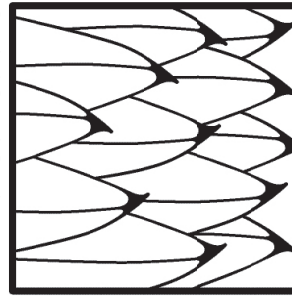


Central Coast Cactus  
& Succulent Society  
c/o Markus Mumper  
780 Merced St.  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449



# On the Dry Side

September 2010

## Inside this issue: CCCSS September Meeting Recap

- Upcoming Speaker  
- Tim Harvey
- Last Month's  
- Meeting Minutes
- Genus of the Month  
- *Pelargonium*

Thanks to **Rob Skillen** for filling in for the vacationing **Gene Schroeder**. Our club continues to grow and we are already starting to plan for our annual Christmas Party and auction. If you have a plant you may want to submit for the auction please talk to Rob as we do have some minimum requirements.

Our Succulent of the Month was *Adromischus*. Some beautiful *Adromischus* were brought in. These South African plants, with approximately 30 species, are easy to grow, root easily with leaf cuttings, can take a light frost and grow throughout the year. I'd say with that information it sounds like we all should be growing them. Another fact: *Adromischus* means 'thick stem'.

Our cactus of the Month was *Ferocactus*, also known as Barrel Cactus. These are from the North Americas, mainly from Mexico. They are beautiful plants that can be grown in pots but will take off in the ground. Most have big, heavy spines. Rob brought in a beautiful potted *F. pottsii* that he started from seed 20 years ago. He fertilizes his plants a quarter of the recommended regular dose every time he waters.

A big thanks to **Terry Skillen** for putting together the bus trip to the Inter City Show & Sale. A good time was had by all! Any comments to the board members on this or future trips will be appreciated.

Our speaker of the month was **Nick Wilkinson** who entertained and enlightened us with his trip to Cedros Island. This island is off of Baja, Mexico and he made this trip in March. He, along with some fellow CSSA members, flew in from Ensenada to the south western end of the island. The mission on this trip was to find *Dudleya pachyphytum*.

This island is mainly a fishing island, but it also includes beautiful rock formations, very few buildings and many churches! The lower elevations get little rainfall, lots of fog and the higher elevations have a population of pine trees. These native trees were *Pinus radiata* v. *cedrosensis*. Nick and his group saw some beautifully sculptured (due to wind) *Pachycormus discolor*, *Ferocactus*, Agaves, *Dudleyas*, *Mammillarias* and *Opuntias*.

The group went by boat to the mining area of Punta Norte. They did a nice steep four mile hike which Nick totally enjoyed!!! After a full day of hiking and searching for *D. Pachyphytum*.....well, mission not accomplished on this trip! Guess they will have to go back and search again. Thanks Nick for sharing your adventures with us.

~Jan Moon

**Tim Harvey**

**Geraniaceae from Namibia and South Africa in Habitat and Cultivation**

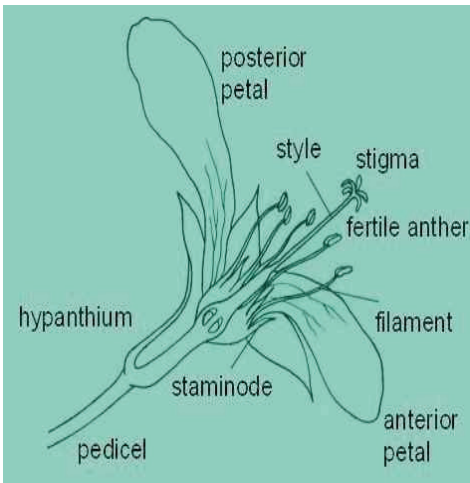
Tim Harvey returns with a talk on *Pelargonium* and *Sarcocaulon* in Namibia and South Africa. Cultivation of these plants in less than ideal conditions of temperature and moisture will be discussed. Basic physical properties of pot versus in-ground culture will be compared - in particular heat exchange and drainage. This will be an educational talk that will help us all understand and grow these plants better.



