

Wish Tree Decoration

Wish Trees can be found in many cultures around the world. Typically, they are used by people as a way to reconnect and express desires, wishes, and dreams. Wishes are often written on a piece of cloth that is tied to real tree branches, with the hope that the wishes will come true. For Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center's Holiday Open House@Home, we are providing instructions for creating a Wish Tree decoration. Use this small, 3-dimensional tree to brighten your home during the holidays, then plant the tree in the spring and see what grows. The decoration is made from recycled native seed paper (recycled paper with native prairie grass and flower seeds added) so your wishes can truly sprout and grow!

What you will need:

- Recycled prairie seed paper with a line drawing of a tree on it
- Scissors
- Glue or clear tape
- Pen or pencil
- Markers or crayons
- Ruler

Step 1: Watch this video and follow along. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2in6mGQOrnM>

or: Carefully cut out two trees from the recycled prairie seed paper using the tree outline provided (see page 2). Make sure you leave space to get TWO trees out of your one card of seed paper. You can trace the shape onto the seed paper or cut one tree and then use it to trace the second tree.

Step 2: Cut down through the middle of each tree, **top down on one, bottom up on other.**

On one tree, cut two inches down from the top point. On the other, cut 1.75 inches up from the bottom of the trunk.

Step 3: Add your "wishes" to the tree with pen or pencil.

Before you begin writing, slide the two trees together along the cuts (slide the tree cut from the bottom down into the one cut from the top). This makes the tree 3-dimensional. Notice where you have space to write, then take the trees apart.

Think about your wishes and write one or several on the branches. Is there something you want, a place you want to see, a feeling you would like to have? Maybe you have a wish for someone (or something) else, or even for the whole world.

Step 4: Add other decorations and colors to the tree, if you like.

Add some color using crayons or markers. You could make the bottom of the trunk brown and add colorful dots to the points of the branches. You could add a small bird to your tree. Or perhaps the words are enough.

Step 5: Slide the two trees together, secure with glue or tape, add a string for hanging, and enjoy!

Slide together as described above. To make the two trees remain perpendicular to each other, place two small dots of glue or small pieces of clear tape in each angle. For the hanging string you can make a small hole near the top of the tree, or glue/tape the string to the tree. Find a nice place in your home to hang your Wish Tree.

Step 6: Plant your Wish Tree in the spring!

This might be the hardest step. If you don't leave your Wish Tree hanging until spring, you will need to remember where you put it, with all those extra little pieces. When you plant and water your Wish Tree, the recycled paper will dissolve, releasing the native grass and flower seeds.

