

Geraniamania

Planting Since 1972

President's Message

After talking to everybody, rather than us trying to do a propagation demonstration Jack Ohmstede has volunteered to do a talk on 'Winterizing Geraniums'.

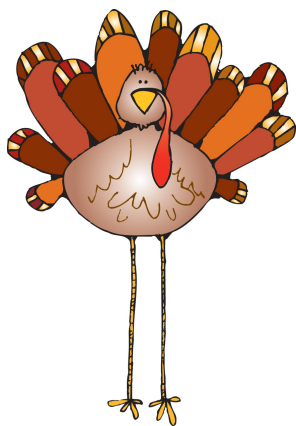
I think Winterizing Geraniums is an appropriate and topical subject for the meeting, as last year I did not do anything and a lot (all?) of my Martha Washington wilted and looked totally dead. I trimmed them down to the ground and strangely I got some runty plants in June. My Ivy geraniums simply stopped blooming and dropped a lot of leaves. Monica trimmed the dead leaves off and I fertilized them with an organic 4-6-4 fertilizer, followed by a slug of Kelp, Dr. Johns Miracle Bloom, and some left over 'rose rejuvenation' stuff. They are now 4 feet high and fill our 10 foot front planter. Ummm... and very few blooms.

Clearly I need advice and guidance from the experts, and I hope that Jack will provide it.

I also have a handbook from the Pelargonium and Geranium Society (PAGS) of Great Britain, where they talk about getting the plants out of the ground and into a protected area in October, before the early frosts. I am glad that we are living in San Diego where the first day of frost (for Alpine) is Dec 31 and the last day is Jan 14 (or so they say).

See you on November 12th! We'll be meeting in the Community Room!

Patrick Powell/President



President
Patrick Powell
papowell@astart.com
Vice President
Marilyn Ketteringham
rmkett@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer
Brenda Archer
leocat25@cox.net
Secretary
Cathy Miller
dlmcym@cox.net



A Publication of the San Diego Geranium Society
The San Diego Geranium Society meets the Second
Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., in Room 101 of the
Casa Del Prado in Balboa Park.
Meetings are Free! All Welcome!

November Meeting
Tuesday, November 12, 2019
7:00PM - 8:00PM



**REMINDER - We'll be meeting at the
Mission Valley Public Library (next to IKEA)**

A Few of Our Favorite Flowers!

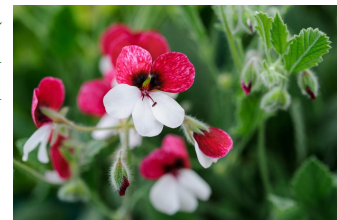
Some of our members have submitted the names of their favorite pellicies - here they are!



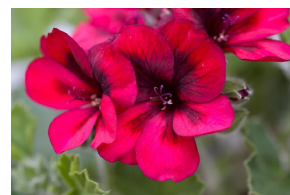
Lord Bute

An antique, small-flowered regal named after John Stuart, the third Earl of Bute, who became Prime Minister of England. It has velvety flowers of deepest burgundy, with fuchsia-pink penciled edges that set off the dark petals beautifully. A spring bloomer; protect from hot summer sun and rain. Circa 1910. RHS Award of Garden Merit.

Pelargonium 'Splendide' is a species pelargonium with pretty bicolored flowers in two shades of pink, contrasting with velvety, grey-green foliage. It's perfect for growing in a sunny border or in a large pot on a sunny patio. For best results, feed 'Splendide' with a high potash fertiliser during summer and deadhead spent blooms regularly. Bring plants indoors for winter.



Splendide



Voodoo

Pelargonium 'Voodoo' produces unusual light wine-red-coloured flowers embossed with purply-black markings. For best results grow Pelargonium 'Voodoo' in well-drained soil in full sun. There's little need to prune, but cut back faded leaves, flowers and old stems as they appear.

