



'Tis The Season!

Nature Scavenger Hunt



It's December and leaves are falling and changing colors! Curious how this happens? It's the time of the year when days become shorter and deciduous trees drop their leaves. Before leaves are shed, they often provide a show of color—sometimes gold, yellow, ochre, and red! Color changes occur because leaves have pigments that absorb light in a process called **photosynthesis**. Shorter days mean less sunlight and the chlorophyll begins to break down. Once this happens, other pigments, like reds, oranges, and yellows that were hidden by the chlorophyll, become visible. However, it's important to remember that leaves changing color is unpredictable and weather dependent.

Visit one of the Natural Areas and look for the color **RED**. How many types of leaves, seeds, flowers, and animals can you find?



Photo: Nicole McLeod

Possumhaw
Illex decidua



Photo: Carolyn Fannon

Poison Ivy
Toxicodendron radicans



Photo: Nicole McLeod

Evergreen Sumac
Rhus virens



Photo: Thomas Paine

Virginia Creeper
Parthenocissus quinquefolia



Photo: Ray Mathews

Fragrant Sumac
Rhus aromatica



Photo: Joseph Marcus

Flameleaf Sumac
Rhus lanceolata



Photo: Nicole McLeod

Texas Red Oak
Quercus buckleyi



Photo: Nicole McLeod

Turk's Cap
Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii



Photo: Joseph Marcus

Flame Acanthus
Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii



Photo: Joseph Marcus
Texas Prickly Pear
Opuntia engelmannii var. lindheimeri



Photo: Louis Nugent
Mountain Laurel
Sophora secundiflora



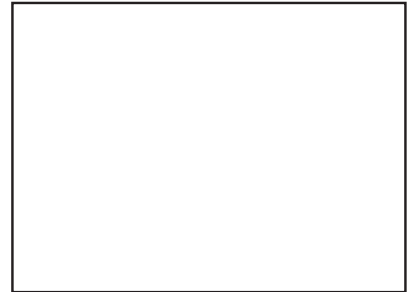
Photo: Joseph Marcus
Tasajillo or Christmas Cholla
Cylindropuntia leptocaulis



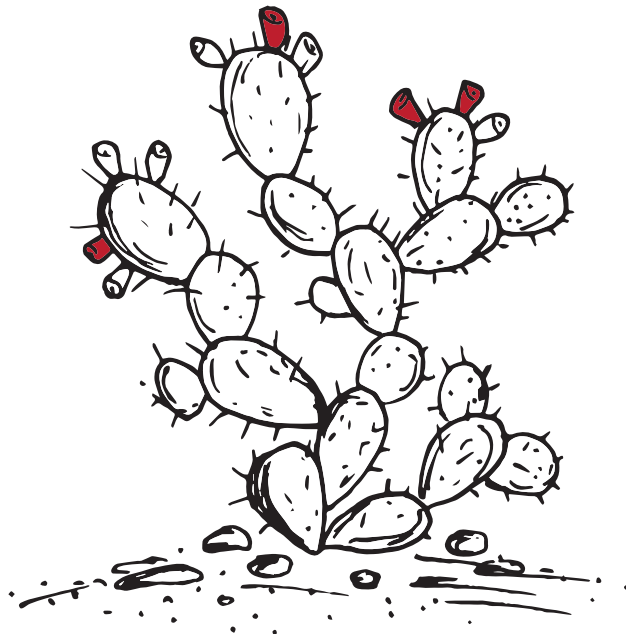
Photo: Jack Bulmer
Northern Cardinal
Cardinalis cardinalis



Photo: Greg Lavaty
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Regulus calendula



BONUS FIND!
Find something red in Texas nature!



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