

Which tree is the most Eco-Friendly?

Source: www.christmastree.org, www.bellaonline.com

Each holiday season, there are news articles, web sites and commentators who debate whether it is better for the environment to use an artificial Christmas tree or a natural Christmas tree. This can often be confusing to consumers who want to make an eco-friendly choice, but can't find a simple, straight-forward "apples to apples" comparison. The table below illustrates that Real Christmas Trees are the better environmental choice.

	Real Trees	Artificial Trees
Place of origin	Canada & U.S.	85% from China
Method of Production	Farming, planting takes place Jan-May	Production at factories, consuming natural resources
Components	plant tissue, 100% biodegradable	PVC plastics and metals, non-biodegradable
Lead free?	Yes	No (lead is used as stabilizer)
Chemicals?	None, if trees are organic. Otherwise, farmers use pesticides and/or herbicides that may pollute water and land	Byproducts: dioxins and other carcinogens that pollute air, water, and land
Disposal	Can be used as compost materials	Landfill

The best eco-friendly choice would be to have a living Christmas Tree because there is no tree to cut and to be disposed of.

Jessica Carson wrote the following article:

Living Christmas Tree Selection and Care

Growing your own Christmas Tree in a container gives you both a beautiful tree for celebrating the holidays and a wonderful addition to your container garden the rest of the year. It's important to choose the right kind of tree, and to slowly introduce the tree to the indoors and back outdoors again. Several factors should be considered in selecting your tree, the most important being species and health of your tree.

Your best bet, for a tree you will grow in a container for many years, is a dwarf conifer. Dwarf conifers are slow growing and will generally not be as tall as 'regular' varieties at maturity. Some varieties classified as dwarf will still grow to 20' or more, but will take many years to get there.

Dwarf conifers are available in many shapes, sizes, and colors. For a traditional Christmas Tree shape, choose one with a narrow upright or broad upright growth habit. Many varieties of Boxwood, Cedar, Juniper, Spruce and Pine are available with a dwarf growing habit and in a myriad of colors and shapes. Choose one you like and that will do well in your climate. Remember to choose a tree hardy to one or two zones lower than where you live for the easiest winter care.

If you are buying your tree locally, choose a tree with healthy color and no brown at the needle tips. When you run your fingers down the branches make sure no needles drop off. Check the bottom of the container and make sure the tree is not root bound. If the tree is balled-and-burlapped, make sure the root ball is firm and slightly moist. (Note, a balled-and-burlapped tree will need to be planted in a container before moving indoors)

The climate inside your home is generally warmer and dryer than outdoors. Your tree will need to be acclimated over a few days to ensure it doesn't go into shock and does not start a sudden growth spurt.

1. Keep your tree on a covered porch or in a cool garage for two or three days. Check it for insects and pests during this time and remove them. You can also spray it with a wetting agent like Cloud Cover or Wilt Pruf to help the tree retain moisture while it is indoors.
2. When you move your tree indoors, place it away from heat sources like heater vents, fireplaces, and stoves but where it will receive as much indirect natural light as possible. Put the container in a large tub or tray to catch any water overflow.
3. Limit your use of lights on the tree, keeping to miniature lights or better yet, LED lights to minimize the heat produced.
4. Be sure to keep the tree watered but not overly wet.
5. Limit the tree's stay indoors to no more than 7-10 days, 3-4 days is preferred.
6. When moving your tree back outdoors, slowly acclimate it again by moving it first to a cool garage or covered porch for a few days. If your winters are especially severe you may want to keep your tree in a protected outdoor area for most of the winter.



Don't forget: You are invited to AGM and Christmas Potluck on Wednesday December 1, 2010. Bring your favourite finger foods and drinks to the meeting. Please invite your significant others.



Many thanks to Bill Bischoff for his beautiful presentation on hardy orchids and his generosity in donating plants and seeds for November raffles

"We generate our own environment. We get exactly what we deserve. How can we resent a life we've created ourselves? Who's to blame, who's to credit but us? Who can change it, anytime we wish, but us?"

Richard Bach quotes (American Writer, author of Jonathan Livingston Seagull, b.1936)

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 1, 2010 AGM and Christmas Potluck

The meeting starts at 7 pm, Burnaby Village Museum, Main Building, on 2nd floor. Refreshment is served. All are welcome. Don't forget to bring your own mug to avoid wasting styrofoam cups! Annual membership cost \$12. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy 10% discount of regularly priced items at GardenWorks and by presenting their membership cards.

