

“From a Gardening Perspective....”

February 2013

## **Winter Interest in the Landscape**

By Helen Pemberton

So a new neighbor came to visit yesterday to visit my garden and get ideas for landscaping her new home at PK. She brought her camera! As we wandered through the mostly dead foliage, I realized that two of the most important things for year round enjoyment of the garden are evergreen plantings and hardscape.

Since DEER can be a pest out here in Palo Pinto County, the winter evergreens that we enjoy have to include plants the deer don't eat. I use herbs and plants with high scented foliage. Upright Rosemary makes a fine evergreen hedge that blooms in the winter. Prostrate (low growing) Rosemary makes a good groundcover. Oregano is evergreen in my garden and I am using it as a groundcover. A new plant for me is Damianita. It is a high scented evergreen mound (maybe 18" tall) that blooms bright yellow daisy flowers from April through hard frost.

Look at your garden and pick a place where you might want to look out the window on a winter day and see something beautiful. Plant a hardscape:

1. Plant a pile of boulders with evergreen things amongst them
2. Plant a cluster of ornamental trees with interesting bark or twisted trunks. Crepe Myrtle, Blue Vitex, and Youpon Holly are interesting in the winter. A statue or piece of attention-grabbing driftwood surrounded by evergreens would complete the scene.
3. Have a rock walkway with interesting stones placed in it.
4. Build a trellis and plant Crossvine on it. Crossvine is an evergreen Texas Native vine that blooms with bright orange trumpets in the spring only. It prefers some shade. Put something interesting in front of the trellis as a focal point. Maybe a birdbath?

February is also a time to finish pruning any oak trees you want to trim (oak wilt could attack trimmed trees after spring sets in). Time for cutting the

dead foliage off last year's perennials and thumbing through seed catalogs  
for new ideas

Ah, Gardening. Nothing says happy like dirt under your fingernails.