

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

August 2022 - No. 102

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Our calendar:

August 30, 2022. International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of September 5.

September 16-17, 2022.
Ohio State AVS Show & Sale
Held at Kingwood Gardens in Mansfield. Visit www.osavs.org

Safe delivery now guaranteed by any means.

Free stuff and how to get it!

2023 AVSA Show awards.
Best Robinson collections
1st place: \$200
2nd place: \$100

Write a review.
Write a review before ordering, good or bad, we'd like to know. Get a free plant added to order.

Join AVSA.
See further below in this column.

Contact us:

email. comments@violetbarn.com

(Some of) What's New:



Ma's Inconceivable. New introduction with fringed, double pink blooms heavily speckled and splattered with blue purple fantasy. Medium green, slightly quilted, foliage. Excellent grower and bloomer. Standard.

Ma's Inconspicuous. Lightly fringed, double white blooms nicely bordered in deep blue-purple. Medium, green, slightly quilted, foliage. Excellent blooming standard.

Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

What's news:



Oil painting.

We have a talented staff! One of our growers, besides producing and caring for plants, paints them as well. At left is a framed oil painting of 'EK Treasure Dream'. The painting measures 8"x10", with wooden frame is 11"x14".

It can be found in the "gift ideas" section under supplies in our online catalog.

Ohio State AVS Convention Show and Sale.

After an absence of two years due to Covid, the "in-person" show returns this year. As before, the show is held at the beautiful Kingwood Center in Mansfield. Come and see the show, attend a workshop, stroll the gardens, and visit us in the salesroom. Details in the sidebar.

Inventory updates.

Standard chimeras have been updated over the last couple of weeks and streptocarpus inventory this coming week .

mail. POB 9, Naples, NY 14512

phone. 585-374-8592
Mon. thru Sat., 12-5 pm ET

Our shop and glasshouse at:
7209 County Road 12
Naples, New York 14512

Visitor hours:
Sundays 12-5 pm.
By appointment only--call ahead!

Place an order for pickup!
For those living locally, we offer pickup service. Save on shipping and we'll have your plants waiting for you.

Are you a member?

Consider joining the African Violet Society of America. Sign up through our website and get a free plant! For more information, visit www.avsa.org

Has your collection grown far beyond violets? Consider joining the Gesneriad Society. For more info: www.gesneriadsociety.org

This month's question(s)

Can you please tell me what is the correct way of wicking an African violet? I've been told different ways but was wondering what is the correct way. Leaving the wick on the bottom of the pot with the wick in the reservoir? Then I thought of bringing the wick up the side of the pot. So far I've had luck, but some parts of soil is getting too wet with the wick on the side of the pot. Some work and some don't. Is there a correct way?

Like many aspects of growing plants, there are more than one that will work. We've seen beautiful plants grown with wicks wound around the pot bottom, along the (in)side of the pot, or straight up through the middle. A lot depends upon convenience and the potting methods of the grower. If the soil is firm (not hard) and the wick is drawing water, the soil should be evenly wet regardless of where the wick is placed, though roots will always grow towards the water source--in this case the wick, over time.

We don't wick our plants, but have in the distant past (we've been growing violets for nearly 50 years). This is what we found easiest for us. When potting, thread the wick through the pot bottom, and pin one end with your thumb on the pot rim. Scoop soil into the pot holding the wick to the pot rim. Firm in soil, make your hole in center for the plant, and repot. Firm soil around plant and tidy up, then pull the top of the wick towards the center a bit. Done!

What is the best way to deal with a violet that grows strong, well-developed foliage but does not develop proportionally strong enough roots to support it?

Like the size and vigor of the foliage, size and vigor of the root system is determined by genetics as well as care and environment. Given the plant has well-developed foliage, the root system, however large or small, must have been strong enough to grow and support it--think of a large person with small feet...he still stands and walks. Some varieties never seem to have large root systems, regardless of maturity or care, yet grow and bloom and look beautiful regardless! Pot size for these varieties might be a bit smaller than the plant size might suggest. The rule of thumb remains the same--use a pot not much larger than the root ball.

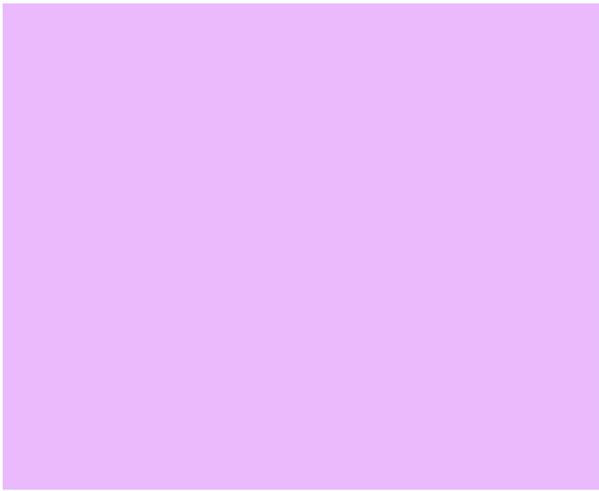
Good care, especially good watering habits, are necessary for a full and healthy root system. Avoid extremes. Overwatering, or wilting, can lead to root loss, and stress of any kind can set back development. The goal is moderation. "Perfect" means soil that is always moist, never soggy, never dry. There are many watering methods, but this should be the goal of each. We suggest a "balanced" fertilizer as well. Avoid a steady diet of extreme formulas that claim to promote blooms or foliage, yet may starve the plant in other areas. Like raising healthy children, plants need a balanced diet, on a regular basis, to grow well.

If lack of "support" means the plant is wobbly in the pot, this may simply be because of its soil or potting. Though this differs from some other growers, we prefer the soil in the pot to be firm. We won't just pour or scoop soil into a pot--we will fill a pot to a bit overflowing, then press soil down. It will be firm, but not hard. When you press with a finger or two, it will have some sponginess, but you won't easily leave an impression behind. We don't like wobbly plants, or those with necks that appear as



the soil line settles well down the pot over time. We find that plants also grow better when anchored. Think of how you plant your annuals or tomato plant in the spring. You remove it from the plastic container, dig a hole, place it in, then firm it in well--you don't just loosely pour soil around it into the hole. It will grow better (and not be wobbly) when anchored well.





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