

VioletsFun

Violet Barn newsletter

November 2023 - # 117

(Some of) What's New



RS Gin. Large, very double, very dark, purple stars over pointed, dark, quilted, red-backed foliage. Standard.

Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

Thanks for attending!



Our display and sale on November 5 was hugely successful. Thank you to all that came to visit--about 70 people in total attended, many from out of state, a few from far out of state!

There were dozens of larger plants grown for display. Local AVSA judges were

invited to informally "judge" our plants the day prior to the event--"Best in Show" was 'Sweet Affair', shown at left. All of our staff grew plants for display and were on hand to help and answer questions (or direct traffic in our parking lots!).

More than a thousand plants were packaged and available for sale and most of our growing areas could be viewed. Refreshments were available and, judging by the few leftovers, appreciated.

Having learned from this one, we are already planning for next year. With a year to prepare, it should be even bigger and better. Improvements we are discussing are tours of other growing areas, educational presentations and/or displays, and participation by area violet society members. Tentatively, next year's event will be first or second week of October. Start making plans to attend!

News and updates:

Winter shipping now in effect.

We continue to ship through winter! However, from now through end of March, we can only guarantee safe arrival when Express mail is chosen. We will ship via priority mail (less expensive) but this is done at customer's risk.

Ordering plants for the holidays?

If you want plants to arrive safely, on time, please order no later than December 15 for shipping the following week. Timeliness, and safety, of delivery is only guaranteed via Express mail. If a gift, please tell us when ordering. Also remember that not all plants are in bloom all the time--we will attempt to send blooming plants, but cannot promise this for specific varieties requested.

My plant looks like this:



Ever notice light discolored patches or spots that seemingly appear overnight on your leaves? At near left is an example.

These photos were taken the morning after we had just watered plants heavily. You might think we had done a sloppy job of watering plants from above and splashed

water over the leaves. No, all of these plants were watered from the bottom, by wetting the matting (blanket) that they are on. What you are seeing is condensation, or "dew" on the leaves that had appeared overnight.

This is something that tends to occur more frequently this time of year, when overnight temperatures are cool, humidity is high around the plants, and air movement is less (neither

the AC nor heat is running). During the summer months, it will happen less frequently as the temperature change is not as great and air circulation is better.

Why the marks on the leaves? Once the moisture appears on the leaves, when the plant is exposed to the cooler nighttime temperatures, the "water marks" will appear. The same would have happened had we watered from the top, splashed water on the foliage, then left them wet overnight. What causes the damage is not the method of watering (here even with bottom watering), and not the fact that water is left on leaves--this alone is not enough to mark the leaves. Leaving water on the leaves AND being exposed to cooler air is the cause--the temperature of the water.

The good news is that the markings are only cosmetic damage, and will have little effect on the health or viability of the plant.

This month's question

I have two questions for you. I have several streps in pots in my living room. They seem to do well for awhile, and then, perfectly healthy green leaves wilt and die. I've had this happen to a bunch of them over the years, and once the one leaf wilts and droops, the rest follow. My other question might be related. When I water my plants, there are little black flies that come out of the soil, and I don't know how to get rid of the flies. It's frustrating, because I repotted my streps in new commercial soil, into washed and cleaned pots, just a few months ago. Any advice would be appreciated.

Without seeing them, and from the information you provided, we can take a guess. Streptocarpus are very durable, easy to grow plants if you can keep their "feet" happy. They don't like heavy or soggy soil and need to be in the proper size pot--all the things that keep their roots happy. The flies are likely fungus gnats, which are relatively harmless but will appear when the soil is wet, especially if the potting soil is very heavy and rich. Most easily found commercial "African violet" soil is too heavy and rich. What you want is just the opposite. A good soil, especially for streps, should be coarse, peat based (no actual soil, manure, etc.) not "rich" and "organic"--it shouldn't feel heavy and shouldn't appear dark. If the soil is too heavy, and/or the plant is in a pot too much larger than the root ball, which might be the case just after repotting (use a pot just slightly larger than the current root system).

If the leaves you see wilting are the outer/lower ones, and this is despite the soil being moist, then it is likely due to the above. If this is the case, lighten the soil (you can add some perlite to the mix), be sure the pot size is proper, and water from the top when soil surface is "dry to the touch". This way you can provide only the amount of water the plant

needs, when it needs it. If you must bottom water, do so only when the plant is mature and well established, will a full root system, and it can tolerate the additional water.

As for the fungus gnats, they need the wet conditions to survive. If the soil surface is allowed to dry between waterings, you'll see fewer and fewer of them over time.

Calendar

December 9, 2023, 6:30 pm.

Meeting AVGS Rochester

Holiday dinner at members home. New members and guests are welcome!

Contact: comments@violetbarn.com

March 2024.

Next international shipping. Sorry, due to weather and the holidays, we are not shipping internationally during winter months. We will resume next spring.

Contact us

Email: comments@violetbarn.com

Mail: PO Box 9, Naples, NY 14512

Phone: 585-374-8592 (M-S 12-5 ET)

Sorry, we're currently closed to visitors

Notes



Follow us on facebook!

We want you to succeed!

Plant not growing well? Don't wait until it's too late. Send us a photo and an outline of care and environment. You are not alone--perhaps we can help.

Having success?

Let us know and share your story.

Write a review to get a free plant

Write a review on the product pages of our website before ordering. Get a free plant added to your order.

Place a pickup order!

For those in the area, we offer pickup service. Save on shipping and we'll have your plants waiting for you.

[More info...](#)

Are you a member?

Gesneriad Society

Has your collection grown far beyond violets? Consider joining the Gesneriad Society. More info: gesneriad.society.org

African Violet Society of America

Sign up through our website and get a free plant added to order! More info: avsa.org

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