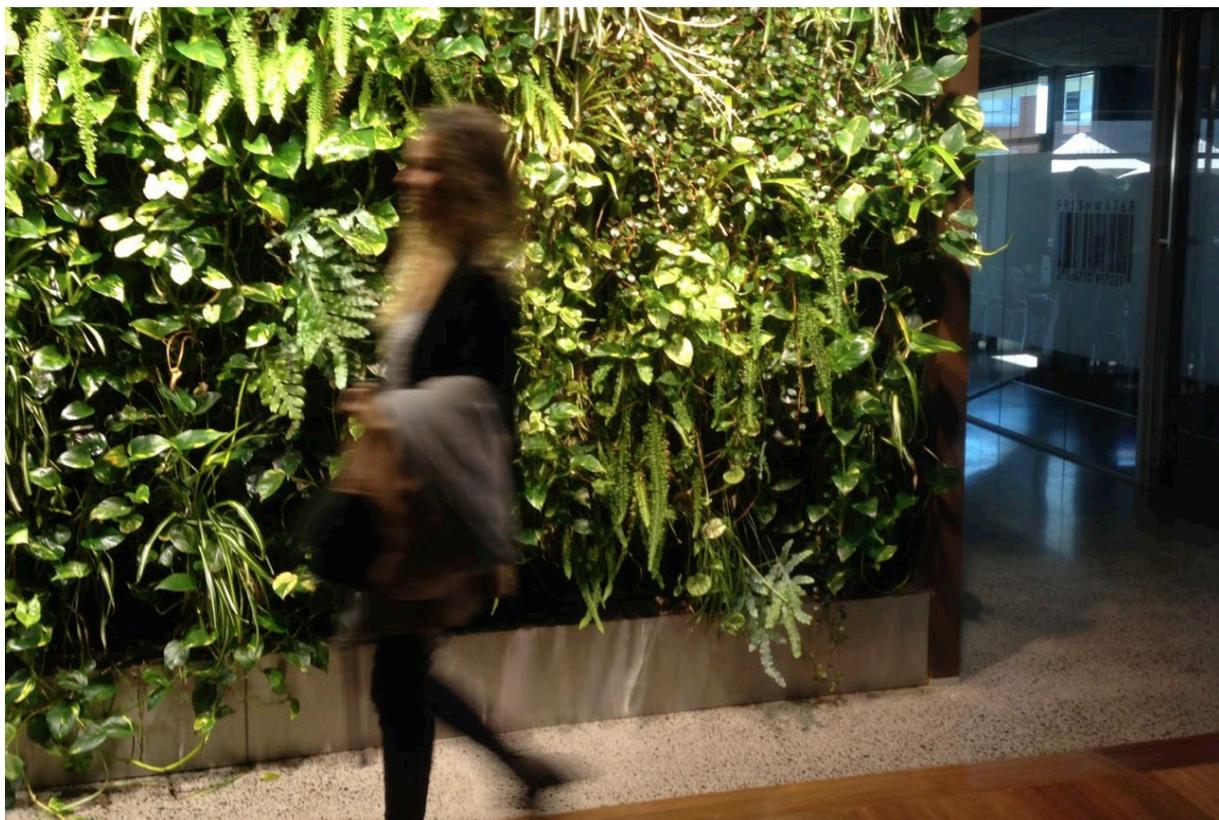
Activity	Bring nature indoors for Tree Day
<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor plants and other nature-based elements have a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits in the workplace. Among many other benefits they:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ help workers recover from stress and tiredness more quickly;</li> <li>→ reduce the presence of VOCs and air-bourn bacteria and improve air quality; and</li> <li>→ increase productivity and creativity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Holding a Tree Day event can help kick off a more permanent introduction of nature to the workplace.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Considerations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up a native plant display where staff (and customers) can see and interact with it.</li> <li>Hold a nature-themed art display with photos, painting or sculptures.</li> <li>Create a temporary indoor forest with hired plants.</li> <li>Invite a knowledgeable staff member or expert to provide a nature-themed presentation or workshop like worm farming, composting, tree planting, or garden maintenance. Councils often have waste education officers that may be able to provide workshops.</li> <li>Do a plant give away. You could give plants designed for people to take home or desk and office plants. It's an idea to ask people to register to receive one, that way you'll know they are likely to look after them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workplace Comments</b></p>	<p>"The Green Team holds a fundraising mufti day to celebrate World Environment Day in June. They collect a gold coin from each participant which is used to fund a bus to take the planters to a (Tree Day) site."</p>



Composting and worm farming workshops are a great way to get staff interested in sustainable living. Photo courtesy of City of Sydney.



Activity	Bring nature indoors permanently
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor plants and other nature-based elements have a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits in the workplace.</li> <li>• Making nature a part of your everyday workplace set up brings these benefits year-round.</li> </ul>
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy or lease plants and have them located around your workplace including on desks, in the meeting and lunchroom and in other shared spaces. Three floor standing pot plants or 6 desk plants will help clear the air in a 10-12 square metre area.</li> <li>• Encourage staff to bring their own plants from home (make sure they can survive in doors).</li> <li>• Install a vertical garden or water feature.</li> <li>• Hang paintings, photos or other nature inspired artwork. Maybe, ask staff to provide their own nature-based images (holiday snaps are a great option).</li> <li>• Re-arrange desks or offices so that people can see the outside world from their workstation. (<a href="#">Research shows</a> workers are more productive when they can see outside.)</li> </ul>



Vertical gardens are a great way to bring the benefits of nature indoors.



