



Forest News

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**Sandals Foundation advances
food security mission**



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planted across Labour
Day Projects islandwide**

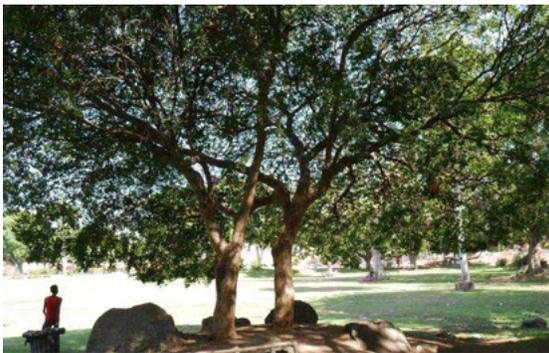


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**Forestry Department to
save through rainwater
harvesting**

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Sandals Foundation advances food security mission

Plants close to 1,000 food-bearing trees for Earth Day

With an increased need for investment to strengthen the Caribbean's food security, the Sandals Foundation galvanised the support of hundreds of its ambassadors and Sandals and Beaches Resorts guests across eight islands to celebrate Earth Day by planting over 900 food-bearing trees in a single day.

The large-scale tree planting event formed part of the organisation's 'Trees for Life' campaign and contributed to the charitable arm's year-long mission of regional food security, which aims to keep local produce in schools and communities.

Heidi Clarke, executive director of the Sandals Foundation, weighed in on the importance of the Earth Day campaign.

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“Sustainably increasing food and agricultural production is critical to ensuring the presence of fresh local foods for our Caribbean families for years to come. The Trees for Life campaign represents our continued pledge to environmental protection as a company, while empowering Caribbean communities with the tools and natural resources to meet their nutritional needs.

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In Jamaica, Sandals Foundation volunteers, environment, health and safety guardians and guests from Sandals and Beaches Resorts rolled up their sleeves and flocked to nearby schools and communities to plant over 500 fruit, ornamental, and forest trees. At the Salem Primary School, a group from Sandals South Coast planted 50 fruit trees, including east Indian mango, St Julian mango, assorted citrus, and avocado. In the west, teams from Sandals and Beaches Resorts in Negril planted 80 fruit and ornamental trees on the grounds of Cove Primary, Kendal Primary, and Kendal Basic schools.

Source: Jamaica Observer

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Environmental projects coordinator, Sandals Foundation, Georgia Scarlet (right) is joined by (from left) Kemar Lakeman, Jermaine Danvers, Gavin Palmer, and Patrick Barrett during the tree-planting exercise in the Montego Bay region.

Forestry Department represents Jamaica at UNFF18



Ainsley A. Henry, CEO and Conservator of Forests at the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF18) held between 8-12 May in New York.

Ainsley A. Henry, CEO and Conservator of Forests at the Forestry Department and Jamaica's focal point, attended the 18th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF18) between 8-12 May in New York where he presented the country's interventions on the following areas:

- Technical discussions on the Implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF)
- Contributions of and enhanced cooperation with partners to achieving the thematic priorities for the biennium 2022–2023
- Means of implementation, including operations and resources of the global forest financing facilitation network
- Update on the preparations for the midterm review in 2024 of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests in achieving its objectives
- The Forum Trust Fund

“ Jamaica’s participation in UNFF provides us with an invaluable opportunity to network as well as to highlight the work we are doing on the world stage. ”

Ainsley A. Henry, CEO and Conservator of Forests at the Forestry Department

The 19th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF19) will be held 6-10 May 2024. The thematic priorities are linked to Global Forest Goals and targets as well as any guidance from the high level political forum.

Over 10,000 trees planted across Labour Day Projects islandwide

The Forestry Department, in partnership with public and private sector entities, united to plant over 10,000 fruit, ornamental and timber trees across the island as part of projects executed to mark National Labour Day on May 23, 2023.

