

Living Christmas Tree Focus of a Green Christmas

A fun Christmas tradition is to plant a living Christmas tree in your yard and create a legacy for your family, as you watch the tree grow. For families with plenty of land available, you can plant a tree each year, and even name them for special people, like "Nona's tree." Enjoy your decorated tree as the star of your living room for a week before planting it, but before you purchase a living tree, consider the full height that this tiny tree will reach.

Noble Fir, Grand Fir and White Pine are classic Christmas trees that can live for a hundred years and reach 60 to 90 feet tall, and thirty feet in width. Is a tree this size appropriate for your yard? If you have a farm with acreage, you are very blessed, and every tree you plant will provide a home and food for wild birds and other critters.

For typical size yards, dwarf Blue Spruce cultivars are excellent choices, with perfect conical shapes and thick foliage. Fat Albert reaches fifteen feet and Blaukissen or Blue Kiss reaches eight feet tall. Zones 2 or 3 to 7. The conifer *Chamaecyparis obtusa Compacta* reaches ten feet tall, and Aurea 20 feet tall, in Zones 5-8.

Pines do well in warmer areas, and Calabrian Pine, *Pinus brutia*, has a classic pine tree shape, grows 30 to 80 feet tall, and thrives in heat, drought and wind. Calabrian Pine cannot take temperatures much below zero F. Zones 6-10. This pine and the closely related Eldarica Pine make ideal windbreaks and bird sanctuaries.

All evergreen trees thrive full sun and well-drained soil away from buildings. If soil freezes in your area, to prepare for your living tree, dig a planting hole earlier in the year and fill it with leaves. In cold climates where snow falls and temperatures reach freezing, keep your tree in an unheated garage or on a porch for a few days, to let it acclimate to the warmer temperature of your house.

These trees need cool temperatures, so keep them indoors for only a week, with plenty of light, and away from heaters or fireplaces. Keep the roots moist but not standing in water. In cold climates before planting outdoors, put the tree back on the porch or in the garage for a few days to reacclimate.

I am celebrating the publication of my new book, co-authored with five other writers, "Scrapbook of Christmas Firsts: Stories to Warm Your Heart and Tips to Simplify Your Holiday."

In our book I wrote many green thumb Christmas tips, including the story of mistletoe, how to grow myrrh, how to keep your poinsettia perky and how to make a wreath of pine cones. I love the gorgeous and electricity saving LED Christmas lights for our trees, and found a great online store, All American Christmas Company, at www.aachristmas.com that sells these lights, and www.homedepot.com also sells them. Consumer Reports issued a report lauding LED lights.

Each thing we do, every day, and especially at Christmas, can help the environment. I suggest that folks use gift bags instead of wrap, and re-use the bags many times. I found foil gift bags in gold and in green at a dollar store, and use them for birthdays, Christmas and any gift occasion. So for a fully green Christmas, you could purchase the ideal living tree, light it with LED lights and fill re-usable gift bags with presents under the tree.

Terra Hangen writes numerous devotionals and articles on prayer, gardening, faith, nature and wildlife. Her publishing history includes national print and online publications such as Vibrant Life, Dog Fancy, Lutheran Digest, Flower and Garden, and Hobby Farms and an essay in the Rainy Day Book. Terra and her family enjoy living on the Monterey Bay in California.

About the Author

Check out more information about the author [Scrapbook of Christmas Firsts](#)

Source: <http://www.thinkgreenarticles.com>