



# THE OFFSET

Webpage <https://sites.google.com/site/cocssok/>

*Echinocereus reichenbachii subsp. baileyi* in the Wichita Mountains NWR, Oklahoma. Mount Scott in the background. Photo by Michael Douglas

## NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL OKLAHOMA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

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**MEETING** At Will Rogers Garden Center at 3400 NW 36<sup>th</sup> in Oklahoma City, the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm (except in January, the month of our show, picnic and December).

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## CLUB NEWS- FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's September already but still over 100 degrees. How many times have I started a message this summer including the temperature? It looks like maybe some relief this weekend but I've decided not to believe the weather forecasters (sorry Mike). My summers the last two years have included more yard work than ever before and people keep telling me that 'it will get better'. However, I'm starting to relate 'yard work' with 'sweaty clothes, burning eyes, never ending watering, and so on....'. Oh but for a cool, colorful fall!



We have the Crystal Bridge tour coming up on the 9th and the Annual Picnic on the 16th at Peggy's. Don't forget the SWAP MEET -- this should be a lot of fun.

Leo Chance will be here on October 20th for his program, book signing and sale and this should be an interesting way for us to start wrapping up 2012. We have a flier regarding Leo's program and hopefully we can all post a few fliers each to bring in some interested people outside the club. One will be included with this newsletter and can be copied.

The regular club meeting for September has been cancelled due to the activities scheduled this month and since our regular meeting date in October is the 18th, we'll simply 'push' that meeting to the 20th for Leo's program and not meet the Thursday before.

Lots of things going on with various members of the club so be sure to attend the events scheduled and catch up on summer happenings!

President      Niki Furrh

### From the editor:

We are starting a new section for the newsletter titled "Succulent travels/places". We thought it would be nice to feature from time to time places that are ideal for seeing cactus and / or other succulents.

I hope you enjoy this new feature and as always if you have any comments, questions or materials for the newsletter send them to me.



We have a few aprons available for \$16 plus tax.

If anyone would like one I will bring the ones we have left to the picnic.

Niki

## ANNUAL POT LUCK PICNIC SEPTEMBER 16TH



Along with the picnic we will be having our first ANNUAL SWAP MEET!. The picnic starts at 5:30 pm.

Bring a plastic bag full of those crazy plastic pots you need to get rid of but can't bring yourself to throw out; how about that shovel Uncle Steve gave you for Christmas 10 years ago and hangs on the wall next to the other 4 you have? Or a book or two you have read 20x and need to pass on. How about bringing several things and making a couple of 'good deals' or work



Thomas Cole's "The Picnic" (ca. 1846).



To avoid duplication If you want to you can call Peggy and let her know what you are bringing that is fine. Her phone number is 840-4583. If you just want to bring something, that's good too.

Peggy is planning to grill or broil chicken breasts and hamburgers, so we need everything else, except I think Nikki is bringing soft drinks.

### Directions:

From NW Expressway between May and Penn, turn north on Villa (light) turn west (left) on 56th Street and go two block to Miller. Peggy's house is on the SW corner, look for the white picket fence. Address is 2700 NW 56th St. Call 840-4583 if you get lost.

## OCTOBER'S INVITED SPEAKER

*The Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society*

will be hosting Author & Speaker

### Leo Chance

**"Cacti & Succulents for Cold Climates"**

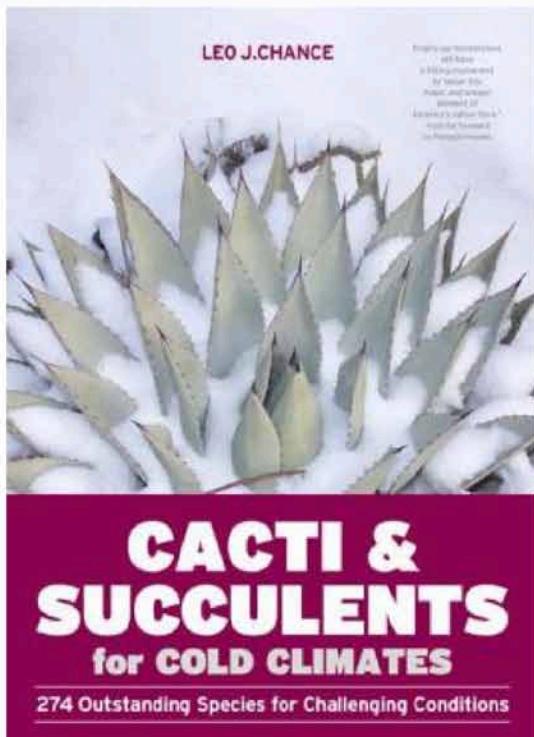
**October 20, 2012, Will Rogers Exhibition Center,  
3400 NW 36th, Oklahoma City, OK.**

**Our free program will start at 10:00 am.**

Following the program we will open the sales area where we will have a nice selection of cold hardy cacti & succulents. Leo will be available to visit with everyone and autograph his book.