It's All in the Leaves for These Geraniums

by Cynthia Furman

One need not be so violent to enjoy the variety of fragrances from the foliage of the scented geraniums. A swish of petticoated Victorian skirts as ladies strolled to tea through their gardens - or a caressing hand passed over the foliage of plants on your windowsills - are enough to free the floral, spicy, or citrus flavors of these once hugely popular plants. Scented-leafed geraniums, more properly known by their genus name of Pelargonium, are tender perennials with divided or oval leaves, shrubby stems, and foliage that release a fragrance when cut or rubbed. Their flowers, while usually inconsequential, are often fragrant as well.

Pelargoniums encompass more than 250 species of annuals, perennials, and sub-shrubs, all native to southern and eastern Africa. First brought to England in 1632 by John Tradescant, botanist and plant explorer for Charles I, they have been cultivated - and hybridized - ever since.

Jefferson brought plants back to Monticello from France in 1786, and by the mid 18th century, there were hundreds of cultivars. Their flowers are tiny, but that hardly matters when the leaves offer up the scents of roses, pine, lemon, cinnamon, peppermint, apple, orange, nutmeg, even eucalyptus. (Although with some, the scent seems to be solely in the nose of the sniffer.)

Regaining popularity in this era of home cocooning, more sophisticated gardening, and alternative medicine, scented geraniums offer something for everyone. The leaves are used both fresh and dried in bouquets and tussie-mussies and dried in potpourri and sachets. They can be used to flavor beverages, jellies, baked goods and other desserts. Even the flowers are edible, and can be scattered over a salad, a pudding or a fruit tart. The leaves make a tasty hot beverage, on their own or with regular tea. Lemon-scented leaves make a fresh, scented addition to finger bowls — and the plants are being merchandised as mosquito repellants. Geraniums are grown commercially in France, Spain, and Algeria as an inexpensive source for perfume oils, and the rose-scented varieties such as 'Graveolens' and 'Attar of Roses' are fragrances on their own.

Advocates of aromatherapy use facial steams with rose-scented geranium leaves for their anti-aging effect on skin and to prevent insomnia and depression. Or just add a handful of leaves from any variety to the water as you draw a hot bath and enjoy the aroma as you - and the leaves - steep.

Pelargoniums make easy and rewarding plants to grow. Outdoors, they thrive in full sun to partial shade, in the ground or in pots. But they are hardy only to zone 10, and must be brought inside before frost strikes them dead. The whole plant can be brought in, cut back by about a third to keep it compact and bushy. Or you can take cuttings to root if you want a smaller plant to over-winter. They like fast draining soil, good air circulation, and ideally, a daytime temperature of 65 degrees and 55 degrees at night. They should be watered only when the soil is dry to the touch and appreciate a balanced fertilizer every two to four weeks from spring through mid-summer. A high-nitrogen fertilizer should be avoided; it will result in lush growth but less aromatic foliage and fewer flowers.

For the gardener who likes to cook, scented geraniums offer innumerable pleasures. One of the easiest recipes is geranium-scented sugar. Simply layer granulated sugar with geranium leaves in small batches and let sit for two weeks in a tightly sealed jar, shaking the mix every few days. Then use the resulting flavored sugar: nutmeg-geranium sugar on baked apples, rose-scented to make vanilla pudding, lime-scented in pound cake, lemon-scented with fresh mixed fruit, and so on, wherever your taste buds take you.

Another traditional use of scented geranium leaves is with cake: grease the cake pan, lay several leaves on the bottom and pour on the batter — rose-scented under pound cake, nutmeg or lemon under vanilla or white cake, and peppermint under chocolate cake. And for amazing variety, combine scented geranium leaves with jelly or jam recipes. Start with two rose geranium leaves added to each jar of a basic apple jelly recipe — the one found on the Certo or Sure-Jell packages. Then perhaps ginger-scented leaves in peach jam or lemon-scented leaves in a tomato conserve or blueberry jam — the only limit is your imagination!