

Things To Do With Pinecones

Compiled or created by Olen Soifer, January 26, 2007

We have LOTS of pinecones at The Woodlands and they are great crafting many things. People pay for pinecones you can gather for FREE! If you come up with some new pinecone ideas, let us know!

TREATING PINECONES:-- Heating pinecones in the oven will kill any insects in them and will melt the sap and make them look a little more shiny. Also, if the pinecones are newer, and haven't opened yet, the heat will open them, cause the seeds inside to fall out & make the house smell nice!. Cover a cookie sheet with aluminum foil, lay out the pine cones in a single layer and put it in a 200 degree oven for about 45 minutes. Then let them cool. For a shinier, look, you can spray pinecones with inexpensive spray lacquer or varnish.

Pinecone Flowers – Many of our pinecones are very open. You can easily cut the center stalk to end up with circular disks of “petals”. You can get 6 or 8 out of one pinecone. Paint the disks and glue a twig or bamboo skewer. You can paint the skewer or wrap it with a thin piece of crepe paper. Add some beads or glitter in the center of the flower to make attractive, permanent flowers. Single cone petals can be painted green and glued to the supporting stick as leaves. Use a short piece of “twist tie” glued to each petal to attach to the stick-stem.

Pinecone Turkey – Some of the pinecones are more compact, with a flat base that can make cool thanksgiving table decorations. Cut out a little fan-shaped tail out of thin cardboard, paint it to look like a turkey tail and glue it to the flat end. Cut another piece of cardboard into a question mark shape and paint it to look like a turkey head and neck and glue to the other end. Then glue on twigs or add pipe cleaners for legs.

Miniature Pinecone Christmas Trees – Cut the wide end off a pinecone so it is sort of flat, and glue it to a round piece of cardboard or thin styrofoam. Paint the whole thing green and then decorate it with glitter, beads, etc. If you want a wider tree, you can push several cones together so that the petals interlock with glue to hold it together.

Pinecone Bird Feeder – Tie 3 foot long piece of string to the thin end of a very open pinecone. Then, mix bacon fat or peanut butter with corn meal, breadcrumbs and birdseed and pack into the spaces in the pinecone. Put more seed, corn meal &/or bread crumbs in a flat pan and roll the pinecone in this until it is completely coated. Hang the feeder from a branch and make sure it does not hang near another branch. This is to keep squirrels from stealing all of the bird's food. The long, long string keeps squirrels from climbing down.

Pinecone Angel – Cut off the thin end of a pinecone and cut the wide end as flat as possible. Paint it white. When it is dry, glue on a round ball (Styrofoam, wood, etc) at the narrow end and glue the wide end to a base. Add some doll hair, yarn or pine needles on the ball and paint on a face. Paint two sturdy leaves white, silver or gold and use for wings, or make wings of construction paper or lace!

Pinecone Fire Starters – Pinecones can be coated with wax and used to start fires if you have a fireplace or woodstove. You can dip the cones in wax or paint the melted wax on. But, BE CAREFUL! NEVER heat wax directly on a stove burner. Melt it in a coffee can placed in a larger pot with water, or some other “double boiler”

Pretty Flames from Pinecones – Either sprinkle one of the following chemicals on glue-sprayed pinecones, or soak the cones in a solution of one the chemicals (1 Teaspoon per cup of water)...then let dry. Toss into the fireplace or campfire for pretty colored flames. **Use only one color per pinecone:** *Copper sulfate (from a gardening store)-blue, Borax-apple green, table salt-yellow, Potassium chloride salt substitute-violet.*

Pinecone Gift Decorations – Pinecones, painted, scented and glittered, make a lovely decoration to add when wrapping gifts and they are much cheaper than bows. If very pretty, they may be appreciated as much as the gift!

Pinecone Potpourri – Fill an inexpensive basket with a mixture of natural and painted pinecones that have been dusted with cinnamon and/or crushed or ground cloves and/or allspice (grind in a coffee grinder) over spray glue.