Cash, Checks, Credit Cards.

For more info call 405-737-1831 or [cactibud@cox.net](mailto:cactibud@cox.net)



Leo Chance is a professional gardener based in Colorado Springs & Pueblo, Colorado. He has also worked as a professional plant buyer & propagator. A member of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America & the Colorado Cactus & Succulent Society, Leo lectures frequently about cacti & succulents, as well as water-wise gardening.

Come join us on October 20<sup>th</sup> for our invited speaker program. It sounds like a great program and there will be plants for sale.

## CACTUS AND SUCCULENT HAPPENINGS IN THE REGION *By Joyce Hochtritt*

**September 9, 2012, 9:30 am, Sunday,** Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society will have a fieldtrip to the Myriad Botanical Gardens & Crystal Bridge. It is open from 11-5. Admission is adults \$7, 62+ \$6, kids 4-12 \$4. For groups of ten or more admission is adults \$5, kids \$3. The tour Peggy will be giving is free. The outside gardens are really worth a look too, if the weather is nice enough. . More information contact Peggy Anglin 840-4583 or [anglin@swbell.net](mailto:anglin@swbell.net)



**September 16, 2012,** Sunday at 5:30 pm, Club Picnic – Pot Luck to be held at Peggy Anglin's home. (2700 NW 56<sup>th</sup> St., OKC, OK. 405-840-4583 – [anglin@swbell.net](mailto:anglin@swbell.net)) Open swap program will be held at the picnic. Members to bring their items they want to swap out with other members. Directions: house: From NW Expressway between May and Penn, turn north on Villa (light) turn west (left) on 56th Street and go two block to Miller. My house is on the SW corner, look for the white picket fence. Address is 2700 NW 56th St. Call 840-4583 if you get lost.

**September 22-23, 2012,** Cactus and Succulent Society's Fall Show and Sale, Tulsa Garden Center, Tulsa, OK. (Car Pool?) More information contact Terri Mann-Bill Keeth 918-241-3252 or [jwkeeth@gmail.com](mailto:jwkeeth@gmail.com)

**October 13-14, 2012,** North Texas Cactus and Succulent Society will host the Fall TACSS Seminar, Dallas, TX. Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, Cedar Hill, TX. Free Admission.

<http://tx.audubon.org/dogwood-canyon-audubon-center> Lodging arrangements: Holiday Inn Express which is a 5 min drive from the Audubon center:<http://www.hiexpress.com/hotels/us/en/cedar-hill/dfwch/hoteldetail>

The group discount will be \$89 per night versus the standard \$129 rate

### Hotel Reservation info:

<http://www.hiexpress.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=ex&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=DFWCH& PMID=99801505&GPC=TAC>

Dawn 972-291-4037 For more information contact: Pete 214-701-7792

**October 20, 2012** The Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society will be hosting Author & Speaker **Leo Chance “Cacti & Succulents for Cold Climates”** at the Will Rogers Exhibition Center, 3400 NW 36<sup>th</sup> St. Oklahoma City, OK. Our free program will start at 10:00am. Following the program we will open the sales area where we will have a nice selection of cold hardy cacti & succulents. Leo will be available to visit with everyone and autograph his book. Cash, Checks & Credit Cards. For more information call 405-737-1831 or [Cactibud@cox.net](mailto:Cactibud@cox.net)

**November 15, 2012,** Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society's monthly program and business meeting. Starting at 7:30 pm at the Will Rogers Garden Center.

**Program:** CSSA Judging Workshop – Presented by J. Hochtritt. How to judge and present plants to be judged. **Refreshments:** Joyce Hochtritt (snacks) and Deb Trimble (drinks)

### 2013 Cactus and Succulent Happenings in the Region

\*June 15 – 20, 2013 - CSSA 35<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention - Hyatt Regency Hotel – Austin, TX.

