

1.2 MILLION TREE PLANTING CHALLENGE

Rotary District 9810



RI President Ian Riseley's challenge

Ian Riseley has set the presidential theme for his 2017-2018 year as *Rotary: Making a Difference*. He said recently that one way Rotarians can make a difference is to take actions to address environmental degradation and climate change. **Ian has challenged each Rotary club to plant one tree for each club member in the period from 1 July 2017 to Earth Day on 22 April 2018.** Planting trees will remove carbon dioxide from the air and help to slow down global warming.

He hopes that the benefits of Rotary's tree planting will be greater than just environmental and said "I believe the greater result will be a Rotary that recognizes our responsibility not only to the people on our planet, but to the planet itself".



What to plant

In the spirit of Ian Riseley's challenge, it is suggested that where possible, your club plants trees or other plants that are native to the area in which you are planting. This will ensure that we are not planting trees or other plants that may become "weeds" in the future.

If your club decides that their contribution to this challenge is to just encourage members to plant a bush or shrub in their own garden, we suggest that the members consider native plants that will attract butterflies or native birds. (Ask your local nursery for suitable plants, such as grevilleas or bottlebrushes. The following website also has some useful information: <http://www.sgaonline.org.au/attracting-birds-to-your-garden/>.)

When to plant

Most tree planting groups tend to plant out seedlings of native plants in late winter or early spring. This will give the young seedlings the best chance to establish before the hot, dry conditions of summer. Look after your plants until they take hold.

If in doubt, check with your local council or government department. Remember this simple guide:

Right Tree, Right Time, Right Place, Take Hold

General tips

- > Try to find an easy way to achieve your target of one tree per member. If your club is new to tree planting, don't try to take on anything too ambitious or too taxing for your members.
- > Ensure that there has been a community needs assessment, i.e. that the trees you are planting are really needed and are suitable to the planting site.
- > If your club gets involved in a project in which your members are physically planting seedlings always make sure that the team leader for the project:
 - ensures that the tasks required of your members suit their ability and level of fitness
 - completes a risk assessment plan and that this is adhered to
 - sends out a set of safety precautions before the planting day and repeats these at the induction
 - gives an induction with planting and safety instructions prior to planting
 - ensures that someone qualified in first aid is available on the planting day in case of any accident and that there is a first aid kit on hand
 - keeps a record of all attending members for insurance purposes.
- > Please send a record of the number and species of trees that your club plants to the Sustainable Communities Committee Chair (details on the next page), so that we know the total number of trees planted by members in our District.

How to reach your target

There are many different ways that your club could achieve its goal of one tree per member, ranging from easy to challenging. Find one that suits your club and its members, depending on the size of your club, other projects and, in particular, the age of your members.

Easy

- > Make a financial contribution to a tree planting group to plant trees on your members' behalf (e.g. TreeProject, a local Landcare group, Greening Australia or a local "friends" group).
- > Encourage your members to plant a bush or shrub that will attract butterflies or birds to their gardens.
- > Give your guest speakers a gift of a native shrub.

Medium

- > See if one of your club members has a country property and wishes to have native trees planted on that property. The property owner could purchase the seedlings and provide any necessary equipment. Your club members could simply help to plant out the seedlings.
- > Contact the environment or sustainability officer of your local council. Find out if there is some way that your club could help with a council tree planting project in your municipality.
- > Find out from your council if your local area has any active "friends" groups who might welcome some involvement by your club in a tree planting project. Contact one of these groups and offer your club's assistance.
- > Contact an organisation that specialises in raising and planting native seedlings and find out if there is a way that your members could be involved in planting seedlings for an existing project, such as:
 - TreeProject (<http://www.treeproject.org.au/>). Consider joining one of their tree planting days

(many of these are relatively close to Melbourne)

- Landcare (<https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>). See particularly the 20 Million Trees Programme
- Greening Australia (<https://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/>). Look at volunteering opportunities on their website.

Challenging

- > Approach a local school to see if they would be interested in partnering with your club on a garden project at the school itself or at a school camp. Many Victorian schools may be interested in building butterfly or bird attracting gardens or indigenous plant gardens. Many are part of the ResourceSmart Schools program, which encourages schools to increase biodiversity in their grounds.
- > Organise a club project in which members grow their own seedlings from seeds and plant them out on a country property (similar to the District 9810 Tree Project described in the box). However, be aware that such a project requires a great deal of time, planning and cooperation from members in your club and any other partners. You may only have time to sow and raise the seedlings by Ian Riseley's deadline of April, 2018. However, that would still be fine.

Sustainable Communities Committee

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District 9810 Tree Project

In a tree planting project coordinated by the Sustainable Communities Committee of District 9810, volunteers have raised and planted out about 2,000 seedlings of native trees each year for the past five years on rural properties in Beaufort, in western Victoria. This is an amazing total of about 10,000 trees, many of which are now several metres tall.

The project involves Rotarians across three generations from the suburbs of eastern Melbourne (Rotary Clubs of Mont Albert and Surrey Hills (MASH), Doncaster, Waverley, the Rotaract Club of Monash and the Interact Club of Ashwood Secondary College). These clubs raise native seedlings in their own backyards from seeds provided by the TreeProject organisation. The seeds are obtained from a variety of eucalypt, wattle and other native species in an area close to the planting site.

After tending to the seedlings for over six months, volunteers from the Melbourne clubs and the Rotary Club of Beaufort come together on an annual planting day in late August to get their hands dirty, planting out the seedlings at one of the designated properties.

This project supports local Landcare efforts to rebuild nature corridors, decrease erosion and improve water quality in the local catchment area. One of the added bonuses of this amazing project has been the bringing together of people from different backgrounds and generations and from city and country to really "make a difference".