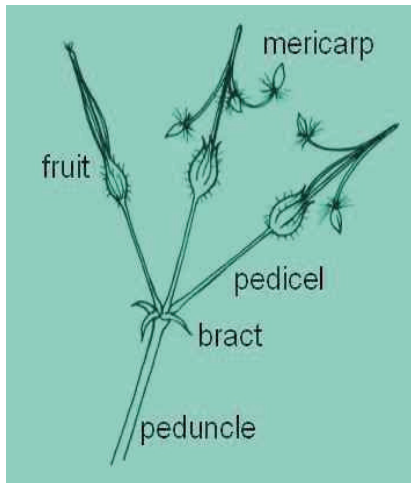
*Pelargonium xerophyton*



*Sarcocaulon crassicaule*



*Pelargonium* flowers differ from those of other genera in having the upper two (posterior) petals differentiated from the lower three (anterior) petals



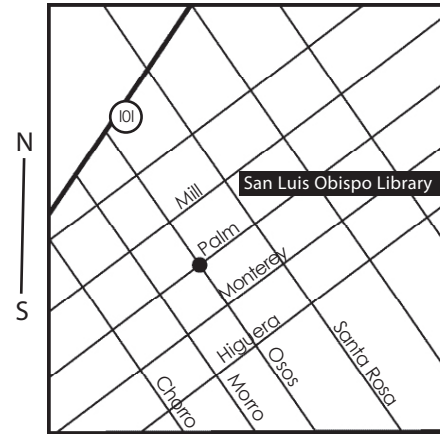
The fruit of *Pelargonium* and *Sarcocaulon* somewhat resemble a stork's bill, the Greek work *pelargos* means 'stork'. Geraniums are from the same group.

**NEXT meeting:**

Sun, Oct. 17'th at  
2:00 pm

San Luis Obispo  
Public Library

995 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo

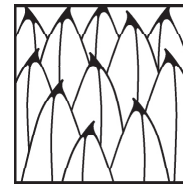


**NEWS FROM THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING:**

- Gene Schroeder proposes an open board meeting to discuss new officer and board member positions and growth for our club - date to be announced.
- Nick is proposing new T-shirts with our club logo.
- The Christmas Party and Auction are coming up - Shall it be pot luck again or catered?
- Nick (V.P.) and Jeannie (Librarian) would like to step down, new candidates are encouraged.

**BOARD—MEETING**

The next Board Meeting will be held on October 17'th right after our General Meeting. As always all members are welcome.



Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society  
e-mail: [markusmumper@gmail.com](mailto:markusmumper@gmail.com)  
All submissions to the CCCSS newsletter must be submitted two weeks prior to the monthly meeting.

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Gene Schroeder 929-2161	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	<b>SECRETARY</b> Jan Moon 927-1310	<b>CCSS AFFILIATE</b> Rob Skillin 473-0788	<b>TREASURER</b> Edie Price 489-8491
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A one time free newsletter will be mailed out to those who sign in at the monthly meetings. After this dues must be paid in order to start a subscription.

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Ben Trogdon ©

**EL CHOYERO SPEAKS:**

**Question:** El Choyero, what is meristematic tissue?

**Answer:** Hola Amigos and Amigas!

Mijo, meristematic tissue is nothing to sneeze at. The places on a plant where new growth takes place is called this word.

The growing point, or points, of a plant is made up of cells that are undifferentiated. This means that these cells don't know yet if they will become bark, a flower, a roof, a leaf, a thorn or whatever else. Hormones "tell" the cells what they will eventually become.

This is the same with you and me. We just have mucho mas growing points than a plant does!

If you take a cutting of a plant and put it in the ground, dividing cells that may have become a part of the stem or a thorn are influenced by hormones to now become a root so that the plant can live.

Viva las plantas!

But normally, without too much stress the cells become the 'normal' things. Roots, stems, leaves, thorns or whatever that you would expect.

The thing to remember mi amigos, meristematic tissue is where the action takes place. The conditions at the time of cell splitting determines what that growth will actually become.

Nothing is guaranteed in la viva.

Until next time amigos!