<http://cssa2013.com>

### 2014 Cactus and Succulent Happenings in the Region

The 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Mid-States Cactus and Succulent Conference Hosted by the Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society in Oklahoma City, OK. More information to come!

If you know of any plant happenings, please send me the information. Thank you, Joyce

## SUCCULENT PLACES/TRAVEL *by Rosario Douglas*

The Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center located in Fort Davis, Texas is a nice place to visit. One of their many activities/ sales/ workshops includes the annual **Cactus Frenzy** (see below for the 2012 cactus frenzy). Their webpage has many interesting subjects to explore. Click on the link below to visit their webpage.



<http://cdri.org/>

Thanks to Joyce Hotchritt for suggesting we include this place in our new section of **Succulent places/travels**

In 1978, the board and supporters of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute purchased 507 acres of rolling grassland, oak-studded hills, and shady canyon springs in the foothills of the Davis Mountains. Here, they established the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center. For over three decades, visitors have explored this tranquil and visually stunning site, taking the opportunity to reconnect with nature and discover the high desert.

Highlights of the Nature Center include a desert botanical garden, 1400 sq. ft. cactus and succulent greenhouse, over 3 miles of hiking trails, and interpretive exhibits. Both formal and informal education programs for children and adults are offered throughout the year.

The Nature Center is a facility of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute—a nonprofit organization established in 1974. Funding for the Institute and the Nature Center comes from donations, grants, program and service fees, gift shop sales, and oil and gas royalties.

Bottom right shows a map of the Chihuahuan desert from the Institute's webpage. All photos displayed are from the Institute's webpage.



**Cactus Frenzy!** In March, our cactus collection is in bloom and we celebrate spring! During our Cactus Frenzy event, we offer workshops and lectures, taste-testing (have you ever tasted a nopal [prickly pear pad] or tuna [fruit of the prickly pear?]) and put up special exhibits—all related to the Cactus family!

Over 50 species of cacti and succulents native to the Chihuahuan Desert region are typically offered during our Annual Cactus and Succulent Sale. Whether you're starting a cactus collection, adding that special plant to your existing collection, or just looking for something new for your garden, you're sure to find it here. The majority of our cacti are seed-grown in our greenhouse or from Sul Ross State University's Native Plant Propagation Program in Alpine.

### Schedule of Events March 12 through 17, 2012

ALL DAY Chihuahuan Desert Cacti & Succulents for Sale. See [list of plants](#) that will be available.

10:00 a.m. GUIDED HIKES INTO MODESTA CANYON.

2:00 p.m. TALKS AT TWO Monday: The Many Uses of Agave Tuesday: Color from the Desert Wednesday: Cooking with Desert Plants Thursday: Welcome to the Chihuahuan Desert! Friday: Cooking with Desert Plants Saturday: Cactus Care

2:30 p.m. GUIDED WALK THROUGH BOTANICAL GARDEN

ALL DAY Chihuahuan Desert Cacti & Succulents for Sale. See [list of plants](#) that will be available.

10:00 a.m. GUIDED HIKES INTO MODESTA CANYON.

**Thanksgiving Open House** Thanksgiving is a time to remember and appreciate the good things in our lives. We have much to be thankful for—our members, donors, visitors and all the wonderful people that believe that the Chihuahuan Desert is a special place.

To show our appreciation, we hold an Open House each year on the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. We do away with admission fees, and bring out the hot chocolate and cookies. Walk

off that turkey dinner with a hike to the geological exhibits or a stroll through the botanical gardens. Peak into the greenhouse—there's always something to see there! Join our docents for a guided hike and see what new exhibits are in progress.

Bring your friends, family, and neighbors to the Nature Center for the Thanksgiving Open House. And remember: *it's free!*

