

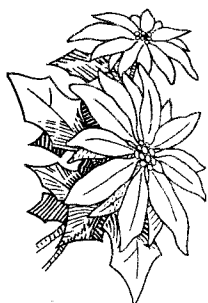
# ***URBAN DIRT***

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## **WINTER COLOR**



We're lucky here in Houston that we can have beautiful floral displays in our gardens all year long. We can achieve this in several ways. The flowers that bloom in our yards this time in the year are usually cool season annuals such as: alyssum, calandulas, carnations, daisies, delphinium,

ornamental kale, pansies, pinks, snapdragons, and violas.

Most winter annuals like a southern exposure or a sunny spot elsewhere in the garden. They require a rich soil with a high content of organic matter. They should also be mulched. If you have some warning that freezing conditions are predicted, it is a good idea to water deeply 24 hours before the freeze. Consider covering the plants with row cover or with old sheets or blankets (if the plant can support them).

Before bedding the new plants, remove any diseased plant materials and work the beds well incorporating organic materials into the soil. Some references suggest that you fertilize every six weeks with a high phosphorus fertilizer to help keep the blooming plants -- blooming, however most Houston's soils are already high in phosphorus.

November is a good time to plant the following bulbs: amaryllis, anemone, calla, crocus, hyacinths, iris, narcissus, ranunculus. Tulips can be planted in late December or in January. They should be refrigerated for a time before planting. Make sure you don't put them in the fruit or vegetable section of the refrigerator, because of gases that fruit give off may damage the bulbs.

While you are cleaning up your gardens, look for unusual seed heads and cones that you can dry and add to holiday decorations. Some people pretreat pine cones by freezing them for an hour and picking off any sap that rises with a tweezer. They then dry the cones in the sun before use. This process prevents the cones from exuding sap onto your holiday decorations. Leaves such as holly or magnolia can also be used in holiday decorations. There are many new ways to preserve them, check at your local craft shop. Some people spray dried leaves with gold paint for holiday decor. What ever you do, have a very happy holiday!!

### **NOVEMBER MEETING:**

11/21/95

Executive Board	5:30 p.m.
Dessert and Coffee	6:30 p.m.
General Meeting	7:00 p.m.

### **SUBJECT:**

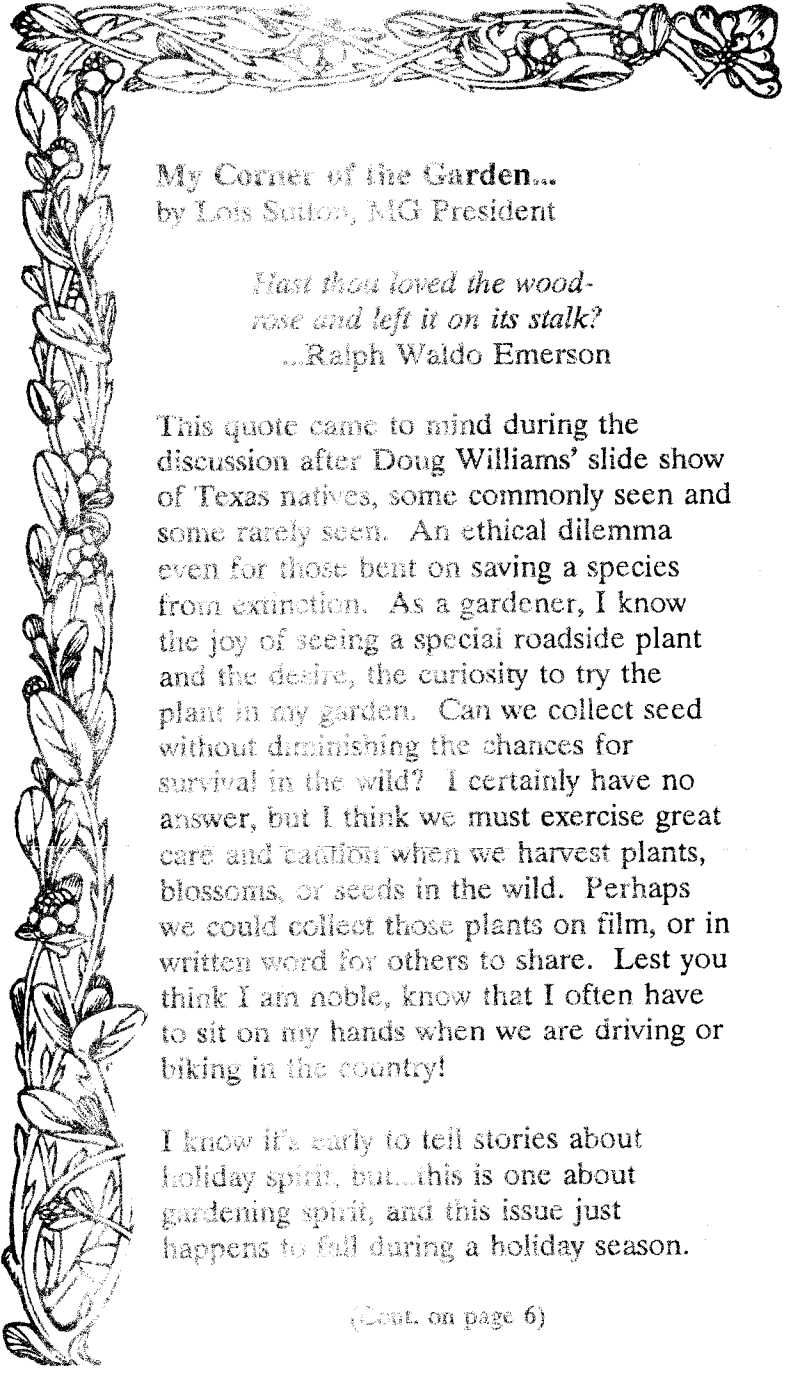
**"Gardening and the World Wide Web"**

**Speaker: Dr. Lineberger**

Note: November's meeting is a "covered-dish" dinner meeting, bring what you can, the more dishes, the merrier.

Please remember: Bring plants to sell!

**There is no meeting in December**



**My Corner of the Garden...**  
by Lois Sutton, MG President

*Hast thou loved the wood-rose  
and left it on its stalk?*  
...Ralph Waldo Emerson

This quote came to mind during the discussion after Doug Williams' slide show of Texas natives, some commonly seen and some rarely seen. An ethical dilemma even for those bent on saving a species from extinction. As a gardener, I know the joy of seeing a special roadside plant and the desire, the curiosity to try the plant in my garden. Can we collect seed without diminishing the chances for survival in the wild? I certainly have no answer, but I think we must exercise great care and caution when we harvest plants, blossoms, or seeds in the wild. Perhaps we could collect those plants on film, or in written word for others to share. Lest you think I am noble, know that I often have to sit on my hands when we are driving or biking in the country!

I know it's early to tell stories about holiday spirit, but...this is one about gardening spirit, and this issue just happens to fall during a holiday season.

(Cont. on page 6)

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