Greening my Local Area

This activity will encourage your students to identify local places where additional plants and trees can be grown, carry out a planting activity and monitor development over time on a map overlay.

For the first time we are launching an exciting competition where 12 groups can win £250.00 each to put towards purchasing plants and gardening equipment!

In this activity you and your students will:

► Carry out a survey of your local biodiversity.
► Plan a planting activity to support local wildlife and contribute to the 1 Trillion Trees project: www.1t.org.
► Add an overlay to your local area map (see bit.ly/environment-map).
► Enter a competition.

Objectives

To add more greenery and trees to your local area that will improve your environment and encourage local wildlife.

What do I need to make it work?

For this activity, you'll need:

► Pens, paper and clipboards or tablets with spreadsheet app installed.
► Gardening equipment for planting trees or shrubs.
► Seeds, seedlings and/or plants ready to plant.

What things will my students create?

► A record of local area plants and wildlife and how it changes over time.
► A better and greener local environment.

Survey your local biodiversity

Before you go ahead with a greening project, it's great to know what is already out there living and growing around you. Then you can decide what will be the best kind of greenery to plant!

If you'd like to keep this simple and undertake the local area greening as your main focus, then keep reading.

If you'd like to use this as part of a bigger project, you could consider adding the information you collect and plan as an overlay to a **Local Environment Map**, you can use the activity on our website to get you started: bit.ly/environment-map.

Get spotting!

First up you need to choose an area or areas nearby where you will be allowed to plant trees, shrubs or flowers. This could be students' gardens at home, part of your school ground, or in agreement with the local council a nearby park or nature area. Nowhere is too small!

Once you have chosen your area(s), you will need a way to record the plants and animals you find there already. Depending as to size, you may wish to divide the area up into smaller plots and send groups to different areas to record.

You could use a simple table like this:

What is it?	Category (Animal/Plant/Fungus)	Location
Robin	Animal	1
Bracket Fungus	Fungus	2

For **"What is it?"** Write the name of the living thing you have found eg. oak tree, robin, bracket fungus etc...

For **"Location"**, you may wish to draw a simple map of your chosen area and number each part in which pupils will be searching.

Spotting Guides:

You may find it helpful to use these spotting sheets and guide:

Hedgerow wildlife detective — wildlife watch

Hedgehog | Hawthorn blossom | Bullfinch | Harvest mouse | Painted lady
Hawthorn shieldbug | Great tit | Common toad | Red campion | Yellowhammer

► Wildlife Watch Spotting sheets: www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/spotting-sheets
► NHM downloadable ID guides: www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/identify-nature.html

For a more in-depth activity on surveying and understanding your local area wildlife, you could also do our Wildlife Safari activity: bit.ly/local-safari.

Look at the results.

After you've had fun spotting creatures, mini beasts, shrubs and fungus of all kinds, put all your information together in one place, by either:

▶ Everyone puts their results into a master spreadsheet, you can use a formula to count how many times each kind of living thing is recorded: bit.ly/34eZ0P8, then you can create graphs to help you see what you have found from most to least.

▶ Or you could create a large display map and mark in each part of your area what you found either with coloured stickers, or pictures for the creatures and plants you found.

Plan your planting activity

Now you know what living things you have in your local environment, you can plan what is best to add to it to improve it.

Discussion

Using the results from your biodiversity survey, talk about:

▶ Which areas have lots of plants and animals and which areas have few?

▶ Are there any species that you have lots of, are there any that you'd like to encourage more?

▶ Which types of plants would encourage other plants or animals that you'd like to have more of in your area?

  ▶ RSPB *Plants for wildlife* makes suggestions for the type of plants and trees that support wildlife : bit.ly/2JHylRF.

  ▶ Garden Organic also has a helpful page about trees and wildlife: www.gardenorganic.org.uk/trees-wildlife.

Appleshaw St Peter's CofE Primary School, tree planting: bit.ly/3evt9OX

Is there space for a tree?

Trees help to create the oxygen we breathe and regulate our climate. Tragically, they are being destroyed at an alarming rate. At the 2020 World Economic Forum, Dr. Jane Goodall announced her commitment to contributing 5 million trees (via replanting or restoration) in the next year to the **1 Trillion Trees campaign** (www.1t.org). Here at Roots & Shoots we know that even the smallest of positive actions can make a difference, so we'd love it if you can make space for a tree (or even two) as part of your local greening!

Get planting!

Now decide which area would be best to do some planting and what to plant there. We would recommend supporting a local garden centre or nursery to source your plants from. The RSPB website is also very helpful as a guide for how to plant and look after different plants: bit.ly/2JHylRF. They have a specific section dedicated to planting and caring for suitable trees, here: bit.ly/jgi-trees.

Portway Junior School, Weeding the Newly Planted Hedge: bit.ly/3erF6VP

Maintaining your plants: With your new plants and trees in the ground, you'll need to make a plan for how to look after them while they become established so that they can have the greatest effect. The RSPB website also has information on this, but your local garden centre may also be able to give some advice.

Keep surveying!

It would be great as an ongoing project to keep repeating the local area biodiversity survey, then you can keep track of the plants and animals you have in your area and see how your area changes.

▶ If you'd like to extend the survey to a more in-depth activity, you could also do our Wildlife Safari activity: bit.ly/local-safari.

▶ And don't forget that you can keep adding information to a local area environment map: bit.ly/environment-map.

Ringwood School, surveying their hedgerows: bit.ly/2Vx9eXr

Enter the competition

To support you in your planting activity, we are offering **prize money** to give to the groups who come up with a plan most beneficial to their local area!

To enter

▶ Do the survey and make your plans as part of this activity, and take some photos along the way.

▶ Upload the details of your activity to our website and at the end of each term we'll announce a winner – If you haven't already, you can register your group here: www.rootsnshoots.org.uk/sign-me-up.

Each entry also counts towards our Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots Awards (see below).

Don't forget to include details of the number and type of any trees that you plant so that we can keep track of them for the 1 Trillion Trees project (www.1t.org)!

Portway Junior School, Wildflower and Grass Seed Sowing: bit.ly/3erF6VP

Want to help improve this activity?

This activity is a living document! Help us by editing this activity to make it as good as possible, just use this short link (just type it into your web browser's address bar):bit.ly/3aFaQEX – full instructions are provided. Any edits that can make this resource easier to use in the classroom or more applicable to life in the UK are very welcome, so please follow the link and make your contribution!

Why not enter the Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots Awards?

This resource was provided by Roots & Shoots UK, a not for profit charity run by the Jane Goodall Institute (UK). One of the aims of Roots & Shoots is to inspire young people to care for people, animals and the environment, and one of the ways that we like to do this is by running annual awards.

Every school that uploads a story about their activities to the Roots & Shoots website www.rootsnshoots.org.uk automatically wins a bronze award

certificate to display at school, and the best stories win the chance for you and your children to meet Dr Jane Goodall herself along with a host of other prizes.

See www.rootsnshoots.org.uk/awards for details about the awards and information on how to upload your 'mission update' story and win!

Keep up to date with Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots UK

You can find us on Facebook at **fb.com/RootsnShoots.org.u**k, on Twitter (@JaneGoodallUK, direct link: **goo.gl/xTQnVm**) and on Instagram (@janegoodalluk, direct link: **bit.ly/jgi-insta**). Or why not sign up for our weekly email newsletter full of inspiring stories from our Roots & Shoots members in the UK at **rootsnshoots.org.uk/sign-me-up**.