

## ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH405



### GERANIUM PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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#### INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Cranesbill
- Scientific name: *Geranium spp.*
- Name derived from the Greek *geranos*, meaning 'crane'.
- Native to temperate regions around the world
- Grows 1-2' tall and spreads up to 2' wide
- Deep green, glossy leaves with scalloped edges
- Flowers appear as clusters of small florets at the end of straight, bare stems
- Flowers range in color from red to rose to pink to white

#### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Requires 6-8 hours of sunlight daily

- Media should be light, loose, and well-drained
- Add compost or other organic matter to the media
- Avoid over-watering; wet leaves and flowers as little as possible
- Fertilize with an all-purpose 10-10-10 liquid fertilizer every month while plants are actively growing
- Spread a 2-3 inch layer of mulch around plants to maintain moisture and improve media

#### PROPAGATION

- Roots easily from stem cuttings, which are best taken in September
- Take a cutting 3-4 inches in length from growing tips

- Trim off lower leaves and insert the cutting into a coarse sandy media; water immediately
- After roots are formed, move the plants into full sun or under a fluorescent light; transplant in spring
- Most geranium varieties can be started from seed

### DISORDERS

- Black root rot (*Thielaviopsis*)
  - Foliage turns yellow, wilts, and dies
  - Lighten heavy soil and avoid overwatering
  - Remove infected plants
- Bacterial leaf spot (*Xanthomonas*)
  - Leaves develop brown spots
  - Remove infected plants
- Foliar nematode infection
  - Lesions bounded by major veins appear on leaves
  - Leaves turn brown and die
  - Remove and destroy infected plants
- Geranium budworm
  - Eats unopened buds; flower petals become riddled with holes
  - Remove buds showing tiny holes and brown specks
  - Handpick visible worms

### CONSUMER CARE

- Remove spent flowers to prevent decline in bloom production
- Regularly cut back long stems to encourage bushy growth
- Geraniums thrive in all types of containers

- Often used in arrangements of cut flowers

### CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Geranium*
  - 'Brookside': sapphire-blue flowers with white eyes
  - 'Jolly Bee': large, cupped violet-blue flowers
  - 'Orion': large purple-blue flowers with violet veining
  - 'Rozanne': violet-blue flowers
- *Geranium cantabrigiense*
  - 'Biokovo Karmine': deep pink flowers
  - 'St. Ola': white flowers age to light pink
- *Geranium sanguineum*
  - 'Max Frei': magenta flowers
  - 'New Hampshire Purple': deep magenta flowers
  - 'Vision Light Pink': light pink flowers with red veins
  - 'Vision Violet': bright violet with darker veins

### References

- <http://www.yardener.com/Geranium.html>
- <http://www.thegardenhelper.com/geranium.htm>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geranium>

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