



## CHANDLERY

*Colligo recently released the new Softies XL Large Boat Series soft shackles. They are the perfect hardware choice for use with synthetic stays.*

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# Stocking Stuffers

*Fun and useful gifts for the nauti ones on your list.*

**I**t's hard to believe, but the 2009 holiday season is upon us. As is custom, *Practical Sailor* editors have put together a varied roundup of gifts to stuff those stockings more likely to hang from a bulkhead than the mantle.

### HARDWARE'S SOFTER SIDE

For the racing or small-boat sailor who's making the leap from wire rope to high-tech fiber, Colligo Marine's Softies offer a lightweight alternative to traditional steel shackles and head-sail hanks. Made of extra strong and chafe-resistant Dyneema, the "soft" hardware is the perfect solution for use with synthetic forestays, and unlike metal hanks, they'll never leave rust stains on sails. Using the Softies is as easy as pulling the shake-resistant knot through the expandable spliced loop, then sliding the slip ring (rubber O-rings) up to the knot. A lanyard ensures easy opening, but the self-tightening O-rings offer added security against accidental opening or shaking loose.

Colligo recently expanded its line to include a 6-inch Softie (46,000 pounds breaking strength) made of heat-stretched Dynex Dux for larger boats.

Other standard sizes are 4 inches (20,000 pounds BS) and 5 inches (31,000 pounds BS), but custom sizes are available. The Softies retail for about \$35—discounts are offered for volume orders—and can be found at [www.colligo.com](http://www.colligo.com).

### YESTERDAY, TODAY, TOMORROW

Any trivia buff would appreciate Peter Spectre's "The Mariner's Book of Days 2010" desk diary and calendar, but those with an affinity for nautical fact, fiction, and folklore will lose themselves in this encyclopedia of marine miscellany. The spiral-bound book offers users a weekly calendar on the right-hand pages and a smorgasbord of information on the left, including ship diagrams, quotes, sea songs, log entries, glossaries, and a "this day in sailing history" fact. (Published by Sheridan House Inc., available [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), \$15.)

### RETRO RIGGERS KNIVES

For the over-grown Boy Scout on your list, there's the high-quality reproduction Navy riggers knife from Colonial Knife Co., which has been making knives in Rhode Island since the 1920s. Today, the company manufactures cutlery for the U.S. government, the Boy

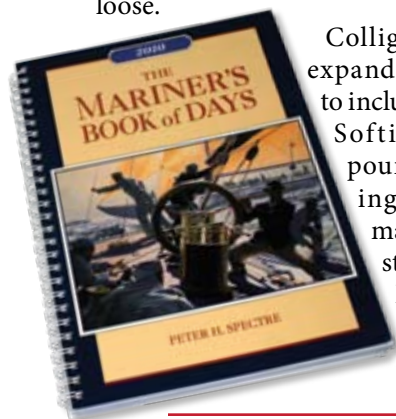


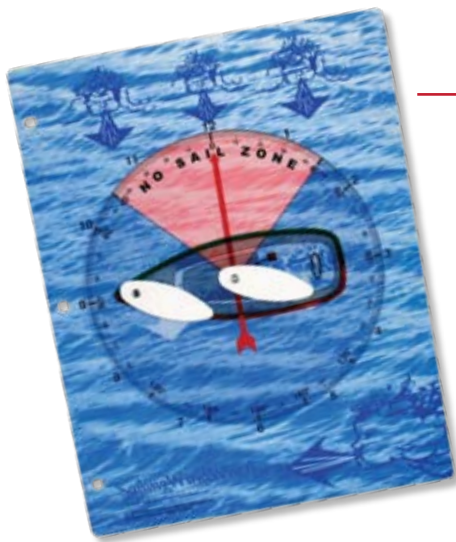
### SAIL SAVER

Another stocking-sized sail accessory is the Wave Marine Sail Saver. The plastic, self-locking rings help prevent headsail snags or sail chafing by rolling the sail over the shrouds—like the baggy-wrinkle of yore but without the added windage.

The idiot-proof installation requires no tools: The pieces simply snap together around the shrouds, just below the spreaders, and the included security clips snap around the shroud below the Sail Saver. It also can be used on lifelines to ease genoas over them, or on backstays to help a large, roached main around. The device has a center hole of 3/16-inches but can be drilled to fit up to 7/16-inch-diameter wire.

Distributed by Forespar, a set of the Sail Savers retails for about \$16-\$18 and can be found at [www.defender.com](http://www.defender.com) or at West Marine. We'll be testing the Sail Saver on our test boat, *Jelly*. Stay tuned for reports on its performance and durability.