Future Speakers

- **January 5, 2010 Ikebana Talk and Demo by Beverley-Ann Ranney.** Beverley-Ann Beverley-Ann has a deep interest in Ikebana for many years. In 1961, she began studying ikebana at the Japanese Cultural Centre under the guidance Shizujko Kadoguchi, President of the Ikenobo Society of America-Toronto Chapter. In 1974, she went to Japan for advanced classes at the centuries – old home school of Ikenobo the family name Ikenobo ikebana which has had direct line of 45 headmasters for life. Over the years, she progressed through the rigorous levels of ikebana until she was honored this year with the Professor of Ikenobo 1st Grade full professorship in Ikebana. For more information about Ikebana in Vancouver, please visit www.vancouver-ikebana.ca
- **February 2, 2010 New Trends in Gardening by Brian Minter.** Brian's passion for plants was transformed into 32-acre [Minter Gardens](#) which today draws thousands of visitors each year, and has become a favourite destination for weddings. He is 'BC's go-to garden expert' through his experience at both the garden centre and the display gardens. As such, he has hosted countless radio and television shows, is a frequent gardening columnist, and is the author of Canadian Best Seller, [Brian Minter's New Gardening Guide - Fresh Approaches for Canadian Gardeners](#)

Out and About

October 1 - March 31, 2011, Emotional Geometry at VanDusen Botanical Garden. an exhibit of works by renowned Mexican sculptor SEBASTIAN, creator of VanDusen's Throne of Nezahuacoyotl, in honour of the bicentennial of the Republic of Mexico. Displayed on the Great Lawn and curated by noted SEBASTIAN expert Dr. George Drake. Presented in conjunction with the Consulate General of Mexico and the Vancouver Biennale.

November 20, Saturday, 10am - 12pm, Wild Birds Unlimited Bird Trek with Al Grass at George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary, Delta. The Sanctuary is 13 km west of Ladner (Delta), west of the intersection of Highways 10 and 17. From Ladner, follow Ladner Trunk Road (Highway 10) west to 47A Avenue and on to River Road. Follow River Road westward for 3 km and cross the bridge to Westham Island. Follow the main road to where it ends in front of large black gates. The driveway to the left leads to the Sanctuary's parking lot.

November 21, Saturday, 10:30am - noon or 1:30 - 3pm, HSBC VanDusen Family Program, Biodiversity is the Best! at VanDusen Botanical Garden. For families with children ages 5 to 11 years. With the 2010 Year of Biodiversity coming to a close, now's the ideal time to explore the interconnectedness of life on earth in a way that is as fun as it is educational. Price: Member Family \$15, Non-Member Family \$25 (includes admission to the Garden). One-time bursaries are available for families with limited resources. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration required by calling 604-718-5898 or familyprograms@vandusen.org

November 24, 9am - 7pm, 4th annual POINSETTIA PREMIERE! at West Coast Gardens, 1420 172nd St, Surrey. West Coast Gardens invites you to enjoy the sights & sounds of Christmas with over 30 varieties of the highest quality poinsettias, all grown on-site and displayed for your enjoyment. Live entertainment & door prizes. Info: 604-541-1117, www.westcoastgardens.ca

November 24 - December 12 (or until sold out), Fresh Christmas Wreaths from UBC Botanical Garden at The Shop in the Garden, UBC Botanical Garden, 6804 SW Marine Drive, Vancouver. Tel: 604-822-4529. Unusual evergreens, colourful berries and exotic foliage are crafted into beautiful fresh Holiday wreaths, baskets and door swags. The special construction ensures that - with a regular, generous spritz of water - the wreaths will last to the end of February and beyond. Only 300 or so of these unique decorations are made - so it is essential to come early for the best selection. Prices range: \$35 - \$80 and fresh supplies arrive daily (roughly 30 per day). All funds generated from the sale support research and educational activities at UBC Botanical Garden and Centre for Plant Research.

November 27 - January 2, 2011, closed December 24 & 25, Heritage Christmas 2010 at Burnaby Village Museum. Enjoy the boughs, red bows and all the other old-fashioned ornaments and decorations throughout the village and farmhouse. Scenes from seasonal storybooks and songs bring Christmas memories to life at the museum. The season features traditional entertainment,

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demonstrations, hands-on activities and exhibits from the early 1900s. The craft is a popular with children as is a chat with Father Christmas. Complete each visit with a whirl on the C.W. Parker Carousel.

