

TAKE PART IN WORLD ANIMAL DAY!

OCTOBER 4



GET INVOLVED

If you're reading this, it's because you love animals – but you might not have internet access and find the idea of organising an event rather daunting. Don't worry – there are still plenty of ways YOU can help change the future for animals in need around the world.

Often, someone just needs to take the lead and others will follow. Why shouldn't that someone be you? You could raise awareness, volunteer, fundraise, organise an event – anything you do is better than doing nothing.

World Animal Day is YOUR chance to join welfare advocates all around the world by speaking up for animals on October 4! You'll be surprised at what YOU can achieve for animals in need, including:

- Wild animals
- Companion animals/pets
- Farm and working animals
- Animals used in entertainment
- Animals used in experiments
- Marine life

Although World Animal Day falls on October 4, any day around then is fine, as long as you make it very clear on your advertising.

Please do not use real animals as part of your event, unless the activity directly improves their welfare, e.g. exercise, adoption, spaying, neutering, vaccinating etc.

We have plenty of inspirational ideas of ways you can get involved! Don't forget – it's not the size of your event that matters, it's getting involved that's important!

GET AN IDEA

Many of the ideas below are relatively easy and quick to organise, however, for those who want to be more adventurous, there are also some that require a little more time and effort.

The size of the event isn't important - showing you care and encouraging others to do the same is what matters. *Will you join us on October 4?*

Together, we can improve the lives of working animals, wild animals and those suffering in experiments.

United, we will make a difference for marine creatures, companion animals and animals used for entertainment.

- Offer to help out at a local animal shelter. Or even better, volunteer your services on a long-term basis, not just for World Animal Day.
- Say 'thank you' to the staff at a local animal shelter, to your vet, to your boarding kennels/cattery, to the person who walks your dog, or to anyone you know who cares about animals – by writing them a letter or card.
- Visit a local wildlife centre and brush up on your knowledge of the animal kingdom. Try to visit the centre before October 4, so that you can let them know about World Animal Day and ask them to take part. We'd be happy to send you some leaflets to share – please call us on 01242 252871.
- If you can't get out and about for World Animal Day, curl up with a book about animals and improve your knowledge. Alternatively, the Discovery Channel always produces special television programmes for World Animal Day.
- Get in touch with some favourite animal welfare organisations by telephone or letter and offer to hold an information stall in your local town centre, library, shopping mall or college/university campus.
- Sponsor an animal – many wildlife organisations have sponsorship schemes for animals in their care, whereby individuals can pledge a certain amount of money for a specific animal and receive regular updates, photographs, etc., and in some cases visit the animal. World Animal Day would be a great day to make a pledge to sponsor a wolf, whale, lion, gorilla, etc.
- Organise a fundraiser for a favourite animal charity, such as a coffee morning or garage sale. If possible, get together with some friends to make the event that little bit more fun – for example, a coffee morning could be enlivened by sharing photographs, videos and anecdotes about pets and other animals.
- Contact a local wildlife or conservation group to offer help in creating a wildlife habitat, putting up bird or bat boxes, conducting a wildlife survey, or whatever other projects they might be running.
- When you're out shopping, buy a few extra tins and packets of cat and dog food and donate them to a local animal shelter. Blankets, toys and feeding equipment also make useful donations.
- Look at how you can make your own garden more wildlife-friendly. For example, in the UK, a 'wild corner' with a few nettles where peacock, tortoiseshell and red admiral butterflies can lay their eggs; a log pile for woodlice, snails, and other small creatures (while you might not think they are particularly appealing, they play a vital part in our eco-system, and will attract predators such as frogs, newts, hedgehogs and thrushes to your garden); a water feature to attract frogs and dragonflies; a bird table and bird bath; butterfly- and bee-friendly plants such as buddleia, ice plants, lavender and lemon balm.
- Treat your own furry (or scaly) friend – make the day special for the animal(s) in your life. Take your dog for an extra-long walk with plenty of ball-throwing; buy your cat some new toys; look at how you can make your caged animals' homes more interesting, with additional ramps, tunnels, etc. If you don't have an animal at home, volunteer to take a neighbour's dog out for a walk.
- Organise your family and friends in a litter-picking session. This might not seem to have much to do with animals, but remember that animals' feet are frequently cut on broken glass, hedgehogs often get their heads stuck in discarded plastic cups, dogs can make themselves ill by eating fast food packaging, and the plastic drink-can holders are a particular menace to all kinds of birds and animals.

(If you choose to organise a litter-pick, keep a careful eye on children, remember to wear gloves, and above all avoid discarded needles or any other kind of medical waste.)

- Alternatively, if you live near the sea, organise a beach clean-up.
- Are you an expert on tropical fish, horses, reptiles, rabbits, or any other kind of animal? Share your knowledge with others and offer to give an illustrated talk to a local school or youth group.
- Spread the word – write to your local paper and tell them about World Animal Day. Suggest that their readers might like to get involved. Even though you don't have internet access yourself, don't forget to include the website address in your letter – www.worldanimalday.org.uk.

There are lots of other ways you could raise funds or awareness for your favourite animal welfare charity, including coffee mornings, cakes sales and bingo nights. The list is endless!

If you have any other ideas, please let us know and we'll consider adding them! Just call +44 (0) 1242 252871 with your suggestions!

GET ORGANISED

Once you decide that you want to hold a World Animal Day event, the months will pass like days so it's important to start work on your plans early.