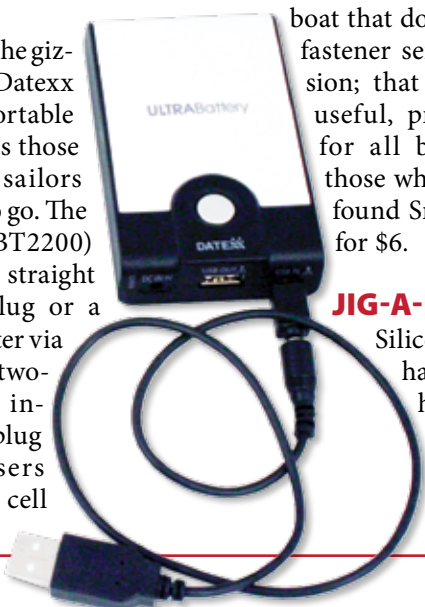
### GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

For those aspiring sailors on your list, be they young or old (naughty or nice), the Sailing Wind Wheel makes understanding wind angles and sail trim easy to grasp. It's a great visual tool to teach others about the invisible wind and its relationship to a sailboat. The durable card offers instructions on the back, and students can spin the wheel on front to practice sail trim. Its 8.5-by-11-inch size and pre-punched holes allow it to easily fit into a three-ring binder, along with a student's notes.

The Sailing Wind Wheel is a great tool to use over the winter to get a sailor-to-be warmed up for a summer on the water. The wheel alone retails for \$20, or its sold with a sailing instruction manual (the "2x2 Micro Method") for \$30 online at [www.sailingwindwheel.com](http://www.sailingwindwheel.com).

### FEEDING THE POWER HUNGRY

Next on the list: the gizmo junkie. The Datexx UltraBattery Portable USB Charger lets those gadget-centric sailors take their toys to go. The battery pack (BT2200) can be charged straight from an AC plug or a running computer via a USB cable. A two-way cord with interchangeable plug ends allow users to power most cell



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phones, MP3 players, smart phones, portable electronic games, Bluetooth devices, etc. We've found it especially handy on weekend trips aboard small, battery bank-less boats as it keeps the phone charged and the iPod jamming for days. On a single charge, the Ultra-Battery can charge a phone up to four times and can charge two devices at once. However, as the battery pack drains, it takes longer to recharge a device. The device retails for \$45 at [www.datexx.com](http://www.datexx.com).

### SNAP-STICK

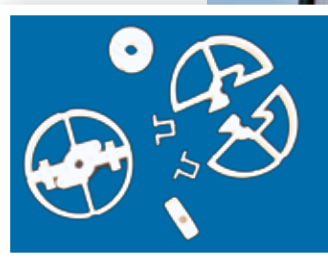
Shopping for someone who's constantly cursing the snaps and zippers on his dodger or cockpit enclosure? Shurhold Industries' Snap-Stick is a solid lubricant that resembles a large tube of Chapstick or a glue stick. The .45-ounce stick enables a mess-free application, so you can target the offending zipper or hinge without getting lubricant on the surrounding canvas or wood. Snap-Stick can be used to loosen corroded, stubborn zippers and snaps, or it can be used as a coating to prevent corrosion from occurring. According to its maker, Snap-Stick is non-toxic, biodegradable, and one application can last as long as three months.



You'd be hard pressed to find a used boat that doesn't have some zipper or fastener seized up thanks to corrosion; that makes the Snap-Stick a useful, practical stocking stuffer for all boat owners, especially those who are hard to buy for. We found Snap-Stick at West Marine for \$6.

### JIG-A-LOO

Silicone spray lubricants can harm or interfere with adhesion on painted and varnished surfaces, so we use them with care around the boat. With



Several companies market shroud rollers to fit below spreaders. Practical Sailor is testing a set from Forespar made by Wave Marine Products (above left); the Sail Savers now come in blue.

this caveat in mind, they are fine for those jobs where you don't want to use a drippy, greasy, petroleum-based lubricant.

We tried the oddly named Jig-A-Loo lubricant from Canada on zippers, hinges, fishing gear, blocks, and multi-tools. The can warns it might harm some plastics or painted surfaces, but we noted no harm or stains on the tested surfaces. As advertised, Jig-A-Loo provides an odorless, long-lasting lubrication and protection. Sure to elicit a "What the heck?" response from your giftee, it can be found at Ace Hardware for \$5. ▲



### CONTACTS

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