November 27, Saturday, 9am - 12m, Wreath Making Course at UBC Botanical Garden, Reception Centre, 6804 SW Marine Drive, Vancouver. Guided by the talented and experienced experts Moya Drummond and Judy Newton, you will learn tips and techniques for making your very own natural holiday creation. Participants will leave with their own beautiful handmade wreath to decorate their door or to gift to a friend. Cost: \$60 general, \$55 members. Info: 604-822-3928.

December 2, Thursday, 1pm Chilliwack Floral Art Club Xmas Floral Gala at Best Western Hotel, at Lickman Rd & Hwy 1, Chilliwack. Award-winning Aniko Kovacs will demonstrate the newest European trends in floral design. \$12 admission includes refreshments, sales tables & prizes. Info: Jane Keding 604-792-9297, kaykeding@hotmail.com

December 4, 2010, 11am - 3pm, Kids Decorate Cookies with Mrs. Claus at Tanglebank Gardens, 29985 Downes Rd, Abbotsford. A free event. While the kids are decorating cookies learn how to decorate your urns for the Christmas season. Demo 11:30am and 1:00pm. Info: 604.856.9339, tanglebank@telus.net

December 9, 2010, Thursday, 7:30pm, Cedar Series Lecture: Alpine Plants of Nuk Tessli with Chris Czajkowski at VanDusen Botanical Garden Floral Hall. In the remote reaches of BC's Coast Range mountains, Chris Czajkowski operates the Nuk Tessli Alpine Experience and writes bestselling books, including Cabin at Singing River, Snowshoes and Spotted Dick: Letters from a Wilderness Dweller, and Wildfire in the Wilderness. Ms. Czajkowski will regale attendees with stories of life in the mountains, cabin-building, and the logistics of getting food to Nuk Tessli, where very little can be grown, almost nothing can be harvested from the wild, and the nearest supermarket is hundreds of kilometres away. Tickets: in advance from the Administration Office or, subject to availability, at the door on the night of the lecture. Individual tickets: Members \$10 and non-members \$15.

December 10 - December 12, Holiday Wreath & Centrepiece Sale in the Entrance Pavilion, VanDusen Botanical Garden. Presented by VanDusen Dried Flower Arrangers.

December 10 - January 2, 2011, 4:30pm - 9pm, Festival of Lights at VanDusen Botanical Garden. Every evening except Christmas Day (December 25) when the Garden is closed. A magical experience for the whole family with 1.4 million twinkling lights. Highlights include the Dancing Lights on Livingstone (the lights 'dance' to seasonal music to see a video click <http://vancouver.ca/parks/parks/vandusen/website/events/fol.htm>), Gingerbread Wood and Candy Cane Lane. Evenings prior to Christmas also feature Community Choirs on the Deck and Santa in his Living Room. Up in the Heather Garden, be sure to support the Make-A-Wish Foundation by lighting a candle at the Candle Shrine. Special prices in effect – click here for ticket prices/details can be found on the Festival of Lights section of the Events Page www.vandusengarden.org. Avoid the line-ups and purchase advance tickets at the Garden starting November 1st or call Tickets Tonight at 604.684-2787 to order by phone or on-line at www.ticketstonight.ca. In the case of heavy snow storms or other extraordinary weather conditions: please call the Garden Shop 604-257-8665 to confirm that FOL has not been closed for that one evening.

December 13, 12pm - 1pm, Plant Inspiring Technology Lecture at UBC Botanical Garden Reception Centre, 6804 SW Marine Dr, Vancouver. In the last lecture in the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity series, Daniel explores how plants have inspired and contributed to technological advances, particularly the development of novel materials. Instructor Daniel Mosquin is UBC Botanical Garden's Education and Technology Manager. He is a naturalist and photographer who frequently travels western North America to observe & photograph biodiversity. Since April of 2005, he has been the editor (and often the author and/or photographer) of UBC Botanical Garden's Botany Photo of the Day. Please bring a bag lunch. Coffee supplied. Cost \$5.00 at the door. Please call 604-822-3928 or email botg@interchange.ubc.ca to book.

December 18, Saturday, 10am - 12pm, Wild Birds Unlimited Bird Treks 2010, Nature House on Lost Lagoon, Stanley Park. Free event.