Many of the trees were planted as part of the National Labour Day project, which was Plant-a-thon to plant 10,000 trees. This was executed on lands adjacent to the PJ Patterson Highway in St. Catherine and organised by the Forestry Department. Approximately 600 volunteers from several private and public sector companies including, the Forestry Department, National Health Fund (NHF), Urban Development Corporation (UDC), Sagility, Pathfinders (Eastern Jamaica Conference), Jamaica Defence Force (JDF), the JDF Coast Guard, National Water Commission (NWC), H&L Rapid True Value, Rotaract Club, Project Management Institute, Jamaica and the National Road Operating and Constructing Company Limited (NROCC) braved the heat and sodden ground and planted with efficiency and sustained enthusiasm.

During the National Labour Day ceremony, Prime Minister, the Most Honourable Andrew Holness explained that the trees planted will “beautify the highway, increase shade on the road, reduce highway temperature and absorb carbon dioxide”. In addition, the fruit trees will enhance food security for neighbouring communities. Honourable Matthew Samuda, Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, in his address, reassured the public that considering the drought, water for maintaining the trees planted will come from “sources alternative to potable water”, including rivers and canals. Mr Ainsley A. Henry, CEO & Conservator of Forests at the Forestry Department, echoed a similar



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre) gets ready to plant a white poui seedling at the site of the Labour Day Plantathon/National Labour Day Project on lands adjacent to the PJ Patterson Highway on May 23, 2023. He is joined by Ainsley A. Henry (right), CEO and Conservator of Forests, Forestry Department, the Hon. Olivia Grange (left), Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda Minister Without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, and the Hon. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Community Development.

sentiment and encouraged the public to use grey water, that is, domestic wastewater from sinks and washing machines, among others to water trees planted.

Over 40 persons were employed to prepare the planting site, most of whom were residents of the nearby Hartlands Community. Some of have been employed to assist with the maintenance that will be done in the coming months. Ackee, Jacaranda, Poui, Cedar and Fiddlewood were among the species planted on the 10-hectare site.

In keeping with this year's theme, “Plant a Tree... For Life”, several Labour Day projects incorporated tree planting. Among the entities that partnered with the Forestry Department to plant trees on Labour Day were the Municipal Corporations. Each Corporation received a tree species significant to their parishes, dubbed the ‘parish tree’ to plant symbolically in communities across their parishes.

The Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation also partnered with the Forestry Department to distribute tree seedlings to encourage tree planting in various parts of the island. Staff from the Forestry Department also engaged communities, schools, the Jamaica Constabulary Force and Local Forest Management Committees in several tree planting activities.

The focus for Labour Day 2023 was intended to drive the achievement of the National Tree Planting Initiative to plant three million trees in three years. The implementation of the Initiative, led by the Forestry Department, has so far seen the planting of just over 2.5 million trees. The Agency distributed thousands of trees from its nurseries to facilitate and encourage tree planting in the various Labour Day projects.

Forestry Department to Maintain Seedlings Planted Along Highway 2000

Article was published before



Photo: Yhomo Hutchinson
 (File Photo) Minister Without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda (left), and Chief Executive Officer and Conservator of Forests, Forestry Department, Ainsley Henry, plant a sapling as part of the launch of the urban tree planting thrust, at Jamaica House on Saturday (January 28).

Commission (NWC) resources. The planting of 10,000 trees along Highway 2000, in the vicinity of Hartlands, is this year's National Labour Day project under the theme 'Plant a Tree for Life – Promoting Climate Change Mitigation, Food Security and Road Safety'.

The trees were planted on land adjacent to approximately 2.5 kilometres of the P.J. Patterson Highway (Highway 2000) in the vicinity of the Hartlands Underpass.

"We have put in place an arrangement to facilitate trucking of water to the site and we will be using water... from rivers and canals... that has not been treated... for irrigating the planting site," he said.

Mr. Henry advised that the site will be monitored regularly, adding that the agency will implement a detailed schedule to ensure the maintenance and watering of the trees.