<b>Activity</b>	<b>Get outside into nature</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Getting outside is a positive way to restore concentration, and relieve fatigue (especially eye fatigue from looking at a screen).</li> <li>Being outside helps to break down barriers created by offices and separate floors.</li> </ul>
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host a Tree Day social event like a lunch or morning or afternoon tea out in the garden or at a park.</li> <li>Hold an outdoor staff meeting in the garden or park.</li> <li>Do a make over of an outdoor space to make in a comfortable and attractive place for breaks. Add plants, picnic table and shade.</li> <li>Set the space up so staff can work from there by extending the WiFi range and making tables comfortable to work from.</li> </ul>



The Tree People at Toyota's National Tree Day Garden Party

## Connecting Indoor and Outdoor



Green spaces help create a link between the indoors and outdoors and make workplaces more welcoming and productive.



Activity	Raise funds for National Tree Day
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship and support for a national, community-driven initiative.</li> <li>• Engages staff (or customers) in a community -driven activity.</li> <li>• Helps Planet Ark continue to grow National Tree Day.</li> </ul>
<b>Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise a morning or afternoon tea inviting staff to bring along tree or nature-themed goodies (green cup cakes anyone?) and sell the items or make a donation.</li> <li>• Hold a green mufti day – ask staff to wear green clothing or accessories to work and make a donation.</li> <li>• Run a raffle for with tree or green themed prizes (eg a weekend at an eco resort, a framed tree photo or painting, a gift voucher from a nursery).</li> <li>• Organise lunchtime or after-work screenings of “eco films” or documentaries and charge an entry fee.</li> <li>• Hold a native plant sale for staff and customers.</li> <li>• If you have a workplace giving program, consider adding Planet Ark to the list of community organisations your staff can support.</li> <li>• Donations can be made though the <a href="#">Planet Ark website</a> and we’d love you to <a href="#">send us photos or stories</a> from your activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Workplace Comments</b>	<p>“The Green Team holds a fundraising mufti day to celebrate World Environment Day in June. They collect a gold coin from each participant which is used to fund a bus to take the planters to a (Tree Day) site.”</p>



National Tree Day helps bring the value of nature to work, home and school.



Activity	Volunteer at a local Tree Day site
<p><b>Outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates links with the local community.</li> <li>• Demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship and supporting community-driven initiatives.</li> <li>• Provides staff with a fun team-building activity outside the office.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Considerations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As most public Tree Day sites happen on the weekend it may not be easy to find an established one near you. You could talk to your local <a href="#">Landcare</a>, <a href="#">Greening Australia</a> or <a href="#">Conservation Volunteers</a> group or council to see if you can participate in or co-host a planting site with them. (It's important to note that most of these groups are volunteer and/or not for profit but there are resource implication for them in hosting a site and they will likely need to charge a per person rate to cover those costs.)</li> <li>• A school, either one in the area or one attended by a child of a staff member, might need assistance with their site.</li> <li>• For more information or to search for a site within reach of your office/s through the Find a Site page on the <a href="#">Tree Day website</a> - or call the Tree Day hotline on 1300 88 5000.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workplace Comments</b></p>	<p>“Volunteering at the local school’s Tree Day site “is an ideal way for team members to give something back to the community. The team enjoys helping out our local school and getting their hands dirty.” Bunnings Team</p>



Bunnings Warehouse Mornington regularly supports Mornington Park Primary School in its Tree Day activities.



Activity	Run your own Tree Day site
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides staff with a positive team-building activity.</li> <li>• Connects staff with nature.</li> <li>• Provides a permanent location for staff to get outside.</li> </ul>
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To run your own site you need to have control over a piece of land that you can plant on.</li> <li>• You'll need to purchase or access suitable plants that will thrive in the location and are preferably natives. Nurseries or Landcare groups may be able to assist you in choosing plants, establishing the site or securing equipment.</li> <li>• To find out more about what's involved in organising and promoting your own site, download the <a href="#">Tree Day Getting Started Guide</a>. This guide was written for public sites but much of the information is also relevant to private sites (see next point for an explanation of these terms).</li> <li>• Make sure you <a href="#">register your event with Planet Ark</a> so your achievements can be added to the national totals.</li> </ul>



Create an attractive space to encourage staff to get outside.



## CASE STUDY - COLONIAL FIRST STATE

Colonial First State has been helping Australians with their investment needs since 1988 and is one of Australian's most respected fund managers.

The company views National Tree Day as a fun way to engage staff in its broader sustainability goals.

Over the years Colonial First State's Sustainability Working Group has developed a number of staff engagement activities in support of National Tree Day including:

- Offering free native plants to staff. The team purchased plants from a native nursery and asked staff to register to "adopt a tree", plant it at home and look after it. Around 350 staff signed up for the initiative.
- Hosting a Tree Day breakfast.
- Holding a raffle for staff, with proceeds donated to Planet Ark. Prizes included gift vouchers and kitchen equipment.



Colonial First State  
native plant giveaway.

## National Tree Day Contact Details

Remember to [register your National Tree Day Activities](#) with Planet Ark and your achievements will be added to the national totals. We'd also love it if you [sent us photos and stories](#) of your events to help encourage and inspire others.

- National Tree Day Hotline: 1300 88 5000
- National Tree Day Website: [TreeDay.PlanetArk.org](http://TreeDay.PlanetArk.org)
- Contact Email: [treeday@planetark.org](mailto:treeday@planetark.org)
- Mailing Address: Level 3, 15-17 Young St, Sydney NSW 2000