A few points to consider:

- Whatever you decide to do, plan well in advance. The more planning you do, the less likely you will have unforeseen hitches and disruptions on the day.
- If applicable, always check with any relevant managers before organising an event.
- Check if other events are being held on the same day in your area. If an activity clashes, choose a different day so that you don't lose your potential audience. Although World Animal Day falls on October 4, any day around then is fine, as long as you make it very clear on your advertising.
- If you are planning on adopting or sponsoring an animal, do plenty of research to find the right organisation. Talk to the information officer at your local library. S/he will be able to find the information you need.
- Don't be afraid to ask an expert for advice. For example, your local wildlife trust should be able to put you in touch with someone who can help you create a garden suitable for the wildlife in your region.
- If you are thinking of adopting an animal, ask plenty of questions and find out as much as you can about the animal's needs.
- If you have an idea for a fundraising activity, your chosen charity might be able to offer some guidance about how to make the most of your event. Some charities might prefer that you contact them in advance before fundraising on their behalf. Ask permission to use their logo alongside the World Animal Day branding (please see 'Get Publicity').
- If you are planning to hold an information stall, try to organise it as far in advance as possible. Make sure the organisation(s) whose work you are promoting know what you are doing. Ask them well in advance for plenty of leaflets to give out. Ask permission from the local authorities well in advance. You will also need to check if you need to have any insurance cover – if so, contact the organisation(s) whose work you are promoting and see if their insurance policies will cover your event. Make sure you have plenty of help on the day as running a stall can be very tiring.
- Depending on the scale of your event, you might also need to consider the following:
 - road closures
 - parking, possibly including attendants

- access for emergency services
- venue capacity and restrictions
- access for people using wheelchairs
- budget
- necessary equipment, to borrow or hire
- risk assessments
- insurance
- first aid, especially for sporting events
- toilet facilities, including cleaners if it will be very busy
- security
- power generators
- regulations regarding food preparation, storage, serving and labelling
- alcohol licensing
- noise restrictions
- entertainment licensing, including public film screenings and music licensing
- litter picking and waste disposal
- temporary signs directing people to the venue, if it isn't in an obvious location

GET PUBLICITY

The biggest issue with any event is not having enough attendees. Don't let all of your hard work be in vain – it's essential to 'sell' your event to as many people as possible. Don't leave it too late, or they might have made other plans for the same day!

The exact timing of your promotion will depend on your intended audience. Families with children and working people might need more notice than those with fewer commitments. Students often choose what to do at the last minute. Get to know your audience and decide when they need to hear about your event. Advertise your event regularly, then increase its promotion during the week leading up to the activity.

The World Animal Day website is used as a source of information by journalists, schools and animal lovers all year round. It would be helpful to ask someone with internet access to add your event to the website (they'll need to register first, but it will only take a few minutes). You could also ask them to create promotional materials for you from the editable signs and posters on the 'Resources' page. Many libraries have printers available for the public to use.

- Compose a compelling press release. Send it to local newspapers, radio stations, clubs, community groups, and anyone else you can think of who will be able to help you publicise your event. Follow it up with a phone call to make sure it's been received and read. Call them again the day before to check that they're sending someone. Ask them to also send a photographer. Tell them that the World Animal Day website has a media centre for more information.
- Invite a celebrity to open your event. This doesn't mean you have to find a big movie star – maybe the local mayor, a local sports star, the editor of a local newspaper or a local politician. It would be nice if the celebrity makes a short welcome speech to open your event and gives a quote to the media. If your celebrity has a pet, maybe they'd like to bring it along – depending upon what it is of course! This would provide the media with a good photo opportunity. If possible, have a reserve special guest just in case your celebrity is unable to attend at the last minute.
- Contact the editor of community newsletters and ask them to include information about your event.
- Do you have community notice boards in your area? Find out who controls them and ask if you can include your event.

- Print flyers and distribute them effectively to be sure your event is brought to the attention of people interested in animals and their welfare. For example, display flyers at veterinary clinics, pet shops, dog training clubs, kennels and catteries, rescue centres, vegan/vegetarian cafés and restaurants etc. Also ask local shops to display your signs.
- You could be raising awareness or funds for an animal welfare organisation – ask them to share your event on their own social media channels and in other areas. The charity might have its own publicity officer who could also promote the event.
- Ask other related groups to advertise your event on their social media pages.

AFTER THE EVENT

Many individuals and organisations participate in World Animal Day on an annual basis, and their commitment is appreciated.

Your first event might not go exactly according to plan, but don't let that discourage you from taking part again next year. This time, you'll gain valuable experience and resources. You'll also make contacts that will help make it run more smoothly next time.

Points to consider:

- If you were able to get someone to add your event to the World Animal Day website, ask them to update the activity after it has taken place. They can also upload some fabulous images and videos. People from all round the world visit the website... let's show them what you've achieved!
- If applicable, work out your profits and pass them on the recipient charity as soon as possible after the event. You could ask the local press to cover this with a photograph of you handing over the cheque. Don't forget to tell them that your event was especially for World Animal Day.
- Make sure your attendees know how much money you raised and, if your chosen charity sends a letter of thanks, share it with them.
- Make sure that any special equipment that has been borrowed or hired for the event is returned, clean and in working order, as soon as possible.
- Following any project, it is always very useful to look back and give yourself an honest assessment of your event. Write a short report reflecting on both the good and not so good, noting down what changes or improvements to make for the next time.
- If your event was large, with many volunteers, ask for their feedback and suggestions at a debrief meeting. If you think they would prefer to respond anonymously, provide them with a short questionnaire or comment cards.
- Send a timely letter of thanks to the venue, speakers, special supporters, sponsors, VIP visitors, individuals/companies that loaned or donated services or equipment etc. Make sure they know how valuable their support has been and what this will mean to animals.
- Don't forget to give yourself and all of your helpers a pat on the back – after all, you did it! You got involved for the animals – you got involved for World Animal Day!
- Finally, start making plans for next year!

Together, we WILL make animal welfare the priority it deserves to be!