

School Tree Nursery Programme

Together we can replenish the Earth



Aims & Benefits of a School Tree Nursery

The combined aim of the UK School Tree Nurseries (STNs) Programme is to provide trees for restoration of locally degraded environments such as flood land, eroded countryside and neglected inner city areas, and to educate and support the children, adults and communities involved. The programme enhances the children's environmental education, and allows for their personal participation in the restoration of the planet. Furthermore, it unites and encourages local communities to participate with their local authorities in environmental decision making, in resolving where to best plant the saplings for the maximum benefit to the local environment, leading to the creation of new green areas in neglected or derelict land. With today's political consensus on the imperative of preserving green areas in our communities, STNs can provide a vital complement in the effort to prevent further degradation of local environments.

School Tree Nursery Programme Operations

STNs are created within school grounds, with children participating in raising saplings in a nursery environment, giving them both a sense of achievement and tangible environmental educational benefit.

The educational aspect of the programme is enhanced through theatre and games, which encourages the children and their teachers about ecological restoration, the carbon cycle, and the importance of the children's participation in this work. We offer an educational workshop called a journey with trees, please contact: andreas@earthrestorationservice.org for details.

Once the saplings have reached their correct maturity, schools, parents, councils, environmental charities, tree wardens, local gardening clubs and more, identify the most suitable places to plant the trees – ideally barren areas prone to erosion, fields that can be transformed to new woodlands, flood plains, and degraded inner city areas. In Lewes, East Sussex, for example, trees have been planted in flood plain areas, helping to alleviate the effect of flooding, a growing problem in the UK. New woodlands are a great way to leave your students legacy in the local community. The motto is to engage other parts of the community to ensure the trees are planted in an appropriate place.

Starting is easy, send us your address and establish details with Polly Wise, the School Tree Nursery Manager: polly@earthrestorationservice.org about number of trees and date for the nursery creation. The main season runs between November until April.

How to prepare a Tree Nursery

Take care when choosing a site for a tree nursery. Think of how much light it will receive and whether there are overhanging trees or buildings to cast shadows overhead. If possible it should be close to a supply of water in the school. Although as we are planting native trees they will withstand minor drought conditions, for saplings staying over long hot summers a water supply may be necessary. Important point - the site should be well drained and not get waterlogged when it rains. Also if you are in a rural school, a rabbit proof fence is a good idea.

Preparations

Tools

Plenty of spades – a wheel barrow can be very useful, rabbit fences and tree guards are usually provided with the delivery. For mulch, old manure should be mixed into the soil. Straw is a recommended mulch which keeps moisture in and protects from weeds, making the nursery easier to maintain. We can provide mulch mats if suitable.

Caring for the Nursery

Water regularly and maintain the nursery by checking for weeds, wind protection, water logging, and growth.

Planting out (source: The Tree Council)

Pit dimensions: Allow at least 15 to 20 cm around the root ball for the initial root growth

Stake: Required if the tree is over 1.5m. Put stake in the pit before the tree. Place on downwind side. Stake should not be more than 1/3 height of the tree

Backfilling: Gently shake the tree up and down to ensure a good root to soil contact

Firm the soil gently with the sole of the foot, so that the roots are seated well into the surrounding soil.

Water the tree copiously – if necessary drench the soil with at least two litres of water for a small tree

If trees are planted on a slope, make V shaped ridges to catch rainwater, If possible, break up the hard rocky subsoil in the bottom of the hole and add a little manure-press down the soil firmly around the tree.

Feedback

Once the tree nursery or outplanting is completed, please share it with us and send us pictures. Pictures, stories and feedback are very necessary to show our potential sponsors and supporters.

For more information, contact:

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