



## 2013 NATIONAL TREE DAY: MP BRIEFING NOTES

**NATIONAL TREE DAY – Sunday 28 July**  
**SCHOOLS TREE DAY – Friday 26 July**

**To find out more visit [treeday.planetark.org](http://treeday.planetark.org) or call 1300 88 5000**

### Overview

Planet Ark's National Tree Day began in 1996 and has grown to become Australia's biggest community tree-planting and nature care event.

National Tree Day aims to inspire, educate and recruit Australians to actively care for our unique land and create future generations of committed environmental custodians.

This year National Tree Day's theme, "Get Outside and Grow", urges Australians to connect or with nature, for their health and that of the environment. National Tree Day is a milestone event this year, as Planet Ark and sponsor Toyota Australia prepare to plant the 20-millionth seedling since the event began in 1996.

New this year, families and friends can organise planting sites in their own backyards, balconies and green spaces, making it even easier for people to get outside and grow.

### What's National Tree Day all about?

- Planet Ark and sponsor of 14 years Toyota are calling on Australians to take part in this special day to get their hands dirty and improve their local environment.
- National Tree Day is a chance to give something back to your community and our environment, and do something good for your own health by getting outside and connecting with nature.
- People across the country will be getting involved in thousands of official tree planting and land care activities organised by schools, communities, councils and Toyota Dealers, as well as sites in their own backyards.
- Schools Tree Day is the largest single nature care activity in Australian schools and is an opportunity for children to interact and learn about their environment.
- National Tree Day is about more than planting trees – activities can also include bush regeneration activities, weeding, seed collecting, maintenance of past planting sites or growing a vegetable garden.



### **What has been achieved so far?**

- Since National Tree Day began, 18.6 million native trees, shrubs and grasses have been planted by more than 3 million volunteers.
- Each year over 250,000 Australian school children take part in Schools Tree Day – a fun and worthwhile day for children to learn more about the environment.

### **What are the key benefits and why should people get involved in National Tree Day?**

- We are increasingly spending time indoors due to shrinking backyards, long working hours and increased screen time, so activities such as National Tree Day help to get people outside and enjoying nature. Planet Ark has recently released a research report exploring this topic, called *Missing Trees: The Inside Story of an Outdoor Nation*. (More information <http://treeday.planetark.org/research/>)
- Plants, particularly native trees and shrubs, help to sustain the local environment. By planting vegetation we are helping to combat climate change by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>, reducing greenhouse emissions creating a healthier and cleaner environment and restoring habitat for native wildlife.
- National Tree Day encourages people to think about going 'green' and 'doing our bit' for the environment – like joining a local Landcare or Bushcare group to help plant trees and maintenance projects throughout the year.
- National Tree Day is a great community event and a chance to have fun whilst making a difference.