



Poinsettia, 1919

The tender *Poinsettia* was named for the poinsettia *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, a native to the area around Taxco, Mexico. The flowering plant was introduced to the United States by Joel R. Poinsett, the first United States ambassador to Mexico. Poinsettia or Euphorbia is a member of the spurge family and is characterized by small flowers (cyathia) and large, brightly colored, leaf-like bracts.

Builder: ?

Length: 50'

Beam: 16'

Draft: 2' 9"

Displacement: 50 tons

Cost: \$6,500

Launched: 1915

Commissioned: 1917 (USN); 1919 (USLHS)

Decommissioned: N/A

Disposition: Destroyed by fire on 27 December 1928

Machinery: 50 horsepower gasoline engine; single propeller

Complement: 5

Armament: None

Tender History:

The *Poinsettia* was originally built as the private vessel *Niagara*, which first entered the water in 1915. During World War I she was taken into naval service as a section patrol boat and was renamed USS *Niagara* with the hull number SP-263. She was transferred to the Lighthouse Service on 4 June 1919 who commissioned her as the USLHT *Poinsettia*. She was assigned to the 7th Lighthouse District, based out of Key West, Florida, where she conducted general aids to navigation duties. She caught fire and exploded on 27 December 1928 and was completely destroyed.

She was replaced by the tender *Poinciana*.

Sources:

Douglas Peterson. *United States Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939*. Annapolis: Eastwind Publishing, 2000.

