

National TreeDay®

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Schools Activities Guide

Each year, schools involvement in Planet Ark's Schools Tree Day has provided support and care for our Australian environment, helped develop and reinforce connections with the local community and is a fun and rewarding experience for the students. Teachers provide the groundwork to establish an awareness amongst our young people about the importance of the environment and its future care. At Planet Ark we are aware of the hard work of so many teachers which enables this to happen. We would like to congratulate you on your efforts to date, and hope that this guide goes some way to making your job easier.

This Schools Activities Guide has been compiled by Planet Ark with consideration of responses given through our Schools Site Coordinator Survey. It outlines a range of activities that have already been implemented by some schools as well as ideas for easy and accessible activities that require little resources and cost.

Schools are welcome to use whichever components they wish from the guide.

Planet Ark would like to thank the schools that have contributed to the success of Schools Tree Day over the years and who have contributed to this guide.

Planet Ark CEO



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



Activity	Tree-Planting Event
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great fun and good hands on learning activity • Beautifies your school and attracts birds and other wildlife • Student leadership and community engagement • Raised awareness about care and preservation of environment. Students gain a sense of real achievement and being part of a much greater national outcome • Helps achieve outcomes in the Key Learning Areas of Studies of Society and Environment (HSIE in NSW) and Science.
<p>Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have the opportunity to beautify their school grounds to make them more hospitable to students, staff, birds and small animals. • Contact your local council or bushcare group to see if they will provide native seedlings and mulch. The group or council could become a supporter of the event so that the seedlings are donated, meaning there is less cost to the school. The National Tree Day Information Centre on 1300 88 5000 can provide contacts in your area. • The event gives students, parents and staff the chance to learn about how to protect the environment, what plants are native to their area and also stresses the importance of caring for our world. • Students can plant native tree species to offset the yearly carbon dioxide emissions produced by their family car. 17 native trees over their lifetime (around 30 years) can offset the carbon emissions produced by an average year of car use. • Consider planting in honour of a loved one – students may wish to dedicate their tree to a beloved friend or relative, a retired teacher or pupil. They could even plant a tree to celebrate the birth of a new sister or brother. • Planet Ark has developed a step by step ‘Schools Getting Started Guide’ including sections on; How to organise your site; What you need on the day; Product suppliers and more. This can be found at http://treeday.planetark.org/schools • A range of downloadable resources are available at http://treeday.planetark.org/schools including: Lesson Plans; Thank You certificates; Case Studies and more.
<p>Coordinator Comments</p>	<p>“This was our first Tree Day event. All the students were very enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoyed the planting process, even though it was pouring with rain and they all got wet and muddy - they loved it. We had an abundance of parent helpers, which added to the community feel of the event.”</p>

Our National Tree Day Hotline can be contacted on 1300 88 5000. We are here to help with any questions you may have.



Activity	Start a School Tree Troopers Program
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education about how to manage native vegetation • Creates a specialist source of knowledge within the school, that can be used to benefit all students • Community engagement
<p>Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your local council or landcare group to train your school students about planting and caring for trees. • A small group of students from a school are trained as 'Tree Troopers' for their school by a qualified person. Perhaps these students could be part of your "green team" • They attend a training session with a school staff member. • The training session will include education about why planting native plants is so important and the best way to go about it. • Once completed, the students will then be equipped with the knowledge and skills to teach their fellow students about the ins and outs of tree-planting.

Activity	Arrange a visit from a mobile zoo
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education about what wildlife can live in local natural spaces and what may return to the area if students are working on a larger scale project
<p>Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mobile zoo is set up in the school, fully enclosed with animals that are friendly and safe. • Select native animals and reptiles which would normally inhabit your local area so that it is relevant to your students. Your local council Bushcare officer may be able to provide advice on this. • This teaches students how to engage with animals and encourages students to take action in the preservation of native wildlife. • It also helps develop an understanding among students about how one action impacts another; how one tree affects more than just what you immediately see. • For a listing of mobile zoos available in your state, visit http://treeday.planetark.org/schools. • If there aren't any mobile zoos that visit your area, try and arrange a school excursion to the local zoo. There are usually discounts for group bookings and zoo tours are great ways for children to learn about animal wildlife in an interactive way.



Activity	Get the parents involved
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises awareness about environmental issues • Raises opportunity for further involvement and support, both physical and monetary, from parents in environmental activities
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting parents involved in environmental initiatives can provide you with fundraising opportunities as well as more on-site help to manage events. • Have a 'Wear Green' day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite children to wear a green item of clothing ie. ribbon, green tie etc to school to raise environmental awareness. • Parents are then engaged in the project and gain a greater awareness about the environmental activities of their school. • Invite parents to donate a tree on behalf of their child • We also have a downloadable poster that you can print and ask students to help put up around the school, demonstrating to parents and teachers the environmental initiatives your school is undertaking. This is available at http://treeday.planetark.org/coords.
Coordinator Comments	<p>"Tree Day is one of those projects which enhance not only the school but the grounds as well. Parents are asked to donate a tree for their child to plant, involving them in choosing the plant and actually planting their own develops a real sense of ownership."</p>

