

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

December 2016 - No. 34

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Our calendar:

December 17, 2016.

Christmas gift? Orders must be received by midnight for arrival guaranteed via Express mail.

December 20, 2016.

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of January 2, 2017.

Winter shipping now applies!

Safe delivery on guaranteed on orders shipped by *Express mail*.

Gift certificates available.

Don't want to ship plants in winter or don't know what to send? We can send gift certificates by either mail or e-mail.

Free stuff and how to get it!

2017 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!

DS Carmel. New streptocarpus from Ukraine. Pink upper lobes, yellow lower lobes, with maroon veining in throat. Large grower.

Aeschynanthus strigosus. Bright red blooms with cream-white throat emerge from long, deep maroon, calyces. Thick, thumbnail-sized, leaves on cascading stems. A terrific plant for windows. Attractive even when not in bloom.

S velutina lite. A saintpaulia species, so not "new", but worth (re)introducing to those not familiar with it. A lighter-blossomed clone of *S. velutina*, with quilted, serrated, red-backed foliage. A small grower, really cute.

RS Maestro. (not pictured) Semidouble white with pink and blue fantasy. Light green, standard size foliage.

What's news:

Ordering for Christmas? Be aware that this *is* winter, so we only can guarantee safe arrival when shipped by *Express mail* and signed for upon delivery. This ensures that plants are exposed to the weather in transit for as little time as possible, and that they arrive before Christmas.

We also can't promise that all the plants you select will be sent in bloom or bud. If this is of utmost importance, we suggest that you leave the choice of variety up to us. That way we can select plants from those in bloom at the time. The "seller's choice" specials typically will have more mature plants, or plants in bud or bloom, for this reason. See our "[what should I order?](#)" page for ideas.

This month's question:

Contact us:**email.** 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
Open Tuesday-Saturday 12-5 pm**Are you an AVSA member?**Consider joining! Sign up through our website and get a free plant! For more information, visit www.avsa.org

I've had problems growing the small plants of streptocarpus that you ship, but would like to order more. Can I order them with the proper pot to do the string watering? I don't do that, I trickle warm water on the dirt every three days. Is there something missing?

Streps would prefer to be top watered (not a self-watering or wicking pot), since they don't like to be constantly wet. If you do decide to wick, be sure to use a soil mix with a lot of perlite (at least 50% of the mix), and wait until the root system is well established before potting in such pots. This will minimize the chances that the plant will be overwatered. One thing streps really don't like is to be sitting in constantly soggy soil. If you do want to purchase pots, the "standard dandy" pots would be usable for the varieties that don't grow overly large--the larger varieties would require a 5" or 6" pot, larger than the dandy pots.

Streps do need water though...more than a trickle. Water when soil surface is dry to the touch, and well enough that the soil ball is thoroughly moist but not so much that water streams out of the pot bottom. The goal is to keep the soil "evenly moist" and avoid actual dryness or wetness. This is the same for most plants, but especially for streps, which don't like to be soggy. Otherwise, they are among the easiest plants to grow and bloom in the home.

This month's tip:

About that Christmas tree or poinsettia (or cyclamen, etc.)..... Remember that bringing such plants into your home for the holidays might also mean bringing in unwanted "guests" (pests, not annoying relatives of neighbors). It's best to keep them away from your indoor garden plants. A few precautions taken for the holidays can avoid many regrets later.

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