

Buy Nothing Day 2023

Stay Home and Stay Busy!



The Adventures of Nils and the Scandinavian Yule Goat

Once upon a time in the picturesque countryside of Sweden, there lived a curious and adventurous boy named Nils. Nils was known throughout the village for his insatiable curiosity and his knack for getting into all sorts of exciting predicaments. This year, however, Nils was about to embark on an adventure like no other, involving the magical Scandinavian Yule Goat.

Winter had arrived, and the village was covered in a thick blanket of snow. Nils loved this time of year when the air was crisp, and the ground was soft and white. It was also the season of Yule, a time of joy and celebration in the Scandinavian lands. The centerpiece of the Yule festivities was the Yule Goat, a magical creature who was said to bring gifts and happiness to all who believed in it.

One frosty morning, Nils woke up to find a trail of hoofprints leading from his window and disappearing into the forest. His eyes widened with excitement as he realized that the Yule Goat had come to visit him. Without a second thought, he followed the hoofprints into the woods.

As Nils ventured deeper into the forest, the snow-covered trees seemed to whisper secrets to him. He soon stumbled upon a clearing where the Yule Goat stood, majestic and mysterious. It had shaggy white fur, tall twisted horns, and a mischievous glint in its eyes.

“Who are you?” Nils asked, his heart pounding with awe.

“I am the Scandinavian Yule Goat,” the creature replied in a deep, melodic voice. “I bring joy and happiness to those who believe in the spirit of Yule. But I am in trouble, Nils, for I have lost my way and need your help to find it again.”

Nils, always eager to help, nodded enthusiastically. “Of course, I’ll help you, Yule Goat! But how can I assist you?”

The Yule Goat explained that it needed to find its way back to the village in time for the Yule celebrations. It had lost its magical bell, a key to its powers, somewhere along its journey. Without the bell, it couldn’t spread Yule cheer.

Nils, being the clever boy he was, devised a plan. He gathered pinecones and tied them together with twine to create a makeshift bell for the Yule Goat. It wasn’t as magical as the original bell, but it would do the trick.

With the pinecone bell in hand, Nils and the Yule Goat journeyed back to the village together. Along the way, they encountered woodland creatures who joined them on their adventure, and forest seemed to come alive with excitement.





When they reached the village, the Yule Goat's appearance filled the hearts of the villagers with wonder and joy. Nils and his newfound animal friends helped decorate the Yule Goat with evergreen branches, ribbons, and ornaments. The pinecone bell chimed merrily as they did so.

That night, the village celebrated Yule with feasting, dancing, and singing. The Yule Goat stood tall in the center of the festivities, its pinecone bell ringing out a joyful melody. Everyone felt the magic of Yule in their hearts, thanks to Nils and the Scandinavian Yule Goat.

Nils had not only helped the Yule Goat find its way home but had also discovered the true spirit of Yule – the joy of giving, the warmth of friendship, and the magic of believing.

And so, every year, the Yule Goat returned to the village, bringing happiness and Yule cheer to all, with Nils by its side, forever its trusted friend and guardian.



Winter Wisdom

The speech of the stars
Bright and lucid rings,
Fashions stars of ice

In the architecture of snow.
Clear sun-rays are shed
Deep in the winter of earth
To bear Nature's crystal wisdom
Into the heart of sleeping life.

Straw Yule Goat

What You Need:

Scissors
Red ribbon
Straw



What You Do:

Step by step photos on next page

1. Straighten out the straw.
2. Find the center of the straw and use a smaller piece of straw to tie around it.
3. Fold one side of the straw in half, and tie it on either side to create the back legs.
4. Pull out a few strands of straw from the “legs” to make a tail. Then, fold the body into the legs and press it firmly to give it a nice bend. After that, braid the tail.
5. Place another tie around the body to secure it in place.
6. On the side opposite the tail, divide the straw in half. The top half will become the neck and head, and the bottom half will be the front legs.
7. With the top half, tie around what will be the neck.
8. Divide the bottom half into two sections and tie each side to form the front legs.
9. Bend the end of the top half down to create the neck. Pull out a few strands from the top for the horns, and then braid the horns.
10. Trim the feet of the straw goat to make them the same length.
11. Trim any stray strands from around the face.
12. Tie any sections that are loose, and manipulate the body parts until the goat looks the way you want it to.
13. Use the red ribbon to wrap around the goat and trim any frayed ends until your straw goat is ready