Activity	Arrange a visit from a Ranger or Bushcare member
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education on environmental care and protection
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak to your local council or bushcare group to arrange a presentation about tree planting, native plants and animals. The National Tree Day Information Centre at 1300 88 5000 can help put you in touch with contacts in your local area. • This can provide you with information and tools you need for tree-planting events with little hassle or cost. • A ranger could be present on your tree-planting day to give demonstrations on how to plant trees carefully or teach children how to care for their plants and what native wildlife may be attracted to it.
Coordinator Comments	<p>"As a tree day organiser, it has been heart warming to see that the students from last year recall all of the tree information given to them previously, and the enthusiasm new students bring makes it all worthwhile."</p>



Activity	Other classroom activities
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A host of ideas on other ways to engage students or reinforce their learning around environmental care and protection • Fun and enjoyment!
<p>Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students to make pots out of papier mache. They can use these pots for growing their seedlings. These seedlings can then be planted on the school ground or donated to a local bushcare group. • Get involved in our schools competition. Details on the National Tree Day website at http://treeday.planetark.org/schools. • Download our Explorer's Logbook at http://treeday.planetark.org/schools. This resource is full of fun activities to help students explore the native bushland. • You could also help children make their own sustainable artwork, made entirely out of natural objects such as leaves, gumnuts, twigs etc. No plants should be damaged in the process. • Alternatively, children could make their artwork out of man-made materials that haven't been disposed of properly e.g. aluminium cans, scrap paper, plastics etc. • Students could make a collage of what they had found, showcasing all the different kinds of native leaves, stones etc found in their local environment. • Read a fun book or watch a video related to trees (for a suggested list http://treeday.planetark.org/schools) or help your students write the story of trees, describing how the plant first begins, how it grows and develops, and what animal life it attracts. • Students could write a haiku, limerick or even a song <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haiku – 3 line non-rhymed poem, 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second, 5 syllables in the third • Limerick – 5 line poem, the first two lines and the last line rhyme, the third and fourth lines rhyme with each other • Or your class could stage a play with different students dressing up as different wildlife in the environment, describing visually how each animal connects with the other, how each tree planted helps the environment. This need not be elaborate, students can simply make a butterfly or koala mask out of cardboard to illustrate what creature they are.



Activity	Take your students on a guided bushwalk
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education about local bushland and animals • Fun outdoor exercise
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your local bushcare group or park ranger to find a guide for your bushwalk. Your local council is a good starting point. Call the National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000 for your local council contact information. • It's important to find a guide for students to get the most out of the experience, providing them with interesting facts about the indigenous flora and fauna.
Coordinator Comments	<p>"It's important to let students know that they are a part of a much larger arena than just their local back-garden...and that their contribution and involvement over these last four years not only re-establishes bushland in some small degree, but allows them to contribute to community efforts of great value."</p>

Activity	On going tree and plant care program
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of onsite school grounds or off site local natural places • Education about how to manage native plant life and wildlife • Stronger relationship with community groups • "Hands on" learning activity which can be linked to curriculum outcomes
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the support of your local Landcare/Bushcare group or local council, students can become part of an ongoing maintenance program for an area of park, bush or local natural space • Local schools are contacted to help manage areas in need of repair, getting involved in mulching, weeding, follow-up watering, maintaining tree guards and more on a regular basis. • The initial tree-planting event is used as a launching pad for extended programs. • Photos can be taken at each visit to showcase how the bush has transformed over time. • Students have a very tangible sense of achievement, pride and ownership • Offers the opportunity for parents to become involved and spend time with their children.
Coordinator Comments	<p>"The children took an adoption certificate back to the classrooms and asked to water their plants weekly."</p> <p>"Each class was allocated 7 native trees to fill in the gaps in last year's effort with teams. Trees were personally introduced, planted, labeled, watered in and mulched. The teams of children from Kinder to Grade 10 can now visit and care for their own tree. At the same time each class took responsibility for the tree needs of a section of our vast school ground."</p>



Activity	Getting additional support and funds
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of plants and other resources • Expert advice on environmental care and protection
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your local landcare or bushcare group or council to see if they would like to support your activity. The National Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000 may be able to help you with contacts in your local area. • They can offer advice on what to plant, how to plant and may be able to provide on-site demonstrations. • They can also offer ideas if there is little space on school grounds for planting. • To raise funds have a “green” mufti day. Everybody wears green and brings in a dollar. Use the proceeds to raise money for buying seedlings, mulch and tools. • Local nurseries may also be interested in supporting your event and may be willing to donate seedlings to your school. Make sure the plants are local area natives. Visit http://treeday.planetark.org/coords or call 1300 88 5000 to find out which groups in your local area have offered their help. • Consider growing seedlings to sell to the local community, such as herbs and vegetables. These ingredients can also be used in meals prepared by the school canteen to promote healthy eating. These herbs and vegetables could become an ongoing fundraising activity, with a stall being held in each school, community fair, athletics carnival etc in order to raise funds for school initiatives. • At some schools, the graduating class raises funds to donate a gift to the school. Gift ideas could be a gardening kit, a vegetable garden, new gardening tools etc which would include an engraving or plaque acknowledging the gift-givers. • Hold a school swap party. Swap items such as clothing, books, CDs etc. Make sure participants only bring high-quality items and a gold coin entry donation.
Coordinator Comments	<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 site.”</p>

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

