Gifts for the gardener

Thanksgiving is over, Christmas is on its way and it’s time to buy those gifts. If there is a gardener on your gift list, consider a gardening gift.

The possibilities are limitless. There are all sorts of gift ideas for a gardener and the price range varies as well. There are even websites that lists garden gifts in various price ranges.

A subscription to a good garden magazine may be just the idea that your gardener will enjoy throughout the year. I suggest a magazine published in Florida or at least in the Southeast.

You might consider a horticulture book. There are many from which to choose, including those written by local authors. Check with your favorite bookstore and see if it includes a section on local writers. Marie Harrison, Okaloosa County Master Gardener and local author, has two books available. They are Gardening in the Coastal South and Southern Gardening An Environmentally Sensitive Approach. Much of the information in these books is based on Marie’s experience in Valparaiso, Florida. So it’s certainly local in context.

The University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) has numerous for sale books, posters, educational card decks and CDs. A few books available through UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore include the following. Your Florida Dooryard Citrus Guide is the most detailed guide about Florida citrus ever published. Its fifty pages are packed full of detailed information, charts and photographs available for $7. Vegetable Gardening in Florida is a135 page book that covers selection to harvest. It’s a must have for any serious vegetable gardener in Florida. It’s available for under $20. Other titles include Your Florida Guide to Shrubs, Florida Lawn Handbook and Your Florida Landscape: A Complete Guide to Planting and Maintenance. These are just a few examples of available books. You can view and order UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore items online at http://ifasbooks.com or you can request a copy of the catalog at your local UF/IFAS Extension County Office.

What about a gift certificate to a botanical garden such as Bellingrath Gardens or Callaway Gardens?

You could make a gift basket. Be creative. Place small gardening tools such as hand pruners, a garden trowel, gardening gloves, seed packets, seed catalogs or other such items in a basket, five gallon bucket (always handy for gardeners), etc. Enclose with colored cellophane wrap, tie with ribbon and there you go - a nice gift.

There are more expensive items such as garden carts, benches, decorative garden art for the landscape, etc. What about a birdhouse, bat house, birdbath or birdfeeder? You might look for a unique gift such as a mushroom kit containing everything needed to grow fresh edible mushrooms. They may be a little difficult to find but they are available.
A decorative stepping stone, outdoor thermometer, a pack of weather proof plant labels or a bug vacuum might be the gift of choice. You haven’t heard about the bug vacuum? I have one. It was a gift. It works great to vacuum small insects off of indoor plants.

Oh and I haven’t mentioned gift plants. Your imagination is the limit when picking out a gift for a gardener. Your gift may be expensive, inexpensive, handmade, purchased from a store… I’ve been told it’s the thought that counts.

Larry Williams
Extension Agent, Horticulture
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