

*Nertera granadensis*, or *Nertera depressa*, is known by many common names: **pincushion**, **coral moss**, **bead plant**, bead lichen. It is unusual for several reasons, not least of which is its distribution in nature, which includes most of the pacific rim from Central America to New Zealand, Australia, and Taiwan. It has tiny leaves, a ground-hugging habit, and inconspicuous white flowers. The berries, however, provide quite a show. They are bright orange, and cover the plant so completely that the leaves are quite often not visible. It blooms in the summer and produces its berries just in time for Halloween. It looks for all the world like a tiny pumpkin patch. For this reason it is often sold as a novelty in stores and supermarkets in the fall. The berries will last through Thanksgiving and into December. Indoors it needs bright light and a tray of water to sit in, as it requires constantly moist soil and humidity. It will grow outdoors in Florida, but I'm not sure if it will flower or produce berries, and almost certainly not in its normal season. In the tropical portions of its range, it grows only in the mountains. Its ideal temperatures for blooming are in the 60's and 70's. If you do try growing it outdoors, it must not have full sun in the summer. I'm going to try it, and I'll let you all know what happens.

