

VioletsFun

Violet Barn newsletter

September 2024 - # 127

(Some of) What's new



Spanish Moss. An "oldie", so it's not really new, but it is newly listed on our site. Double, lavender two-tone blooms over beautiful green and white variegated foliage. Standard.

Mac's Mesmerizing Meteor.

Another new listing. Deep coral-red

double pansies. Green and white variegated foliage.

Semiminiature.

Many more on the website!

Annual Open House.

Our 2nd annual Open House is coming soon, Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6, 10-3 pm each day. We should have nearly 200 showplants. Large "exhibition" size standard African violets, tiny miniatures, showy streptocarpus, and more. Hundreds of blooming plants are being grown for sale as well. The selection of sales plants will change each day, so that Sunday visitors are guaranteed a good selection--the "good" stuff won't all be sold on Saturday. Many of the showplants will be for sale, for pickup at the end of the event.

Private tours will take place just before opening--sorry, these are already booked (only those already reserving a spot will be allowed on tours), but our facility will otherwise largely be open to everyone for viewing. Programs are scheduled at the end of each day, and are open to all, no reservations needed.

An RSVP is needed for our Saturday morning guest speaker, Karyn Cichocki, who will give a hands-on presentation on dish gardens. Karyn is highly regarded grower, designer, and speaker, and winner of top awards at national shows.

Besides lots to see, buy, and learn, there will be live music and free refreshments. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff will be on hand to answer questions, should you have any. All of the [details can be found on the website](#).

RSVPs are encouraged, so we can plan accordingly. Click the button below to do so. We will send you confirmation with details about the full schedule of events for the day.

[I will attend](#)

News and updates

Ohio State AVS Convention Show.

We'll be attending this year's show at the Kingwood Center in Mansfield. Visit our sales booth--we'll have plenty of plants to see and buy. This is perhaps our favorite show of the year both because of the show and the venue. Lots of lovely showplants and the gardens of the Kingwood center are wonderful. Click on title above for more details.

New York State AVS Convention Show.

The NYSAVS will be celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. We'll be bringing some of our plants.

Inventory updates.

Standard violet inventory recently updated. For those attending the open house, we plan to have selected varieties available only at that event, with a slightly different selection on each day.

My plant looks like this:



My last order of lovely little plants had 'Painted Silk' included. It's very healthy, but the crown is so tight, the blossoms can't penetrate the tangle of leaves! What's going wrong?

This unusual variety can be beautiful as can be seen by the [photo on the website](#). The gold and green variegation is gorgeous, especially on the scalloped "girl" leaves. Varieties like this one, though, with wavy, curly, or heavily scalloped "girl" leaves, need to be handled a bit differently. Their leaves aren't as flat as on other varieties and won't shingle atop each other as nicely without your active intervention.

First, don't allow this variety (or those like it), to grow too many leaves. Excess older, outer, leaves need to be removed to make room for the newer growth. If not, they will only become an obstacle, and you'll have the tangled mess you see. Rather than laying (relatively) flat, new leaf edges catch the edges of older leaves, and become twisted or folded under. Removing the obstacles allows new growth to develop normally and lay flatter.

Don't pot these varieties too low into the pot as well. If growth has to grow up and over the pot rim, it will make twisting and bunching even more likely. You want leaves to grow "out", not "up". As shown, your plant doesn't have this problem.

Lastly, avoid growing varieties like this one under very intense light, as this will only encourage tighter, more bunched growth. A bit less light will produce "looser" growth, giving leaves room to lay down and not grow into each other. You still want enough light for blooming, however.

This month's question

I love Rex begonias, but after years of trying I still don't know if mine struggle and die because of too much or not enough water. Would using your wicking potting mix help? If not, how much water at a time would you use for a 4 inch pot one the top of the soil is dry? (from a longer thread, edited here).

You are correct that they require more exacting water. The ideal environment is about the same for most plants we grow, but the tolerance of swings in watering or environment is less. Rexes will tolerate less stress than rhizomatous (or tuberous) begonias because of their structure. Aim for moderation.

If you tend to water heavily, a "wicking" mix, which contains more perlite and is more porous, may help. We use it for many of our mature plants, which allows us to water them more liberally. As for "how much" to water, this is needs a more nuanced answer.

Good watering is a matter of judgement--how fast the plants and soil dries depends upon many things. Environment (heat, humidity, air movement), which can vary throughout the year, to begin with. Size and maturity of the plant (how much water it needs and consumes), size of pot or container (the volume of soil relative to root system), type of container (terra cotta is more porous than plastic or glazed), and the soil mix. The goal is moderation, however that can be achieved. The less variability in watering and soil moisture, the less the plant will be stressed and the better it will grow. Some plants can tolerate more stress from imperfect watering, like succulents, tuberous, or thick leaved plants. Some less, like those with fine, fibrous, roots and/or thin leaves and stems that don't retain much water in the plant tissues. Finally, each individual plant, like any living thing, can be a bit different. You only learn this by caring for them over time.

Watering is easy. Just turn a hose on over plants or flood a tray or saucer with water. GOOD watering is a skill. Being good at it requires experience and observation. We've had many, people work with us over the years, growing plants. Watering is the one thing that takes the longest to master, some never fully do. Usually, those that do it best, grow the nicest plants, all else equal.

Calendar

October 5-6, 2024.

AVGS of Rochester Meeting.

New members welcome. October's meeting and program at the open house!

September 27, 2024

Notes



Follow us on facebook!

We want you to succeed!

Plant not growing well? Don't wait until it's

International orders must be placed by this date for shipping week of October 7.

September 20-21, 2024.

Ohio State AVS Convention Show.

Held at the Kingwood Center in Mansfield.

Details: osavs.org

October 5-6, 2024. 10-3 pm.

Sale and show at Violet Barn.

October 18-19, 2024.

NY State AVS Convention Show.

Hilton Garden Inn, 800 Pittsford-Victor Rd in Pittsford, NY.

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

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?

African Violet Society of America

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

Gesneriad Society

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

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, simply click on the following link [Unsubscribe](#).

©2024 The Violet Barn. All rights reserved.