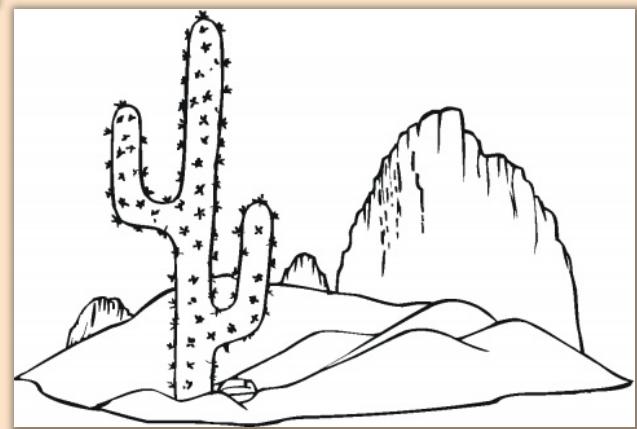
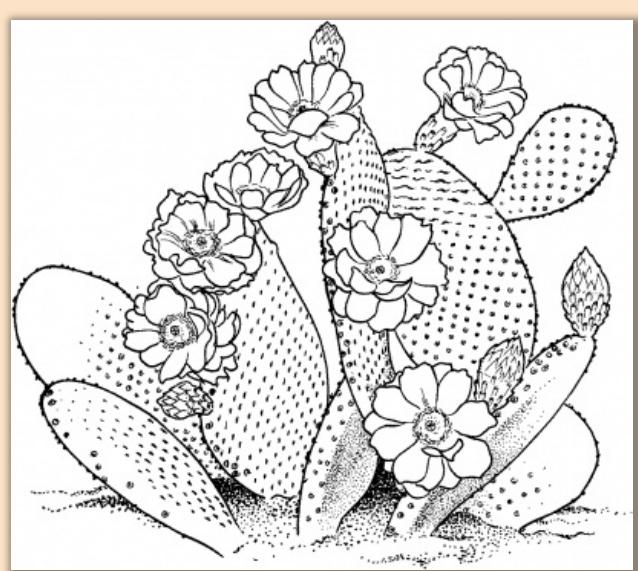
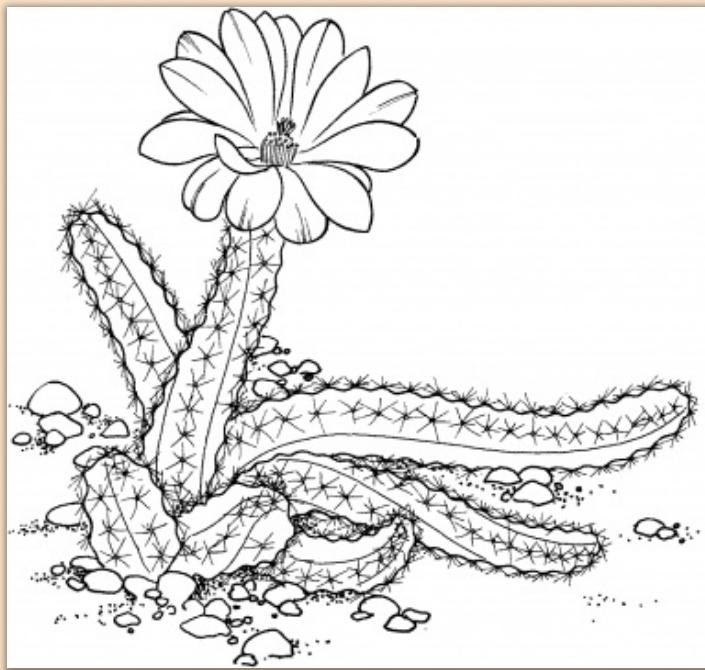


## ODDS &amp; ENDS

## CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CRAFTS



I found these cacti in a plant-coloring page. It looks like fun. If you go to the webpage you will see quite a few samples you can print, some for free. Then have fun coloring them.



<http://www.squidoo.com/plant-coloring-pages>

## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

by Rosario Douglas

**An Oklahoma rock garden**

Continuing with the theme of rock gardens we now describe our experience in designing and building a cactus rock garden and a front lawn with a minimum of Bermuda grass.



This garden came about as a byproduct of building our new house in 2005. We spent a fair amount of time planning the garden for the front lawn, including a cactus rock garden. We eliminated almost all the Bermuda grass (a non-native that requires maintenance and water) and replaced it with beds outlined by sandstone rock. Perennials and some evergreens including oaks were later planted. The rock garden was placed near the main door in an area that had a perfect shape already in place.

We hired a landscape architect to help us put our ideas on paper. We looked for a local source for rocks and fell in love with limestone boulders called "holy boulders". Holy boulders have many small holes (great for planting small succulents) and are irregular in shape. All the materials were



delivered by truck and in 2.5 days the landscape team put all the sandstone borders and rocks in place. We used the large holy boulders in the cactus bed and the rest of the front lawn garden. After 7 years enjoying our gardens I would say that any kind of rock garden you choose to design will be a forever evolving project.



