Return Your Christmas Tree to Nature

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Thursday, December 18, 2009
Tallahassee Democrat

Extend the usefulness of your Christmas tree by putting it to continued good use after the holidays. Return it to nature. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is encouraging Floridians to recycle their tree.

Here are some ways to recycle your tree:

- Place your used Christmas tree in the garden or backyard and use it as a bird feeder and sanctuary. Fresh orange slices, cranberries, raisins, seed cakes, suet bags, strung popcorn, or smeared peanut butter and seeds in pine cones will attract the birds. Birds also find shelter in the branches from strong winds and cold and a place to roost at night. Be sure to remove all tinsel, decorations, hooks, and garland.

- Some gardeners and communities use Christmas trees to make effective sand and soil erosion barriers, especially for lake and river shoreline stabilization.

- Prune off the branches and place the boughs over perennials as winter protection. Christmas tree branches can be chipped for mulch in your yard. Leon County and the City of Tallahassee have used shredded trees as a free, renewable and natural path material that benefits both the environment and hikers.

- Trees sunk into ponds make excellent refuge and feeding areas for fish.

Where can you drop off your Christmas tree for recycling? Christmas tree drop off usually occurs after Christmas until the beginning of the New Year. Specific dates will be posted on Talgov.com as the time nears. If you miss these dates, you can still place your tree at your curbside on your normal Yard Waste collection day. For more current information check out: [http://www.talgov.com/communications/](http://www.talgov.com/communications/)
Pines, firs and other evergreens have a high content of flammable oils. It’s best not to burn your Christmas tree; especially in a fireplace or wood stove. Recycling is a much better option.

Have a merry and safe Christmas. When the holidays are over, please recycle your tree.

If you are in the market for a beautiful evergreen to be added to your landscape, Christmas is a perfect time to begin shopping. While most Christmas shoppers purchase a cut Christmas tree, there are nurseries and tree farms that offer live Christmas trees with the roots still intact.

You can learn more about Christmas trees at:
http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/families_and_consumers/christmas_trees.html

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