Written by: E. Hartman Reckford

Source: Jamaica Information Service (JIS)

As Jamaica grapples with the impact of the prevailing drought, the Forestry Department has undertaken to water seedlings planted for the National Labour Day project, using alternatives to National Water

Chief Executive Officer and Conservator of Forests, Forestry Department, Ainsley Henry, told JIS News that the agency will be responsible for maintaining the trees that are planted.

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Plastic waste disturbs the ecological balance of mangrove forests.

Here's how to #BeatPlasticPollution:



Use more sustainable products such as reusable water bottles and shopping bags.



Shop for products without plastic packaging.



Dispose of your solid waste properly.



Recycle plastic products.

#BeatPlasticPollution

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

JUNE 5



Forestry Dept, Devon House playing important role in preserving Jamaica's trees

The picturesque Devon House mansion and property, one of the must-see landmarks in Jamaica's capital city for residents and visitors alike, was the subject of some debate late last year when one of its poinciana trees — majestic though ageing and badly damaged — was removed from the historic piece of real estate.

Many felt that the mansion — the architectural dream of Jamaica's first black millionaire, George Stiebel — declared a national monument in 1990 by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, should remain untouched.

Recent renovations to the courtyard at Devon House which began in March 2022 involved construction to "address expressed concerns about safety, pedestrian flow, the functionality of the courtyard and accessibility to the differently abled", the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) stated late last year.

The statement pointed out that only one



Seeds from the trees at Devon House are among those collected by the Forestry Department islandwide and used to replenish similar trees across Jamaica.

tree — a poinciana — was removed during the construction, for public safety on the recommendation of the Forestry Department.

While the removal of the tree placed the spotlight on Devon House, what is less known is that the trees on the property are playing an important role in replenishing similar trees across

Jamaica.

The Forestry Department — an executive agency of the Government responsible for the management and conservation of the country's forest resources — is integral to this process.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



In support of our mandate to conserve Jamaica's forests, we conduct routine reforestation and maintenance to increase Jamaica's tree cover.

Reforestation conserves, restores, and supports the regeneration of degraded and denuded forests, contributing to a healthier environment.

National School Tree Planting Competition Propagates New Generation of Environmental Stewards



Students and teachers of the Lister Mair Gilby High School for the Deaf, second-place winner, Secondary Category, in the National School Tree Planting Competition, are joined by Sophia Lewis, Head of the JPS Foundation (centre) and Alexander Beckford, Projects Officer, Forestry Department in observing one of sixty-eight tree seedlings planted at the school.

A new generation of environmental stewards were rewarded under the National School Tree Planting Competition (NSTP), for demonstrating innovation, civic pride, commitment to sustainability, and appreciation for the benefits of trees to the environment and community.

The top three schools in the primary and secondary levels as well as the top school in the Early Childhood Institution and Tertiary student categories were presented with their cash prizes during a prize-giving tour from May 2-5, 2023.

"I am pleased that our students were eager participants and persevered despite extremely difficult challenges to contribute to the NTPI, better their communities and in so doing have cultivated a culture of environmental stewardship among themselves and their peers," Mr. Ainsley Henry,

CEO & Conservator of Forests said. He congratulated the winners and encouraged all schools to maintain and plant more trees once the conditions became more favourable.

The first-place schools at all levels received cash prizes of \$300,000 each. The winners were Snowden Infant School in Manchester (Early Childhood), Prospect Primary in St. Thomas, York Castle High in St. Ann (secondary level) and Kadeisha Cooper, a University of Technology Student in St. Andrew that won at the Tertiary level. The second place winners were Mona Preparatory (primary) and Lister Mair Gibly School for the Deaf (secondary) in St. Andrew while third place went to Bath Primary and Junior High in St. Thomas (Primary) and Glenmuir High in Clarendon.

