



Hollies Held Great Esteem

By MARK M. TAYLOR
Holly, of the genus *Ilex*, is a valuable tree for ornamental purposes and its sprigs are in much demand at this season. There are many species of holly, our native American holly being *Ilex opaca*, small but valued for its red berries. The European holly, *Ilex aquifolium*, is very similar. Hollies belong to that group of plants with separate sexes staminate flowers on one and pistillate on the other, so both must be planted in proximity to insure pollination and proper fruiting or production of berries.

Of the other species of holly, *Ilex cornuta*, or Chinese holly, is valuable with its long, evergreen and lustrous leaves and bright red berries. Japanese holly, *Ilex crenata*, has black berries in fall and is often used for hedge plantings. There are other species of *Ilex* worthy of mention as being native to parts of the United States. *Ilex desudata*, has deciduous foliage, a detriment as we think of hollies. It is a native of southeastern United States.

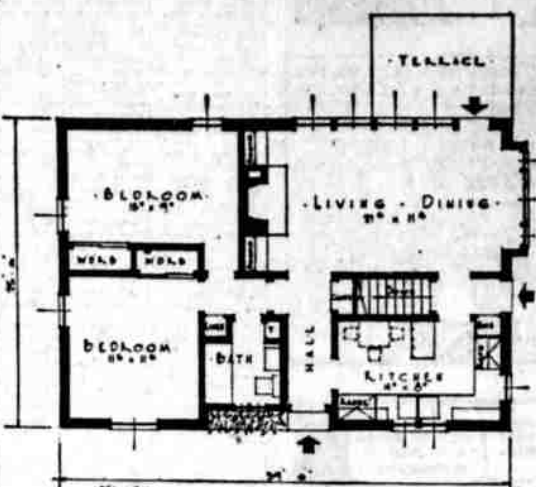
Ilex glabra, or Inkberry, is often found in swampy regions. It is evergreen with small, dark green leaves and black berries. *Ilex verticillata*, or Winterberry, is a native of the northeast and has bright red berries. This is a holly often used in eastern United States as the berries remain on all winter. While deciduous, it holds its leaves until after Christmas.

Hollies may be planted now, but to avoid disappointment, secure a plant that has had the opposite sex grafted to it in order that you will have the berries you want. Holly trees are slow growing and do best in rich rather moist soil. Hollies make splendid specimen trees or can be well used for foundation plantings near a corner, or, as mentioned, serve successfully also as strong hedge plants. Such a hedge is a good deterrent for animals as well as intruders, because of the thorns. Holly is a strong grower, disease and pest resistant, appreciating, principally, a moist soil, very little cultivation but a frequent syringing of the foliage to remove dirt and dust residue that might clog the leaf pores. In a landscaping plan, hollies thrive well along with the other broad-leaved evergreens such as rhododendrons, camellias and azaleas.

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A small, so-called ranch-style house with a great deal of personal appeal. Because it is almost square, it should be economical to build, yet it includes many features seldom found in a house this small. The front door opens into a hallway which leads directly through the house and the living-round area, which is unusually pretentious and not cluttered considering the smallness of the house. The entire back wall of the living room is a picture window with a French door leading out on to a suggested terrace. Plans are available from the Model Home Planning Co., 1414 North Woodward, Royal Oak, Mich.

Questions Answered

By MARK M. TAYLOR
Q—When is the right time to plant lilies to have flowers for Easter?—Mrs. W. B.
ANS—This month pot and place in semi-darkness until considerable growth shows then bring into sunlight. Water sparingly at first.
Q—What branches can one use besides holly for good Christmas greens?—Mrs. R. L.
ANS—Some magnolias, Oregon grape and any broad-leaved evergreen. Dip in an oil emulsion to give them a clean gloss. Too often, I believe, we overlook the beauty and acceptability of our own Oregon grape with its green and bronze foliage.
Q—What fertilizer is recommended for bulb beds?—W. A.
ANS—Bone meal is a slow-acting fertilizer. Use 10 lbs. per 100 square feet.
Q—When should you start tuberous begonias?—S. R. A.
ANS—From seed, start in greenhouse or hotbed this month or January. From tubers, start indoors about March.
Q—How long does it take for a potted amaryllis to bloom?—Mrs. F. A.
ANS—Prepared bulbs will bloom in about six to eight weeks.
Q—African violet leaves droop then fall off. What causes this and how can I correct this fault?—Mrs. L. P.
ANS—Gas in the house could be the cause. If there is no gas used in your house then it may be root nematodes. Probably you should repot your plant in a fresh, sterile soil mixture. Do not over-expose African violets to sunlight. Water carefully and keep temperature at about 60 to 70 degrees.
Q—What are some of the good new roses available this year?—Mrs. F. R.
ANS—All-American rose selections for 1954 have named Mojave, a scarlet and vermilion mixture with a glow like a desert sunset. It's a hybrid tea of good form with long stems. Lilibet is a dawn pink floribunda of fragrant clusters of miniature roses. Another

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Capital Journal HOME PAGE

Variety Possible in Making Decorations for Christmas

By MARK M. TAYLOR
It's always fun to make your own Christmas decorations. Save or take clippings from boxwood, laurel, Oregon grape, holly, Euonymus or any berryed shrubs, such as barberry or firethorn, and use these to make your own wreaths or swags. Cuttings from cedars, arborvitae and juniper are easily handled and will hold their color well when cut.

