



PLANTING SEEDS OF CITIZENSHIP

The Daffodil Project Activity Guide

A note to teachers and parents: This guide is designed to engage youth in their communities with a simple first step...planting a daffodil bulb that will flower next spring. As you guide young people through these activities, encourage them to see this as a meaningful act of citizenship that will foster ongoing interest, participation and advocacy for city parks and public spaces. These activities are flexible and can be adapted to a range of ages.

Why Daffodils?

The Daffodil Project was originally created to commemorate the tragedies that occurred on September 11th, 2001 and serves as a living memorial for the victims, a symbol of remembrance and an act of rebirth that involves citizens in the revitalization of their communities. Each fall, New Yorkers for Parks distributes hundreds of thousands of daffodil bulbs across the five boroughs of New York City. The bulbs are free to anyone willing to plant them in a park or public space. Since the project began, over 7.5 million daffodils have been planted. In 2007, Mayor Bloomberg named the daffodil the official flower of New York City.

What to do With Your Daffodil Bulbs

Getting Started

1. Plant in the fall—early in colder climates, later in mild areas. The month of October is the perfect time to plant daffodils in most parts of New York City.
2. Tour your neighborhood to find a public space where you would like to see blooming daffodils in the spring. This may be outside of your home or apartment building, around the trees near your school or in a public park or garden in any neighborhood that needs *beautification*.
3. Get permission from property owners or the NYC Parks Department (Dial 311) to plant your bulbs.
(*Note: Avoid spaces designated as *Greenstreets*. These are maintained by the NYC Parks Department.)

Planting Instructions

1. Collect your tools: a *trowel*, gloves, *compost*, water, and bulbs.
2. Daffodils are *hardy* and can grow in the toughest locations. Select a spot in full sun or part shade.
3. If planting near a tree, leave 8-12 inches between the trunk and bulb so the roots have room to grow.
4. Prepare the soil by removing dead leaves and garbage and mixing in *compost*.
5. Dig holes 6 inches deep leaving 2-4 inches between each.
6. Place the daffodil bulb in the hole with the pointed side up and the root side down. The top of the bulb should be about 4 inches below the soil. The bottom of the bulb should rest firmly on the soil at the bottom of the hole. Tightly pack dirt around the bulb to cover the hole.
7. Water the bulbs thoroughly.
8. Return to the site in the spring to watch your daffodils grow!

Ongoing Care Of Your Daffodils

Become a steward of your park by taking care of your daffodils.

In the spring...

After the winter, your bulbs will begin to sprout and will need help from you to grow. Here's what you should do:

- 🌱 In early March, begin to clear the site of dead leaves and twigs and pick up litter.
- 🌱 Leave the bulbs in place but check the soil to make sure rainfall has kept it damp. If not, water the site weekly.
- 🌱 Post a sign letting people know that daffodils have been planted.
- 🌱 As the flowers grow, regularly clear away litter and debris.
- 🌱 Place fertilizer or compost around the flowers to add nutrients to the soil.



Take pictures of your daffodils and share them using [#daffodilproject](#), and tag us, [@ny4p](#). We'll have lots of daffodil photos on our feeds - we're on Instagram and Twitter as [@ny4p](#).

Daffodils will flower again year after year. In the late spring, do not cut the green leaves because they are needed by the plant to stay alive. Once the leaves turn brown, you can cut them to help the plant replenish itself over the winter.

Suggested Activities

Who Uses The Park?

Parks are a part of the community for a variety of reasons. Many people use parks for *leisure* activities, enjoying the lawns, park benches, playgrounds, and sporting fields. Parks also add beauty and open green space to the dense city landscape. Find out who uses your neighborhood parks just by looking. Create a simple worksheet, like the one to the right to record your observations and document what you learn.

Share what you find:

- 🌱 Illustrate a typical park scene depicting how people use the park.
- 🌱 Draw a map of the park highlighting *services* and *amenities*.
- 🌱 Take photographs of park users.
- 🌱 Create a blog to post your observations, images, and drawings and invite comments from others.

Commemorating September 11th In NYC Parks

Daffodils are a traditional symbol of *memorial*. When in full bloom, the bright yellow flowers hang down over the green stem – some people think this looks like a head bowed in silence. In New York City, daffodils have been planted to *commemorate* September 11th and remind us that everyone can help to revitalize their communities by improving public spaces. Share this message with your neighbors in the following ways:

- 🌱 Distribute a flier or post signs telling people about the Daffodil Project and the bulbs that you planted. Invite volunteers to help with ongoing care of your daffodil beds. Create a schedule to share responsibilities in the fall and spring.

What do you see in the park?

Trees
Flowers
Playground
Lawns
Benches
Garbage cans
Water fountains

What services or amenities are in the park?

Lighting
Seating
Rest rooms
Lawn care
Gardening
Signage

Who uses the park?

Families
School children
Dog walkers
Senior citizens
Runners
Park workers

How do people use the park?

Ride bikes
Sit with friends
Read
Work
Play with dogs
Picnic

- 🌸 Ask friends and neighbors to get their own free bulbs and plant them. We have a vision of a daffodil for every New Yorker in 10 years. That's almost 9 million flowers, so we have a lot of work to do!
- 🌸 Be active in a local park to show how important parks are to the rebirth and life of our city. Visit the memorials in NYC parks and gardens and learn about the events and people commemorated. Think about why parks are a good place for public memorials. Design a memorial for your neighborhood green space using daffodils.
- 🌸 Collect stories of hope that celebrate the community, such as profiles of residents who helped to improve the neighborhood or memories of the past that inspire *revitalization*. Share these on a blog and invite ongoing posts.

