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Kids' Garden Adventure Kit – Don Burke

Publisher: New Holland

RRP \$29.99

What an excellent gift to encourage youngsters to explore the outdoors and try fascinating eco-friendly projects.

Don Burke is the award-winning front person of Australia's television programme, *Burke's Backyard*. He has spent a life-time introducing people to the pleasure of gardens and horticulture. The author of 11 books, he is also Editor in Chief of *Burke's Backyard* magazine.

With this publication, Burke has developed an all-in-one kit for young people interested in plants and the environment. The centre piece is a well-illustrated book with 25 activities that can be completed indoors, the backyard, or other outdoor areas.

Close-up photographs show boys and girls engrossed in making a strawberry tower, seedpod aliens, succulent shoes, hairy caterpillars and snakes. There's lots more imaginative ideas to try by following the clear, easy-to-understand instructions. Household items can be used for many of the activities.

Science projects such as how to change the colour of flowers will fascinate young minds. Included in the kit is an ultraviolet (UV) torch which should be of great interest. Some plants produce UV patterns to attract insects for pollination. The human eye can't see these patterns, yet, when the UV torch is shone on the plants the fluorescent colours glow.

Also part of the kit is a garden trowel, a compass to track the sun, and a thermometer to note temperature. The book and tools fit into a plastic tray which could be used as a seed tray. Everything is packaged in a colourful box with a carry handle. All is ready for the environmental projects and outdoor explorations that kids will be keen to try.

**Reviewed by children's book author
Jean Bennett**

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