# **How to get involved in landcare at home or work**

Do you ever think about who cares for the local bushland, waterways or coastline where you live or work?

You will find that there is a local environmental community group with volunteers who have a shared vision to protect, enhance or restore the natural environment through sustainable land management and conservation activities. Landcare enables people to actively care for the natural environment in their community.

Did you know research has proven that people who are involved in landcare activities are happier and healthier? Read about the wellbeing benefits of getting involved in landcare here: <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/wellbeing-report/>

Get involved in your local group and get your hands dirty to care for the environment in your local community.

We know many people are time poor, however there are many ways to get involved in landcare that won’t take up a huge amount of time, and you can get your friends, family and colleagues involved.

Every little bit helps. There’s a reason over 100,000 people are already regularly landcare volunteers!

## **At Home - how you can get involved in Landcare**

* **Volunteer** and get your hands dirty at the next local community event. You may not have time to join your local group but lending a hand at the next event will help make an impact.
* **Start your own local group** in your suburb, at work, your local school or youth group. We have easy tips on how you can get started, it costs nothing but your time.
* **Fundraise** for a local group. Your donation can help buy trees and native shrubs, or materials like timber to build boardwalks at your local beach, animal nesting boxes and so much more!
* **Get social** and promote your local group’s activities online.

**Volunteer your skills!** You don’t even need to get your hands dirty. Volunteer your professional skills to your local group, such as web design, newsletter writing, applying for grants, book keeping, event management or fundraising.

* **Handy with your hands?** Many groups need help from people who like woodwork, and can help them make and maintain birdhouses and nesting boxes for different species like birds, possums and bats. Every animal needs a home!
* **Save your items from landfill** by joining your local Pay It Forward/Free Stuff Facebook group to pass on preloved goods through a give and take system, helping save our environment while helping others within your community.
* **Sign up to your local landcare, ‘friends of’ or environment groups newsletter** to keep informed on what is happening in your neighbourhood
* **You can help protect native species** in your own backyard. Bring back native bees and birds by enhancing their habitat simply by creating a bee hotel, or bird nesting boxes or plant native species to encourage them to visit your garden.
* **Woof woof!** Ensure your dogs are kept on a leash in nature reserves or bushland where native animals are likely to be vulnerable. Landcare groups work on these sites to enhance the habitat of native animals to protect them.
* **Go natural** and help give bees and local insects a helping hand by avoiding chemical pesticides and herbicides in your garden, consider using natural alternatives.
* **Plant native** shrubs, trees and flowers to bring bird life and bees into your garden.
* **Keep cats inside overnight**. Even well fed cats roaming at night hunt and kill possums and other small native mammals while birds are often targets at dawn and dusk when they are most active.
* **At the beach** keep on the walking tracks. This protects the vegetation that provides habitat for local native birds and other animals, and prevents erosion.
* Learn more about your community’s **Indigenous heritage**. Traditional Owners and First Nations people have been caring for Country for tens of thousands of years.
* **Local business owners** can support their local groups and help sponsor fundraising activities, promote their community working bee events and volunteer their time.
* **Help injured or lost wildlife** by calling local authorities including WIRES.
* **Reduce your plastic footprint** to help protect our rivers and waterways by keeping our beaches and oceans clean, and protect marine animals from the impact of rubbish including plastics.
* **Reuse** if you need to use plastic products, make sure you reuse items over and over again before disposing of them thoughtfully at the end of their useful life
* **Recycle** if you can’t reuse an item, recycle it or compost it. Putting something in the rubbish bin for landfill should only be a last resort. Many household groceries come in soft plastic wrapping. Most major supermarkets now will recycle your soft plastics for you. Just bag them up and take them in to the supermarket when you go shopping.
* **Compost** your food waste and fertilise your garden, it will help make your garden grow and reduce waste to landfill.
* **Be water wise** and water your gardens early in the morning or late afternoon to reduce water wastage.
* **Sustainability at home** can start by using products that are good for the environment. Look for ecolabels or environmental star ratings on products. Generally, the more stars the more environmentally friendly a product is.
* **Find a transport buddy** and carpool to work, or taking your children to school. Consider taking public transport or riding your bike to work or school.
* **The Junior Landcare Learning Centre** has many fun, educational activities for children of all ages. A great way to introduce Landcare to the young people in your life so they understand how to be aware of the how they can care for their local environment.
* Students may want to set up a **Youth Landcare Group** at high school, university or a youth group. Get connected to the local Landcare group in your area and volunteer with their local community environmental projects, or contact Intrepid Landcare or Co-Exist Australia.
* **Sign up to Landcare Australia’s newsletters** and keep informed on grants, campaigns, challenges and learn what other groups are doing so you can do it too!
* **Thank your local group** if you see them volunteering on a project in your local area. The work of landcarers is often unseen, so giving them a big wave and thank you is a good way for them to feel acknowledged for the work they do for you, for all of us and future generations.

## **At Work - how you can get involved in Landcare**

* **Corporate Environmental Volunteering** gets you and your colleagues out of the office and outside for some on-ground, ‘get your hands dirty’ activities. There are multiple projects you can get involved in from planting, cleaning up rubbish and removing weeds, seed propagation, building walkways, nest boxes….and so much more! Feedback shared with us from people who participate advise that their team is more engaged at work, take less sick days and stay with their employers for longer (Telstra research).
* **Grab your work colleagues and get involved with a local group** and help them with their next working bee – lending your hands to landcare will help a local group with their project and can help with community engagement for your business
* Can’t get away from your desk? Motivate your work colleagues and your company to get involved in **Workplace Giving**. A small, regular donation to Landcare Australia will help support long term projects that will continue to make a difference.