

TREE DAY A TREE-MENDOUS SUCCESS

EARTH FIRST

By Peter West, ECCO

Last Sunday's National Tree Day event was a tremendous success in Orange. National Tree Day is Australia's largest community tree-planting event coordinated by Planet Ark. It is an annual event and a day for all Australians to help out by planting native trees and shrubs in their local area.

This year represents the 14th year of National Tree Day and more than 2 million people have volunteered their time and planted over 13 million native trees and shrubs throughout the country.

Orange City Council hosted this year's event adjacent to the Sir Jack Brabham playing fields on Huntley Road. Event organiser, Councils Vegetation Officer, Roger Smith, expressed sincere gratitude to all participants for showing such enthusiasm and interest in making this year's event such a success.

"This year we celebrate the planting of our 11 thousandth tree. To date, 11,230 trees have been planted in Orange as part of the National Tree Day program – a great achievement from all involved."

A total of 76 participants volunteered their time and energy last Sunday, including some local Councillors and many young green thumbs. Collectively, the group planted an impressive 1500 trees and shrubs in 3 hours.

A mixture of species were planted including eucalypts, melaleuca's, grevillea's, callistemon, hakea's, banksias, lomandra's and selected native grasses. Each was accompanied by a weed matt and tree guard, and water crystals were used in some areas for drought protection.

The event aimed to enhance the appearance of the recently constructed storm water harvesting dam (built to irrigate the local playing fields). It will also improve water quality, support biodiversity, provide a corridor for wildlife between remnant bushland, and combat erosion.

The event was enjoyed by all, particularly as we were graced by a blue sky day and warm sunshine – a striking contrast to last years unexpected snow showers.

Participants were also grateful to the local State Emergency Service (SES) for providing a free BBQ and drinks, and the Conservation Volunteers Australia who provided demonstrations on tree planting techniques.

If you happen to drive past Sir Jack Brabham playing fields, you will now see 1500 small trees and shrubs that will develop into a healthy and attractive vegetated area.

Many local schools also participated in their own events, aiming to enhance their school grounds and provide shade and shelter for summer. Congratulations to all.

Thank you to everyone who assisted on the day. Next years event is expected to be bigger and better. We hope to see you there.

Green dates for the calendar

Keep Australia Beautiful Week, August 24-30 (see www.kab.org.au).

National Threatened Species Day (Sept 7).