## Upcoming Events

**November 6 - 7**

**San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

Los Angeles County Arboretum - 9:00am - 5:00pm  
 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia (626) 798-2430

**December 4 - 6**

**Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

Fullerton Arboretum - 9:00am - 5:00pm  
 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton, CA (714) 267-4329

**April 24 - 29**

**Cactus and Succulent Society of America's 34th Biennial Convention**

Mission Valley Marriot Hotel  
 8757 Rio San Diego Drive, San Diego, CA

**May 21 - 21**

**Gates Cactus & Succulent Society's 36th Show & Sale**

Jurupa Mountain Cultural Center - 9:00am - 4:00pm  
 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA (909) 360-8802

**June 30 - July 3**

**Cactus and Succulent Society of America's Annual Show & Sale**

Huntington Botanical Gardens - 9:00am - 4:00pm  
 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA (626) 405-2160

### ArtsObispo Open Studios Art Tour

The 12th annual ArtsObispo Open Studios Art Tour 2010 will take place in South County on the weekend of October 16-17th from 10:00am to 5:00pm. Several CCCSS members will be participating and will have custom made ceramic pottery for sale.

This is your chance to purchase hand made show quality ceramic pots from local potters and to see their studios.

For maps and free downloadable catalogs, go to:

[http://www.artsobispo.org/open\\_stu.html](http://www.artsobispo.org/open_stu.html)

Ben Trogdon will be at: 612 Sandydale Dr, Nipomo  
 Charles Varni will be at: 1743 Rochelle Way, Oceano  
 Richard Rowe will be at: 310 Corralitos Rd., Arroyo Grande

## Hospitality News

Sign up to bring refreshments and get a 4 inch plant!! You must sign the **Hospitality Sign-Up sheet** and bring refreshments to get a plant. We need refreshments for each monthly meeting and we need to know who is bringing them. Thanks to everyone who has been contributing to the refreshment fund; donations can be made at the refreshment table.

~Pat

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 potter / artist

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[roweclayworks@att.net](mailto:roweclayworks@att.net)

**The  
 Clayworks**



## **Pelargonium** (*Pelargos G. for Stork*)

Pelargoniums are a diverse group of plants with a wide variety of growth habits and habitats. Members of the family Geraniaceae, estimates of the total number of species and subspecies in the genus range from 230-300. Most are native to southern Africa, but a few species occur naturally in Australia, eastern Africa, New Zealand, the Middle East and the islands of Madagascar, St. Helena, and Tristan de Cuhna.

The genus Pelargonium includes annuals and herbaceous perennials, shrubs and sub-shrubs, and both evergreen and deciduous plants, but most of the scented-leafed species or "scenteds" are succulent perennial shrubs in their native habitats. Some grow erect while others have a trailing habit, and some have tuberous roots.

Most herb enthusiasts value pelargoniums for their fragrant leaves, but not all plants in the genus are scented, and not all of the scents are pleasant. The common name, scented geranium, came to be associated with pelargoniums due to a very early misclassification of the genus. True geraniums belong to the genus Geranium and are hardy North American and European plants.

Pelargoniums are informally classified as zonals (which are named for the dark markings on the leaf surface and are primarily ornamental, bedding plants), fancy-leaf cultivars (some of which are scented), regals, angels, ivy-leaf, and scented-leaf. The scented-leafed pelargoniums (often called "scented geraniums") can have aromas of rose, peppermint, lemon, lime, orange, strawberry, camphor, nutmeg, spice, apricot, apple, filbert, ginger, and coconut. Plants are often categorized by enthusiasts according to the following scent groups: citrus, fruit and nut, mint, rose, and pungent.

Pelargonium leaves come in a variety of shapes and sizes and may resemble ferns, grape leaves or oak leaves and may be deeply divided or nearly round. They may be small or large, may be covered with fine hairs and may be rough, sticky or have a velvety texture. Leaf edges may appear "curly" or "crisped" in some species. Leaves include scent glands that release pelargoniums' renowned scents when brushed, may be variegated, and may include dark patches of color in the center or along the veins.

