

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS

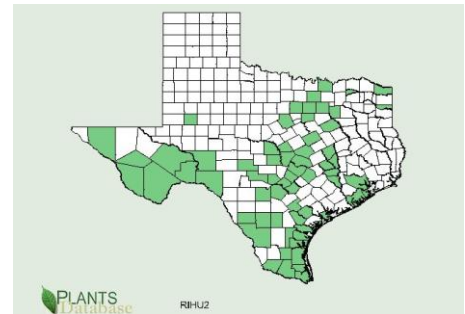
Lindheimer Chapter

PLANT OF THE MONTH
NOVEMBER, 2013

Pigeonberry, *Revina humilis*



Pigeonberry with Flowers and Fruit



USDA Range Map - Texas

Pigeonberry makes a wonderful low growing perennial for shady areas. It gets to be about 1 to 1 ½ feet tall, and blooms from spring into fall. The flowers are pink to white in 2" long spikes. They are followed by bright red, almost translucent fruit that are a favorite food of many birds. The plant is especially attractive when it has both flowers and fruit at the same time.

Pigeonberry is found in the shade of trees and shrubs from Florida to Arizona, and north to Oklahoma and Arkansas. While it prefers some moisture, it will survive summer droughts by going dormant, reappearing as fall rains and cooler temperatures revive it. Alternatively, some supplemental water in periods of drought will keep it thriving. In milder areas of South Texas it is an evergreen shrub, although in the colder winters of the Hill Country it will go dormant.

In the landscape, Pigeonberry makes an interesting ground cover and wildlife plant for woodland settings, under shrubs such as American Beautyberry, Red Buckeye or Mountain Sage (*Salvia regia*). It can be combined with other shade loving perennials such as Turks Cap, native sedges, several types of mistflowers or tropical sage.

While not very common in nurseries, it is sometimes available where native plants are sold. It can also be started from seeds or cuttings. Seeds germinate well but grow slowly at first. The fruit and leaves are reported to be somewhat toxic. Deer will generally leave Pigeonberry alone, unless they are especially hungry.