Yarn Wrapped Yule Goat

What you need:

Cardboard

Scissors

Yarn

Use the attached template to draw a goat and two pairs of legs on a piece of cardboard and cut out the figures. Randomly wrap the yarn around the cardboard. Avoiding the slits where the legs will go.

Once you've inserted the legs your Yule Goat is ready to display!





Birdseed Ornaments (Gelatin Free)

What You Need:

- ½ cup water
- 2 tsp agar agar
- 2 cups birdseed
- Cookie Cutters
- Twine
- Parchment paper

What You Do:

Prepare the Agar Agar Mixture:

- In a medium saucepan, combine ½ cup of water and 2 tsp of agar agar.
- Whisk the mixture over medium heat until all the agar agar powder is dissolved.

Bring to a Boil:

- Continue heating the mixture until it comes to a boil.
- Let it simmer for 2 minutes or until it thickens.
- Remove the saucepan from heat.



Add Birdseed:

- Stir in 2 cups of birdseed into the agar agar mixture.
- Make sure the birdseed is well coated with the mixture.

Prepare Cookie Cutters:

- Stir in 2 cups of birdseed into the agar agar mixture.
- Make sure the birdseed is well coated with the mixture.

Fill Cookie Cutters:

- Carefully fill each cookie cutter with the seed mixture.

Use a spoon or your fingers to press the mixture firmly into the cookie cutter shapes.

Create Hanging Hole:

- While the mixture is still soft, insert and remove a straw (preferably stainless steel) at least an inch from the top of each ornament. This will create a hole for hanging.

Let the Ornaments Set:

- Allow the birdseed ornaments to set for about an hour.
- After an hour, the ornaments should be firm to the touch.

Remove from Cookie Cutters:

- Gently loosen and remove each birdseed ornament from the cookie cutter shapes.

Dry the Ornaments:

- Let the birdseed ornaments dry for another 24 hours or so. This will help them harden and hold their shape.

Attach Twine for Hanging:

- Tie a piece of twine to the hole created by the straw in each ornament. Make sure it's securely attached.

Hang for the Birds:

- Hang your birdseed ornaments outside for the birds to enjoy!

Now, you have beautiful and bird-friendly ornaments that you can hang in your garden or yard.



Pine Cone Bird Feeder

What you need:

- Prepared pine cones (see below for preparation)
- Peanut butter
- Birdseed
- Twine
- Small spatula or clean popsicle stick



Preparing the Pine Cones

1. Start by getting your pine cones ready for the bird feeder activity.
2. Brush off as much dirt and debris from the pine cones as you can.
3. Soak the pine cones in a mixture of approximately 1 gallon of water to 1 cup of white vinegar for 30 minutes.
4. After soaking, place the pine cones on a piece of newspaper to air dry for 1-2 hours.
5. Once they are dry, line a cookie sheet with aluminum foil and place the pine cones in a single layer on it.
6. Do not preheat your oven. Instead, bake the pine cones at 220 degrees Fahrenheit for 2 hours.
7. After baking, remove the pine cones from the oven and let them cool for at least 45 minutes.

What you do:

1. Take one of the prepared pine cones (larger ones work better for this).
2. Tie a loop of twine around the top of the pine cone for hanging.
3. Use a small spatula or a clean popsicle stick to press as much peanut butter as possible into all the cracks and crevices of the pine cone.
4. Once the entire pine cone is covered in peanut butter, place it in a bowl with birdseed. Make sure the birdseed covers the peanut butter completely.
5. Wrap a piece of parchment paper around the pine cone and roll it gently in your hands to further press the seeds into the peanut butter.
6. Place the pine cone in the freezer overnight.

In the morning, your pine cone bird feeder will be ready to hang outside for the birds to enjoy!