Flowers occur in a pseudo-umbel consisting of 1-50 individual flowers, but most have 5-10 florets. Flowers may be white, pink, mauve, lavender, pale yellow or burgundy, and upper petals may have purple, pink or red markings. Most of the scented-leaf species have small, delicate blooms, but some pelargoniums have flowers that resemble tulips, carnations, cactus flowers or pansies.

Pelargoniums can be propagated from stem cuttings, root divisions, leaf cuttings or seed. Propagating from seed can be tricky for several reasons. Only true species can be cultivated successfully from seed, but due to cross-pollination and labeling errors it may be difficult to know if your seed is true. Cuttings are the preferred propagation method for many of HSA's Pelargonium aficionados.

All pelargoniums are hardy in Zone 10, but some are hardy to Zones 7-8. All pelargoniums require well-drained soil with good air circulation. Some, like *P. graveolens*, prefer moist soil, and others, like *P. scabrum*, grow in dry, sandy areas. Soil should be slightly acid with a pH of 6.0-6.8. Sterilized potting soil amended with perlite, pigeon grit, granular baked clay, sand or greensand will provide adequate drainage.

Pelargoniums can be planted in-ground or in containers, or a combination of both. If planting in-ground, remember that due to their temperature requirements, pelargoniums are generally grown as annuals in areas of North America that experience frost. One way

to get around this is to plant pelargoniums in pots sunk into the ground. Planting in sunken pots allows plants to be easily moved indoors or to the greenhouse in the fall. If you will be planting directly in the ground, spacing should be based on the size and habit of the plant. Pelargoniums are well-suited to container growing, whether in whiskey barrels, pots or hanging baskets. Clay pots are recommended because they promote water evaporation and prevent accumulation of excess moisture.

Although most pelargoniums can be grown in full sun, some species, including *P. odoratissimum*, *P. graveolens*, *P. grossularioides* and *P. tomentosum* require some shade. If there is a cardinal rule for watering pelargoniums, it is "less is more." Although some grow near streams or in areas with winter rainfall in their native lands, most plants in this genus are native to low-rainfall areas, and they dislike excess water and humidity.

Container-grown pelargoniums generally need more fertilizer than in-ground plants. Pelargonium cuttings can be fertilized with a balanced 20-20-20 fertilizer after they are rooted. For in-ground plants, compost and balanced organic fertilizer can be added to the soil before planting. For indoor growing and overwintering, plants should be brought indoors before nighttime temperatures fall below 45°F. Indoor plants will require at least 4 hours of direct sunlight or growlights, and are best placed in a south facing window or greenhouse.

Pelargoniums have a wide variety of uses. Scented-leafed pelargoniums can be used to flavor jellies, cakes, butters, ice cream, iced tea and other dishes. The pelargoniums most often used in food are the rose, lemon- and peppermint-scented species and cultivars. Commonly used lemon-scented culinary species include *P. crispum* and *P. citronellum*. Rose-scenteds include *P. graveolens* and members of the *P. 'Graveolens'* cultivar group. Other species and cultivars with culinary use include the lime-scented *P. 'Lime,'* the lemon balm-scented *P. 'Lemon Balm,'* the strawberry-lemon-scented *P. 'Lady Scarborough'* and the peppermint-scented *P. tomentosum*. There are many rose and citrus-scented cultivars with culinary use including those with hints of peach, cinnamon and orange. *P. 'Rosé'/P. 'Old Fashioned Rose'* is a culinary favorite among HSA's Pelargonium aficionados.

Many Pelargonium species have a long history of medicinal use in their native Africa. The primary uses have been for intestinal problems, wounds and respiratory ailments, but Pelargonium species have also been used to treat fevers, kidney complaints and other conditions. Geranium (Pelargonium) oil is considered a relaxant in aromatherapy, and in recent years respiratory/cold remedies made from *P. sidooides* and *P. reniforme* have been sold in Europe and the United States. Pelargoniums can also be used in crafts and cosmetics. For more information on uses see the Uses section of Pelargoniums: An Herb Society of America Guide, available on The Herb Society of America website.

This fact sheet was adapted/excerpted from Pelargoniums: An Herb Society of America Guide. Kirtland, OH: The Herb Society of America, 2006.