Sectional prizes for most outstanding student, most outstanding teacher and most innovative schools for the

primary and secondary categories were also awarded. Both York Castle High and Prospect P Primary won \$100,000 each for most innovative schools their respective categories. The most outstanding student and teacher awardees each received sectional prizes of \$50,000, which went to Nesline V. Lawrence and Nakeel Phipps from Prospect Primary and Shennel Haye-Stephens and Tyrique Clarke from York Castle High School.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

See pages 10-12 for the competition's winners.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TREE PLANTING COMPETITION



Sponsored by **JPS Foundation**



EARLY CHILDHOOD CATEGORY



8
TREES PLANTED

TERTIARY CATEGORY

220
TREES PLANTED



NATIONAL SCHOOL TREE PLANTING COMPETITION



Sponsored by **JPS Foundation**



1

PROSPECT PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Most Innovative School
- Most Outstanding Teacher
- Most Outstanding Student

103
TREES PLANTED



71
TREES PLANTED

2

MONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL



3

BATH PRIMARY & JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



57
TREES PLANTED

PRIMARY CATEGORY

NATIONAL SCHOOL TREE PLANTING COMPETITION



Sponsored by **JPS Foundation**



YORK CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

- Most Innovative School
- Most Outstanding Teacher
- Most Outstanding Student



275

TREES PLANTED

68

TREES PLANTED

2

LISTER MAIR GILBY HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF



52

TREES PLANTED

3

GLENMUIR HIGH SCHOOL



SECONDARY CATEGORY

Schools grow through challenges to win school competition

Amidst setbacks induced by the harsh drought, animal trespass and water shortage, the Forestry Department and sponsors witnessed gratitude and respect for trees among the top schools. They invested time and care and applied commendable strategies that can inspire youth and communities across Jamaica to plant trees sustainably and with little resources.

Although they got off to a late start, Prospect Primary was not a late bloomer. They placed first in the primary level of the competition, having planted over one hundred trees. Still, the number of trees planted was not the only impressive feat of the school. They developed an exemplary agroforestry plot of various fruit species including soursop, cherry, coffee, and coconut, which set a high standard for sustainable tree planting. Principal, Nesline V. Lawrence reported that the community was happy with the productive use of the former dumping ground.

After planting the seedlings, the small school in Danvers Pen, St. Thomas was faced with water woes threatening the plants' survival. Nevertheless, Mrs. Lawrence, who received the award for Most Outstanding Teacher, primary category said despite the challenges she was determined that her school would win. "We are in it and we are going to win it", she revealed was her attitude during the competition. The school reused plastic bottles for drip irrigation to alleviate the drought. Funds were low, but Ms. Lawrence purchased water from Serge Island Dairies, which later donated the resource to maintain the plants. Ms. Lawrence rallied her students, including Most Outstanding Student, Nakeel Phipps, parents and farmers who planted and maintained the seedlings, even on weekends. Together, the school and the community



One of 103 trees planted by the Prospect Primary School, winner of the Primary Category in the National School Tree Planting Competition. The school employed a drip irrigation system of plastic bottles to water plants in the wake of water shortage in the community.

converted an overgrown plot of land into a promising orchard from which the school and community will benefit.

Tree planting is not new to York Castle High school. Principal, Raymond Treasure, proudly shared that the partnership with the Forestry Department was longstanding, confirmed by several mature willow and jacaranda trees growing across the school compound. The school was led to victory by the Agriculture Science Department steered by Most Outstanding Teacher, Shennel Haye-Stephens who incorporated the planting and maintenance of the trees in her lessons. The drought was no match for the highly motivated team who sought to win the cash prize to fund the purchase of new equipment for the Department. In addition, Mrs. Haye-Stephens replaced seedlings destroyed by the drought through propagation. "When we planted and they started dying we had to find other ways to maintain so we did some propagation...we got some additional trees from the Pou tree via circumposing" she said.

Empowered by skill, determination and vast real estate, the team propagated and planted two hundred and seventy-five trees including ackee, otaheite apple, ackee, breadfruit, cedar and Christmas palm among others.

