



After you enjoy your Christmas tree, consider giving it back to Mother Nature!

Did you know that each year approximately 30-35 million real Christmas trees are bought by families in North America? It takes about 500,000 acres of land just to grow Christmas trees. Trees are a vital part of the water cycle (evapo-transpiration), but it might surprise you to know that each acre planted with Christmas trees provides the daily oxygen requirement for 18 people. For every Christmas tree that is harvested, up to three seedlings are planted in its place the following spring.

In a national survey, 93 percent of people who purchased a real Christmas tree said they recycle it in some way or another. In fact, people have become so interested in recycling their Christmas trees a new name has been created for the process -- **TREECYCLING**.

Recycled Christmas trees get returned to Mother Nature in several ways: chipping/shredding for mulch; beachfront erosion prevention and river delta sedimentation management; and lake and river shoreline stabilization, including fish habitat. And, there's a more direct way your family can recycle a Christmas tree -- in your backyard landscape.



Winter birds will be happy to use the tree for cover in your backyard, especially if you decorate it with bird food "ornaments". Make sure to remove tinsel, garlands and other non-recyclable items, however.

Suet, molded seeds or disposable bird-seed hangers may be purchased from garden centers and bird supply shops. Homemade treats, such as pine cones or stale bread smeared with peanut butter and rolled in bird-seed, are also a hit.

You'll need to secure the tree trunk to the ground to prevent it from being tipped over by winter winds. You can attach the tree to a stable support with wire or twine or use stakes to secure the tree to the ground. Replenish the treats and add variety -- depending on the kind of birds in your neighborhood. 💧