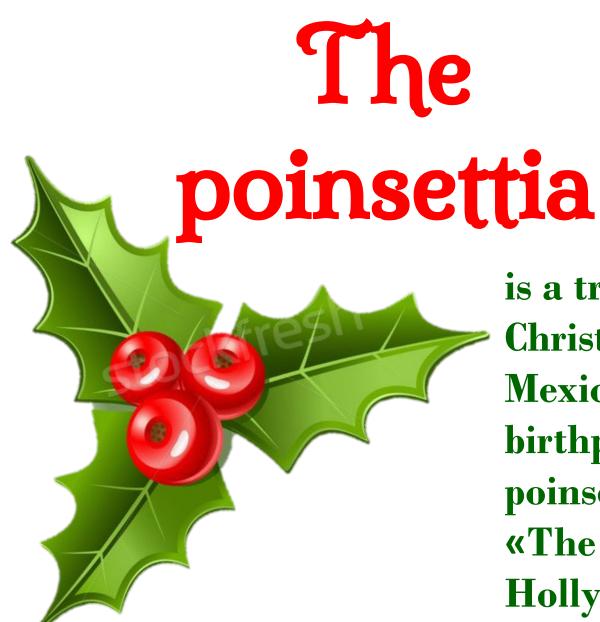
** Christmas Facts

Merry Christmas

A Christmas wreath





Christmas flower. In
Mexico (its original
birthplace), the
poinsettia is known as
"The flower of the
Holly Night"

Mistletoe

At Christmas, it is traditional to exchange kisses beneath the hanging mistletoe.



Rudolph

The red-nosed reindeer was invented for a US firm's Christmas promotion in 1938.





You would be surprised to know that the famous James Pierpont song "Jingle Bells" was originally titled "One Horse Open Sleigh" and was meant for Thanksgiving.



It is an interesting fact that the first artificial Christmas trees that the Germans had were made of dyed goose feathers.



The tradition of sending cards on Christmas is quite popular. In fact, in US alone, over 3 billion Christmas cards are sent every year.



Santa is addressed by different names around the world. In Germany, he is called Kriss Kringle while in Italy he has Le Befana as his name. Also, he is addressed as Pere Noel in France and as Deushka Moroz in Russia.



As per the calculations of some US scientists, Santa would need to visit 822 homes per second in order to deliver presents throughout the world on Christmas Eve. Also, he would have to travel at a speed of 650 miles a second.



The tradition of hanging stockings on Christmas apparently comes from the story of 3 sisters. They could not get married since they were too poor to pay dowry. It was only when Bishop Saint Nicholas of Smyrna (the precursor to Santa Claus) came down their chimney and filled their stockings with gold coins that their life changed for the better.

The world's biggest ever snowman was built by the residents of the state of Maine in America in the year 1999. This snowman was 113 feet tall.



