

# VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

September 2022 - No. 103

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## Our calendar:

### September 20, 2022.

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week September 26.

### September 16-17, 2022.

**Ohio State AVS Show & Sale**  
Held at Kingwood Gardens in Mansfield. Visit [www.osavs.org](http://www.osavs.org)

### October 21-22, 2022.

**NY State AVS Show & Sale**  
Held at the Hilton Garden Inn, in Auburn, NY.

**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.

## (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:

### Inventory updates.

It is becoming more difficult to source many of our supplies, particularly plastic pots. The new, post Covid, world. Besides material shortages and prices, all of our manufacturers tell us of turning away business simply because they "can't get anyone to do the work"--the common refrain for most businesses today. We continue to offer plastic pots in most sizes, but you'll notice color choices may have changed or be more limited, and availability might be more sporadic.

## My plant looks like this:



It needs pruning, and likely, repotting. The newer growth appears healthy, and it is blooming. Removing the outer, yellowed, leaves will greatly improve its appearance.

Like most plants, African violets will bloom from the newer growth, and once a leaf axil produces a bloom stalk, it will tend not to produce another--it may, but the second bloom stalk will likely be weaker and less prolific than the first. Keeping older leaves on the plant, that may have already produced bloom and are, perhaps, aged and discolored, no longer improves either the

**Join AVSA.**

See further below in this column.

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

Open to public Sundays 12-5 pm  
Resuming in October. 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](http://www.avsa.org)

Has your collection grown far  
beyond violets? Consider joining  
the Gesneriad Society. For more  
info: [www.gesneriadsociety.org](http://www.gesneriadsociety.org)

health, or appearance, of the plant. Grown as a houseplant (not for exhibition), like the one pictured, most violets grow and look best with no more than about 15 leaves.

It is also a good habit to regularly repot your violets in fresh soil, generally every 6-12 months. Use a pot not much larger than the rootball. Usually, this means a 4" (5" at most) pot when grown as a houseplant--the one pictured would do well in a 4" pot. Soil will get "old", losing its porosity as it breaks down, and gradually accumulating excess salts, minerals, and other toxins over time. The quality of the soil ingredients, the fertilizer, and the water (hardness and pH) used will determine how quickly this occurs. This can also cause older growth to prematurely yellow, change texture, or lose vigor.

After removing many of the older, outer, leaves, a bare stem or "neck" will appear. Repotting is also a chance to deal with this. Removing some of the older soil from the bottom of the root ball, lowering the plant in the pot, then adding soil at the surface, will cover the neck and make for a more attractive plant. Don't be hesitant to remove some of the outer root ball and old soil. The whole point is to give your plant a fresh start and encourage new growth--happy roots means a happy plant! After repotting, water only moderately. Water based upon the size of the current root ball, not the size of the former plant or the pot. As the plant begins to grow (meaning new roots in the new soil), it will be able to process more water.

**This month's questions**

Can streptocarpus be grown under terrarium conditions? I understand the problem with overwatering leading to root rot--if the soil is light enough, maybe with a drainage layer at the bottom, will high ambient moisture cause issues?

*So long as the soil is not kept soggy, or is well aerated (lots of perlite), they can be grown under terrarium conditions. The high humidity won't be an issue. Your terrarium will have to be large enough to accommodate them. Streps are vigorous growers, have long leaves, and can grow multicrowned over time, all meaning they can outgrow a confined space. They are also prolific bloomers, which means you will have to be diligent about removing spent blooms as they appear, before they rot and become potential problems.*

I purchased a few self-watering ceramic pots for my African violets. Do I leave the water in the reservoir and refill it when it dries out, when the soil is almost dry, or do I wait until my violets have absorbed enough water and then dump out the excess water?

*Any of the above, though most growers simply keep the reservoirs filled all, or most, of the time. If your soil mix is very light (contains at least 50% perlite), the reservoir can be kept full. That said, at least an occasional, partial, drying of the soil can be helpful. If the soil is allowed to totally dry, it may be difficult to "restart" the absorption process through the inner pot. If this happens, water from the top to thoroughly wet the soil, and the inside of the inner pot, then refill the reservoir.*

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