The planning stage involved the selection of the site, the type of rocks and sizes to be used and it also involved identifying a local source that could deliver the materials. We also had to look for nurseries in our area or online where we could buy plants for the rock garden. We were fortunate to have a number of native Oklahoma cacti such as *Echinocereus reichenbachii* and *Coryphantha missouriensis* available. We also purchased winter hardy succulents such as different species of sedums. At this stage you have to decide if you can do it alone or you need a professional landscape designer that can help with the design and can also bring a team of workers and machinery in case you are planning to use big rocks. Our heaviest rock is a limestone chunk that weighs 1000 pounds.

Top right our front-lawn in December 2005 before the oaks and other evergreens were planted. Bottom right our rock garden in 2005 ready for plants – it looks like a pile of rocks at this stage.

The second part involved the hardscape; getting the place ready, making sure there was good drainage, taking care of having the right soil mix for the plants and finally placing the rocks. This part, depending on the size of the rocks you use, may require professional help. The rocks we used were too heavy for even two people to lift. The landscape architect brought his team in and they placed the rocks using a bobcat.



The third part involved selecting the plants that could do well in our climate. The climate of your area plays a determining role for this part. It is very important that you check the maximum and minimum temperatures for your area. Rainfall also is key since the more rain you have in your area, the better the drainage will have to be. We live in Norman, Oklahoma and our average rainfall is about 30 inches per year. That is a lot of water for cactus or many succulents. Our soil is not ideal being the red clay type that does not drain very well. Designing our rock garden we had the landscape team scoop out as much of the clay as

possible. We then added sand and gravel and mixed it before putting any rocks in place.

The final stage was the planting. Here you may want to take your time to find the best places for your plants. Avoid plants that may grow too large. Use small holes or crevices in your rocks if you have them and plant little sedums or other succulents. If these crevices or holes are good-sized you may be able to plant cacti.

After this it is just a matter of waiting to see how plants mature and to see which plants survive the winters or summers. We use a shallow layer of granite gravel over our rock garden and it works well. Unfortunately because we get a fair amount of rain, there is an endless number of seedlings that have to be constantly eliminated from the bed. This has to be done periodically otherwise it will be too difficult to keep the area around the cacti clear due to the spines.



Our rock garden will be 7 years old in December. It has evolved and today it has many non-cacti plants (grasses, wildflowers, small shrubs) growing on it. Originally we planted winter hardy cactus and succulents, but other plants came on their own or sometimes they came with the rocks. We have kept some of them because they add a nice touch and soften the overall appearance of the garden.

All photos on these pages show our garden in 2012.

A favorite time of the year is April and May when the *Echinocereus* bloom profusely. The fight to get the weedy plants out goes on every year, it is worse in the wetter months during the spring and fortunately by the time the hot summer rolls around there is less maintenance required.



We admire our rock garden almost daily and it looks nice even in the winter. I would strongly recommend creating a rock garden (any of the types mentioned in previous articles) and to incorporate some of your own ideas to make it a reality. Size is not important, you can have a relatively small rock wall, container garden or small cactus rock garden and derive the same pleasure of seeing how it evolves through the seasons.



All photos in this page taken in May 2012. *Echinocereus reichenbachii* var *baileyi* blooming. Bottom left shows the holes in holly boulders and how they can become effective pots for your sedums or other succulents. Bottom right: another view of the rock garden.

Good sources to learn more about building a rock garden are:

<http://www.spokanecounty.wsu.edu/spokane/eastside/Fact%20Sheets/C121%20Rock%20Garden%20Plants%20for%20the%20INW%20%2005.pdf> This is a website of the Washington State University Spokane country extension. Here you will see the basic designs, types of soils, types of rock gardens. Drainage is also discussed as are the types of plants you can consider. The gardens listed here are not really cactus and succulent rock gardens but you can use a fair amount of this information to start planning your rock garden and then you can plant cactus and succulents that can grow in your area and survive the winter.