"I would call [the competition] groundbreaking", said Mrs. Haye-Stephens. "The trees are going to add not only to the aesthetics of the environment but also help with reducing our carbon footprint, [and] teaching students, actually, how to take care of their own space."

The teachers and students from both schools have committed to maintain the trees and expand their tree planting efforts. Ainsley A. Henry, CEO & Conservator of Forests expressed that the competition was one of the programmes that would "help to make [the National Tree Planting Initiative] more personal to Jamaicans and would help [the Forestry Department] to achieve [its] target of three million trees.

Forestry
Department

Protecting
our Forests;
Sustaining Lives

Congratulations Food For The Poor on 40 years of service to Jamaica



We look forward to strengthening our partnership and wish you continued growth and success for years to come.

For more information,
contact:

 (876) 618-3205

 fdinfo@forestry.gov.jm

 www.forestry.gov.jm



Jamaica Public Service shines bright through tree planting

The Jamaica Public Service (JPS) is spreading the light across various communities through its league of tree-planting volunteers, JPS Voltz. Eighty-eight beaming participants turned out to plant 5000 trees on a hot, sunny Friday on June 16, 2023.

The team along with members of the Forestry Department planted a mix of timber ornamental and fruit trees including, Guango, Poui and Ackee on Sugar Company of Jamaica (SCJ) lands, adjacent to the PJ Patterson Highway, St. Catherine, in support of the Agency's target to plant three million trees.

Azalee Lawson, Manager, Environmental Affairs at JPS shared that "for some of the volunteers, it is the first they are coming out and they are in awe". She added, that "they are just loving the exercise despite the heat... and they've promised they will come back and plant trees...".

Ms. Lawson, recounted that tree planting has been a wonderful experience for her as a volunteer. She officially started her journey as a tree-planting volunteer in 2010 with JPS, one of the first corporate groups to join the Agency's Adopt-a-Hillside Programme. The Programme encourages private-sector groups to play an active role in reforestation by funding the reforestation and maintenance of forests.

Through its own projects and partnership with the Forestry Department, JPS has demonstrated its commitment to a sustainable environment over the years. The utility company was also a major sponsor in the Forestry Department's National School Tree Planting Competition in 2022.

Ms. Lawson said that "tree planting is our way of giving back to the environment, giving back to communities in which we serve".





Forestry Department to save through rainwater harvesting



Rainwater harvesting system installed at the Head Office nursery.

The Forestry Department is expected to see several benefits including a reduction in its water bill and a return on investments in three to five years with the introduction of rainwater harvesting.

To date, rainwater harvesting systems have been installed at the Head Office nursery, and will be expanded to regional offices and nurseries.

Learn more about the rainwater harvesting activities by clicking the link below:

WATCH THIS VIDEO

More on the rainwater harvesting project in our next issue.

New advisory board appointed to the Forestry Department



The members of the newly appointed Forestry Department Advisory Board, from L-R, Ms. Racquel Hudson, Mrs. Donna Blake, Dr. Theresa Rodriguez-Moodie, Ms. Sharon Donaldson (Chairperson), Ms. Daniella Aitchison, Mr. Peter Baker and Mr. Clehan Barrow Williams, JP (not in picture). The board has been appointed to serve from October 24, 2022 to October 23, 2025.

The Role and Membership of the Advisory Board

The Executive Agencies Act provides for the appointment of an Advisory Board responsible for advising the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the strategic and

business responsibilities of the Agency.

The Advisory Board is appointed by the responsible Minister, from among suitable qualified persons and private

sector individuals with professional expertise, interests and experiences to support the Forestry Department's mandate.

Mission

Manage our forests in an effective and responsible manner for the benefit of current and future generations.

Vision

Jamaica: a country where we value our forest ecosystem and use its resources in a responsible manner.

Core Values

Commitment Confidentiality Teamwork Integrity
Professionalism

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