Improving The Park For All

Helping to make your community a better place is an example of active *citizenship*. Making sure that your park has *amenities* and *services* for the people who live there is a great way to get involved.

Step 1. Assess

Look to see what services and amenities your park offers. These may include playgrounds, seating, lighting, drinking fountains, signs to direct park users and garbage removal.

Step 2. Interview

Find out how people use the park, what they like and don't like about the park and what they would like to improve.

Step 3. Evaluate

Based on what you learned, decide what is needed to serve more people. Visit a park in another neighborhood to compare the services offered. How do you explain any differences?

Step 4. Share

- 🌸 Videotape or audio record your interviews and post them on YouTube or in a blog to start a conversation about improving the park for *stakeholders*.
- 🌸 Be a park *advocate* by writing to your local newspaper or elected official with the results of your research and your recommendations for making improvements.
- 🌸 Host an event in the park to highlight what the community and government can do to improve the use and care of green spaces in your neighborhood. Invite your local newspaper or elected official to come!

Questions to ask about a park...

Ask yourself ...

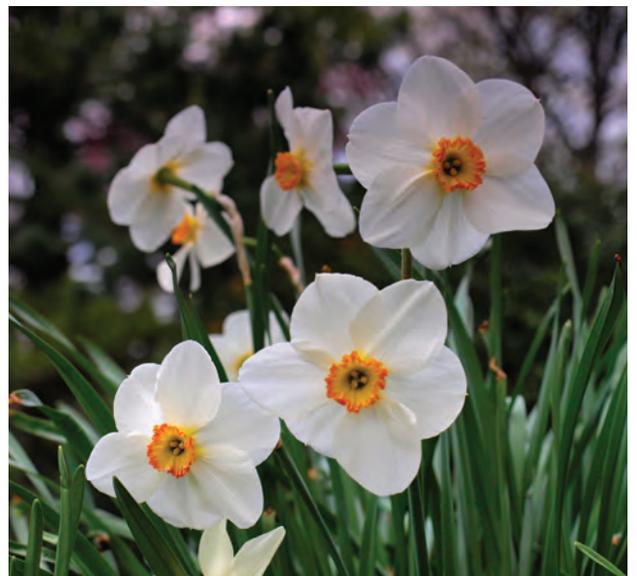
What does the park have?

Ask others ...

What does the park need?

Decide...

- Do some park users have needs that conflict with others?
- How should we balance the needs of many park users?
- Do all parks have the same types and quality of services and amenities? Why or why not?



Glossary



Listed below are key terms essential to the Daffodil Project.

Advocate – *n.* someone who supports a belief, a place or a cause

Amenity – *n.* a feature of a building or place that adds comfort, convenience or pleasure

Beautification – *n.* the improvement of something to make it beautiful

Citizenship – *n.* the behavior of an individual as a member of society

Commemorate – *v.* to honor the memory of a person(s) or event

Community – *n.* a place or group whose members share characteristics, interests or experiences that make it distinct from the larger society

Compost – *n.* decayed organic material used to fertilize plants and flowers

Hardy – *adj.* able to survive difficult conditions or situations

Leisure – *n.* free time used for enjoyment

Memorial – *n.* a thing or place used to remind people of a person or an event

Revitalization – *n.* when something has been given new life

Services – *n.* plural. work and activities that serve the needs of the public

Steward – *n.* someone who cares for property he or she does not own

Stakeholders – *n.* plural. people who have an interest in a place, property or organization

Symbol – *n.* an image, object or words that are used to represent something with meaning

Trowel – *n.* a small handheld shovel

Web Resources

Check out the following websites for more information about urban parks and green spaces.

- **Living Trees Project:** See how others are using trees and plants in public spaces to create living memorials to 9/11 at <http://www.livingmemorialsproject.net/about.htm>
- **September 11th:** Find tips for talking to children about the acts of terrorism that occurred on 9/11 at <http://www.9-11heroes.us/talk-children-war-terrorism.php>
- **War Memorials:** Many park memorials honor citizens who served the country during wartime. Learn about why war memorials in NYC parks are important public spaces to inspire remembrance at http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_history/veterans.html
- **Peace Memorials:** Learn why Strawberry Fields in Manhattan's Central Park is a monument to peace at http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_history/strawberryfields.html
- **Trees:** Adopt a NYC tree, request a tree for your street, or volunteer to care for NYC trees and plants at www.milliontreesnyc.org. Check out the Kids Section for games and downloads.
- **Volunteering:** Every spring and fall, visit a NYC park for free cultural events and volunteer activities on It's My Park Day. For a schedule or information about how to plan your own event go to <http://www.partnershipforparks.org/>
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Contact the manager at any NYC park to find out how to volunteer. Search for a specific park at http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/your_park.html
- **New Yorkers for Parks:** <http://www.ny4p.org>

About New Yorkers for Parks

New Yorkers for Parks is the only independent citywide organization fighting for greener, cleaner and safer parks in all five boroughs of New York City. New Yorkers for Parks is dedicated to ensuring that all New Yorkers enjoy ready access to excellent neighborhood parks. We provide the tools that help communities build better parks for better neighborhoods.

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