

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

September 2017 - No. 43

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Our calendar:

September 19, 2017.

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of September 25.

September 15-16, 2017.

Ohio State AVS Show & Sale.

Held at the Kingwood Center in Mansfield. For more info, visit:

www.osavs.org

May 25-26, 2018.

AVSA/AVSC Convention Show.

In Buffalo, New York, at the Adams Mark Hotel. Jointly held national conventions of African Violet Societies of America and Canada!

Mark your calendar! This is the event of a lifetime. Exhibitors and vendors from across North America will be there. We will have showplants, display, and sales booth. For more info:

www.avsa.org or www.avsc.ca

Free stuff and how to get it!

2018 AVSA Show awards.

Best Robinson collections

1st place: \$200

2nd place: \$100

Primulinas are back!



After a long absence from our site, *Primulinas* are again listed and available for shipping. These generiads, formerly classified as *Chirita*, are tolerant of neglect and rewarding to grow. Shown at left is one grown in our west-facing window.



There are a number of new listings, both hybrids, like 'Omen' at left, and recently introduced species like *P. yungfuensis* at right. More will be added soon as they become available.

This genus of about 160 identified species is native to South China and Vietnam and have only been in cultivation for perhaps the past 20-30 years. Many new species have been discovered, identified, and introduced to cultivation only within the past 10 years. Hybridizers have also been busy adding even more varieties. We've tried to collect many of the nicest or most interesting of both the species and hybrids.

Most bloom and grow well in the same home environment as do African violets. They are relatively drought tolerant--if you're neglectful of watering, they'll forgive you. They don't mind being a bit pot-bound, some will bloom better when this is the case, also good if you're one who doesn't seem to get around to repotting their plants often enough. Be patient for blooms--even after buds appear, it can seemingly take forever for blooms on some primulina to appear. Once they do, you'll see many, and the plant will continue to bloom almost indefinitely once mature.

Most also won't mind that chilly windowsill that other plants won't tolerate. We grow ours under lights but, otherwise, they get little in the way of special care, often being the last plants we remember to repot, water, or groom.

News:

For those who may be planning a visit, beginning January 1, we will be changing the hours our shop and glasshouse are open to the public, no longer being open on Tuesdays. Our volume of shipping is now such that it takes all of both Monday *and* Tuesday to deal with mail orders (in addition to our usual plant work). We simply don't

Write a review.

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

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

*New hours starting Jan 1, 2018:
Shop and glasshouse open to
public Weds-Saturday, 12-5 pm*

For those attending the 2018 AVSA/AVSC convention, we are a 2 hour drive from Buffalo.

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

have the time to properly greet, answer questions, and otherwise deal with visitors. Our hours by phone remain the same. Our apologies for any inconvenience caused.

This month's questions:

Question #1: I live in Wisconsin (zone 5). I bought a few streps from a couple of nurseries in the area who were selling them as annual plants. I planted them in large pots with other plants. I'd like to bring them in for the winter. Do I keep them in the large pots with the other plants or do I remove them and pot them individually? How much root do I need to keep on the plant--they are really quite large. How big a pot do I need? I'd like to use them in my window boxes next year.

Question #2: Do you recommend spraying streps before you bring them indoors if they have been outside for the summer? If so, what should they be sprayed with?

Two related questions, so we'll address them together. First, streptocarpus are subtropical plants, so they're typically grown as a houseplant year round, unless you live in a subtropical climate. They are tough, neglect-tolerant, plants, so they can often be grown with success outside when the weather is mild. A protected location, out of the direct sun, is best.

Be aware that there are risks in bringing plants in from the outside--you'll be bringing in not only the plants, but all of the pests that may be hitching a ride. Personally, our rule is "what goes outside, stays outside", i.e. if you grow them outside, treat them as an annual (let them die and replace them next year). If you do bring them inside, at the very least, keep them segregated from your other houseplants, so if you do bring in a problem, you'll minimize the chance of it spreading.

Clean/wash the plants as best as possible--use room temperature water and mild dish soap, gently and thoroughly cleaning the entire plant. Since it will be many months before they'll be going outside again, we'd even decrown and reroof the plant. Remove the entire root ball and soil, keeping only the youngest, freshest, leaves in the center of the plant (the crown). Reroof this in a small pot of moist (not soggy), fresh soil. Make a small "divot" and make sure the soil is firmly around the base of the crown. Then place in a sealed plastic baggie. It will reroof and can be removed from bag in about a month.

If you are repotting, the rule is the same as for all plants. Use a pot no larger than the root system. Streps don't like to be greatly overpotted and don't like soggy or heavy soil. As for what to spray with, this depends upon what pests you are most worried about. Most chemicals, to be effective, target only specific pests. Neem oil is an easy, safe, inexpensive, product that can be used, but it won't eradicate any serious infestation. For that you'd have to spend more money than you've invested in your plants--you might as well buy more next spring. Again, we'd suggest either leaving them outside, replacing them next spring, or bringing them in only after some meticulous cleaning and repotting (restarting) and isolating them from your indoor collection.

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