

# VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

December 2022 - No. 106

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**Happy Holidays to all!**

**Our calendar:**

**December 16, noon ET.**

Deadline for receipt of orders shipment and arrival before Christmas!

No events or shows scheduled until spring 2023.

**International customers.**

Due to complications from weather and holidays, no international shipping until March 2023.

**Winter shipping in effect.**

Safe arrival guaranteed only by Express mail when signed for upon delivery.

**Free stuff and how to get it!**

**2023 AVSA Show awards.**  
Best Robinson collections

**(Some of) What's New:**

Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

**What's news:**

**Christmas orders.**

If you intend to ship plants as a gift to arrive before Christmas, we must receive your order no later than 12 noon ET on Friday, December 16. Guaranteed timely, and safe, arrival only by **Express** mail, with signature upon arrival.

**Gift certificates.**

If you miss the above deadline, we can always email a [gift certificate](#) to you or your intended recipient. We process these within 24 hours.

For domestic (US) customers, we continue to ship year-round, even in winter. From November through end of March, however, Express (overnite) mail will be the default shipping option, and the only means by which we guarantee safe arrival. Priority shipping during winter remains available, but is done at customer's risk

**Inventory.**

Inventory of some items is low, and some items (like chimeras and sinningia) may not be available at all. We have had recent problems in producing saleable plants in some categories so have removed these items from the catalog listing. We are working hard to address this and replenish our inventory. It may be late spring or summer 2023 before inventory approaches previous levels.

**The wierd, unusual, or charming:**



This attractive little shrub, [Serissa foetida 'Mt Fuji' variegated](#) is one of our favorites. This small, evergreen, shrub is perfect for bonsai or as an accent specimen in your collection. With its heavy white variegation it stands out among its neighbors, and it will bloom with delicate, tiny, fringed, white blooms spring through fall when cared for well.

1st place: \$200  
2nd place: \$100

**Write a review.**

Write a review on product pages before ordering. Get a free plant added to order.

**Join AVSA.**

See further below in this column.

**Contact us:**

**email.** [comments@violetbarn.com](mailto:comments@violetbarn.com)

**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

*Sorry, our shop is closed to visitors at this time.*

**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)

Though it can be grown as a larger (knee height) specimen, we never let ours get too large. Regular pruning keeps it about 6" in height, comfortable in a 2 1/2" to 3" pot. It is a bit slower growing than some other serissa, which we find desirable as it makes it more manageable and easier to prune and shape.

Care is not difficult but, to grow it well, you must be aware of a few of its preferences. Moderate to slightly warm (65-80f) temperatures are preferred, and it does not like to go dry for long periods. Always better to water before soil goes to dry. Use a light, porous, soil mix and you can keep it on the damp side. It will tend to shed leaves if allowed to go too dry, or if temperatures are too cold for its liking. Some leaf drop is natural, and not necessarily something to be concerned about. This will only serve to better display its woody trunk and give it that "tree like" appearance that is so attractive. Fertilize regularly, but don't overdo it. It is not a heavy feeder, and an occasional watering with clear water is appreciated.

**This month's questions:**

Any suggestions for my recent streptocarpus purchase? I've repotted them in African violet potting soil (*photo was attached*).

*Without knowing more, or the varieties in question, they are certainly in too large a pot. The pot should be only slightly larger than the root system when repotted. The soil appears wet and too heavy. Streps like a coarse, light, soil and don't like to be overpotted or overwatered. All of this can be done, but it greatly reduces your margin for error, especially if the varieties in question aren't large or fast growers by nature, as appears to be the case here.*

I understood the streptocarpus used the same type of soil as African violets, so that was purchased and used. To me, coarse soil would be heavy, makes me think of gravel.

*By "coarse" we mean the size and texture of the ingredients, with plenty of vermiculite and perlite. You can use commonly found "African violet" soil but, because its typically much finer and has little vermiculite and perlite, you must be much more careful with watering. Would suggest watering from the top, when soil surface is dry to the touch. Goal is moist, not soggy or wet. This is even more important when the root system has yet to fill the size of pot (volume of soil) and cannot process all of the water in the soil easily. Once the plant is established and has a full root system, then it can process more water and all of the above is less critical.*

Thank you, very helpful. Curious, would sand fit in at all? I have play sand, ordered perlite and peat moss. Will be doing some repotting when it arrives trying not to disturb the original root ball. In the past, African violets did not seem quite as complex but they stayed in the same size pot as when purchased.

*In the "old days" (prior to the mid 70's), everyone used sand, but it's heavy, fine, and can sift to the bottom. Plus there was the complication of cleaning and sterilizing it. Perlite will work better, especially if you can find a grade that isn't too fine. Violets are no more complex than before, we've just improved our growing methods and available ingredients over time. Both streps and violets should be repotted in fresh soil at least once a year. This will help keep the roots healthy and growing and will provide the opportunity to lower the violet in the pot to eliminate the neck/trunk that will inevitably appear. In the case of streps, this may mean removing old growth and dividing as needed. The size of pot used is always determined by the size of the root system. See what you have, after any pruning, and use a pot no more than one pot size (1") larger.*



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