

Student Essay on Characteristics of the Pigsqueak Flower

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Essay

Flowers are plants that are cultivated for their blossoms. *Bergenia cordifolia*, also known as Pigsqueak, is a unique type of flower that not only attractive to people but also to bees, butterflies, and birds. Many different types of flowers exist in the world, Pigsqueak flowers originated in Asia. The genus, *Bergenia*, was named after an 18th century German botanist, Karl August von Bergen and *Cordifolia* is Latin for heart-shaped leaves. The plant was brought to the United States in the 19th century. Pigsqueak can be found in regions of the United States where the minimum temperatures average between -40 degrees to 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

Pigsqueak can range in color from white to red and even purple; their evergreen foliage can sometimes have a bronze or purplish hue. During the winter these plants look very plain, their flowers die back and one wouldn't have any idea that this plant is vividly colored with five bright petals. The green foliage is large and the leaves resemble hearts that were stretched from top to bottom. In spring these flowers bloom and they expose filaments with bright yellow, pollen covered anthers and a brightly colored green stigma. The contrasts between the vivacious purplish pink, yellow, and green are calming and pleasant to the eye.

Anthers covered with pollen have a sweet scent that calls to several types of wildlife.

Pigsqueak got its nickname from the sound that the leaves make when people rub two of the plant's leaves together, the resonance is very similar to the voice of a pig when it is startled or frightened.