Growing Gifts Instructions

By MARK M. TAYLOR
Many beautiful "growing gifts" are exchanged at Christmas, yet unless certain care is given they fail to continue in their attractive condition as the donor had hoped. It seems to me that florists and other dealers selling such plants as gift items should include some instructions for their care in event they reach the hands of the novice. In most instances such living plants can be kept for long periods, later planted outside and brought in again next year to re-perform.

Poinsettias are among the most popular of Christmas gifts and, judging from the inquiries that most garden columnists and magazines receive after Christmas, their care is something of a mystery. Poinsettias are available, not only in the familiar bright red but in salmon pink and white, as well. These should not be placed in the sun or a location subject to draughts. They need daily watering and will look well for two or three weeks, then the leaves begin to yellow and fall off. When this happens, cut off the red bracts and place the plant in the basement in a rather cool spot, watering once a week. When danger of frost is past in the spring, cut back to three or four inches, remove from the pot and plant in the garden. Cuttings from the tips in 3 or 4-inch lengths can also be rooted and planted. Then in September, the old plant is repotted in fresh soil, brought into the house and kept in a cool place. At the end of November place it in a sunny window where it will bloom again at the end of December. Cuttings should be treated in the same manner.

When bringing in sprigs of holly or other broad-leaved evergreens, a bright and shiny leaf is most desirable. Wipe the leaf with a cloth dipped in an oil emulsion and this will remove any soiled areas and tend to add a gloss. One difficulty with any greenery when it is cut and brought into a warm house is the drying process and possible added fire hazard. Christmas trees, especially, come in this category. So, if possible, keep your greens fresh and lifelike by setting in vases as you would cut flowers. Even Christmas trees can be set in tubs or pots of moist sand so that they will not dry out excessively. Too, one can use one of the plastic spray materials available for transplanting plants. These are designed to prevent loss of plants when moving due to transpiration (loss of moisture through leaves of stems). They serve a similar purpose for cut greens.

PLANT ROSES
Webfoot—Mrs. Albert May, Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe Roberts of Webfoot were planting new improved varieties of rose bushes at their homes Saturday.
The 254 Texas counties range in size from Rockwall's 147 square miles to Brewster county's 6.208.

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Arctotis, a bright-toned white flower, thrives in mild climates

Single Flowers Are Lovely And Often Easier to Grow

Single flowers have a charm all their own. Where simplicity is the dominant theme they're the ones to plant. Lately, however, they have suffered from some dazzling, though questionable competition. Among plant breeders there is a trend that seems to aim at confusing the average gardener. Not content with endowing their creations with ruffles, flutes, frills and crests, they have engineered a Zinnia that looks like a dahlia, a begonia that resembles a carnation and a salpiglossos now masquerading as a glloxinia.

Taking a perfectly innocent flower and turning it into something bizarre or grotesque might have its good points, yet a double aster is not necessarily any better than a single one and it may prove considerably more difficult to take care of. There still are plenty of gardeners who will argue that a straight petal is just as attractive as a lacinated one, and a plain leaf as appealing as a serrated one.

One of the most satisfactory single flowers for winter bloom is the African daisy. The bright orange-colored flowers are carried proudly on stems about 12 inches tall. They perform excellently for bedding, in borders and along parking areas. Variety ecklonia, the perennial form, is white with a deep blue center. Another interesting African daisy is the Arctotis. Variety grandis is white with a steel blue reverse to the petals. It is covered with blooms during the flowering season, and an excellent cut flower. Arctotis hybrids are available in tones of orange, terra cotta, yellow, salmon and carmine. The blooms measure from two and one-half to three inches across and are produced on plants that reach a height of one foot at maturity. You will be amazed at the long life of these flowers after they have been cut. Pyrethrum, or painted daisy, may be seeded this fall. The flowers are well named, for the colors are vivid, gay and bright. Almost every garden

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Lebanon Decoration Deadline Monday

Lebanon—Deadline for the Christmas home decoration contest was advanced to 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 21, sponsors announced today.
Cash awards will be given in each division: Religious, landscape lighting, Christmas trees, best decorated door and miscellaneous. Home decorations only will be judged and the setting must be visible from the street. Entrants must live inside the Lebanon area which includes all residential areas just outside the city limits.
Awards in each division include \$10 first; \$5 second, and \$15 sweepstakes. Third places will be given honorable mention.
Entries must be filed before the deadline with the chamber of commerce, the Lebanon Express, or Mrs. L. e. n. Dillard, president of the Lebanon Garden club.
There was measurable oil production in 177 of the 254 Texas counties in 1950.

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