

# Green Gifts for the Holidays

by Tanis Roelofs with contributions by Fash Eftekhari

Green gifts can often be *intangible presents* that deliver green goodness long after the holidays and won't end up as clutter in your closet.

- Donate time and money to a charity in honor of the gift recipient. (A gift to World Wildlife Federation or Sierra Club are good choices.)
- Buy carbon offsets in the recipient's name. Along with cutting your own carbon emissions and fuel bills you can help your friends and family offset theirs. (Look at TerraPass.)
- Give a National Park Pass or a membership to the Dallas Arboretum or Dallas World Aquarium.

For more *traditional gifts* some green stocking stuffers for adults are:

- Energy-saving light bulbs
- DVD's such as *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Who Killed the Electric Car?*, *Food, Inc.*, *Kilowatt Ours*.

No child's stocking or Hanukkah gift would be complete without chocolate and organic is better for the environment. Mass-produced cacao beans are typically grown with heavy use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers on clear-cut forestland. Organic beans are cultivated without the use of chemicals, and shade-grown beans help preserve the forest canopy that shelters migratory birds and butterflies.

- Thompson Candy's organic collection includes panda bears.
- Chinaberry sells an assortment of holiday-themed organic chocolate.
- Dagoba Chocolate-produced from organic beans grown in Latin America
- Green & Black's-gourmet chocolates made from organically grown cacao beans.

## Children's Books and Board Games

Instill the three R's (recycle, reuse and reduce) early and have fun while doing it with ***Recycled Crafts Box*** by Laura C. Martin. Available in bookstores everywhere, \$10.95 or less.

Dr. Seuss's rhyming classic ***The Lorax*** spins an unforgettable tale. It is a whimsical way to introduce complex environmental ideas to young children.

***Groundhog's Garden*** and ***The Sea, the Storm, and the Mangrove Tangle*** both are excellent books about growing one's garden and the intricate workings of an ecosystem.

Board games with environmental themes provide plenty of fun but also important educational benefits. ***Keep Cool: Gambling with the Climate!*** Was developed by two scientists as an educational tool to convey the risks of global warming and the benefits of international cooperation. (to order call 323-525-1948)

***National Parks Monopoly*** provides plenty of educational trivia about Yosemite, Yellowstone and 20 other U.S. park jewels. It can be purchased through amazon.com

## **Carry Bags and Jewelry**

Billions of plastic bogs end up in landfills every year. Give a gift of reusable canvas or cloth bags to take to the grocery store and an attractive designer looking bag to take to the shopping mall.

**Green Karat** Jewelry Company curtails destructive mining practices by using recycled gold and other precious metals. It uses only synthetic diamonds and seeks out ecologically responsible metal refiners.

**Vintage and antique jewelry** is available at a variety of stores and estate sales across the country, and a Google search turns up a long list of online sources.

Other ideas for gardeners, hikers, bird watchers and bicyclists: **gardening tools, binoculars, bicycle accessories** and **portable solar battery packs**.

Deck the halls and boughs with the latest in energy-saving light: LED string light. They use much less electricity and last longer than conventional ones.

