



Canadian Institute of Forestry
Institut forestier du Canada

ACTIVITY

GREEN GUARDIANS

Junior Stewardship
Challenge

GREEN GUARDIANS

Junior Stewardship Challenge

In this activity you will become a Green Guardian and learn how to care for trees and green spaces in your community. Urban forests include all the trees found in cities and towns, from street trees and parks to schoolyards and neighbourhood green spaces. Trees support healthy communities by improving air quality, cooling neighbourhoods with shade, and providing homes for birds and other wildlife. By planting, observing, and caring for trees, Green Guardians help protect these important natural spaces and support vibrant, healthy communities for people and nature.

Activity Information

Level: Ages 8-14

Subject: Science

Estimated duration: 60 mins

Help learners explore their local urban forest, understand why it's important, and learn how to protect and care for trees.

Learning Goals

-  Understanding what an urban forest is
-  Learning to care for trees and green spaces
-  Building confidence as environmental and community stewards

SESSION 1: WHAT IS AN URBAN FOREST?

What do you think an urban forest is?



Forest or Not?

Forests exist all around us in towns and cities!


☐

City park


☐

Street with trees


☐

School yard with shrubs


☐

Community garden


☐

Parking lot with a single tree



SESSION 1: WHAT IS AN URBAN FOREST?

Group Brainstorm: Why trees matter



Prompts

-  How do trees help people?
-  How do trees help animals and insects?
-  How do trees help the city or neighbourhood?

Explore the term *ecosystem services*
How does it apply to trees in your community?

Examples

-  Cleaner air
-  Shade and cooler temperatures
-  Animal habitat
-  Reduce noise
-  Improve mental and physical health

SESSION 2: TREE PLANTING FIELD ACTIVITY

Plan & Prepare

Select a safe planting location as a group such as a school, local park, or community land- get permission.



Discuss

-  How will this location benefit from a tree?
-  How will people and wildlife in the community benefit from the location you chose?



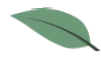
SESSION 2: TREE PLANTING FIELD ACTIVITY

Planting a tree is more than a one-day job!

Trees take years to grow and need ongoing care.
Planting is just the first step.



Planting Rules

-  Discuss safety when planting: use of gloves, wearing close toed shoes, and using tools responsibly
-  Choose a species native to your area
-  Learn proper planting basics: spacing, root care, and watering routine

SESSION 3: TAKE-ACTION PROJECTS

Interview a neighbour, teacher, or family member



What do trees mean to you? Do you have a favourite tree?

Create & share: Why urban forests matter



Create a poster, short video, comic strip, or slideshow.

Tree Guardianship

Monitor growth or health of planted trees monthly. Organize a mini “green cleanup day” around trees.



REFLECTION

Discuss one thing you have learned and one action you will continue.