Also very informative is the website for the North American Rock Garden Society; it has good information with nice photos of some of the plants you may consider. <http://www.nargs.org/>



Author Donna E. Shaper has written a book titled: "The Art of Spiritual Rock Gardening" which aside from the spiritual part has a lot of information about designing a rock garden. I thought it would be fitting to end this article about rock gardens with a passage from her book:

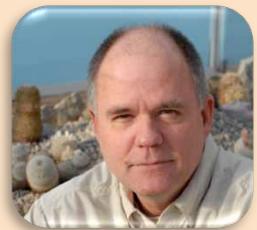


*"Building a quiet sanctuary of stones and plants, slowly and meditatively over time, is a rock garden's true meaning."*

*Process over product, journey over destination, forever a work in progress—rock is the best metaphor we have of everlastingness."*

## WHAT IS BLOOMING?

Photos by: Mike Douglas



*Obregonia denegrii* on the left.

*Coryphantha hesteri* (?) at the bottom.



## SUCCULENT PLANTS

By Rosario Douglas

## THE GENUS PEDILANTHUS

The genus Pedilanthus is in the large Euphorbiaceae family. The name refers to any of several tropical American shrubby succulent plants resembling cacti but having foot-shaped bracts (source: the free dictionary). The name derives from the Greek words *pedilon*, meaning "slipper," and *anthos*, meaning "flower."



Pedilanthus flowers are typically red and bird-shaped. The genus has about 15 species all of them found in Mexico. Most species are endemic to Mexico although a few extend to Central America. One species, *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* has a large range from Florida and Mexico to northern South America and the Caribbean. Source: Article by Victor W. Steinmann titled: **The Submersion of Pedilanthus into Euphorbia (Euphorbiaceae)**. Acta Botanica Mexicana, December # 065. Institute of Ecology A.C. Patzcuaro, Mexico pp 45-50. 2003.

Habitats include bushy or arid areas. Pedilanthus is easy to cultivate and needs extra warmth and water. Source: Timber Press Guide to Succulent Plants of the World by Fred Dortort

On left *Pedilanthus macrocarpus*, the artist, Lucretia B. Hamilton, From the **Sonoran Desert Florilegium Program**  
[http://art-botanical.org/herbarium\\_text.html](http://art-botanical.org/herbarium_text.html)

Bottom left *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* (L.) Poit. | BR f.837/1824 | BHL



Above and at right, *Pedilanthus macrocarpus* in habitat, Tehuacan, Mexico. Photos by Mike Douglas. Closer view of flower top right from the web.



## THE CULTIVATION CORNER

### Should I Put Gravel in the Bottom of My Container Gardens? *By Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott*



The short answer is NO!

**The Myth** This is just one of those myths that refuses to die, regardless of solid scientific evidence to the contrary! Nearly every book or web site on container gardening recommends placing coarse material at the bottom of containers for drainage. The materials most often recommended for this practice are sand, gravel, pebbles, and pot shards. Other 'benefits' often mentioned include preventing creatures from entering through the drain holes, and stabilizing the container.

Some of these recommendations are quite specific and scientific sounding. Consider this advice from a 1960's book on container plants: "Adequate drainage is secured by covering the hole in the bottom of the pot with a piece of broken flowerpot, concave side down; this in turn is covered with a layer (1/2" to 1" deep) of flowerpot chips. On top of this, a 1/4" to 3/8" layer of coarse organic material, such as flaky leaf mold, is placed." The advice seems to make perfect sense, and it's presented so precisely. After all, we know that plants need good drainage so their roots receive adequate oxygen, and we also know that water passes through coarsely textured material faster than it does fine material. So what's not to like?



**The Reality** Nearly 100 years ago, soil scientists demonstrated that water does not move easily from layers of finer textured materials to layers of more coarse textured. Since then, similar studies have produced the same results. Additionally, one study found that more moisture was retained in the soil underlain by gravel than that underlain by sand. Therefore, the coarser the underlying material, the more difficult it is for water to move across the interface. Imagine what happens if a container lined with pot shards!



Some of my other columns have mentioned soil interfaces and their inhibition of water movement. We can see the same phenomenon occurring here: gravitational water will not move from a finely soil texture into a coarser material until the finer soil is saturated. Since the stated goal for using coarse material in the bottoms of containers is to "keep soil from getting water logged," it is ironic that adding this material will induce the very state it is intended to prevent.

<http://containergardening.about.com/od/containergardendesign/f/Should-I-Put-Gravel-In-The-Bottom-Of-My-Container-Gardens.htm>

Thanks to Joyce Hotchritt for sending me this link.