

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

September 2019 - No. 67

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Our calendar:

September 24, 2019

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of September 30.

Sorry, we are unable to attend any fall shows this year. Major construction and fall shipping keeps us tied up at home!

Free stuff and how to get it!

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 to public Wed-Fri, 12-5 pm
Saturdays by appointment.

What's New (or returning):



Ceropegia linearis variegata. This unusual plant is returning after a long absence from the site, during which we've gotten dozens of calls asking where it went to. It's full name is a bit lengthy, *C. linearis ssp. woodii huber 'variegata'*, but it's more commonly known as the 'variegated love vine'. An unusual variety because of its heavy white variegation, we originally acquired this from a grower in Japan. It is semisucculent, growing from a small tuber, which makes it very tolerant of neglect. Odd looking purplish blooms will appear spring through summer, though it's best grown for its attractive foliage.

The photo is of a plant grown in our glasshouse--it makes an excellent hanging plant for a bright window.

Many more! This is just one of the new varieties that have been listed in the past month.

What's news:



Take a last look....by the time of our next newsletter, the glasshouse you see here will likely be no more. Preparatory work has begun (the digging you see is for drainage pipes and some foundation work). The glasshouse will be taken down within the next few weeks. Not to worry--it will be replaced atop the existing foundation with another growing

area--all plants being grown under artificial light. We will be able to grow as many plants as before, just under a more controlled environment. (*note: most of our plants are housed within the lower barn and attached buildings, another building not visible*).

As nice as a glasshouse can be, it's a lot of work. Too much sun in summer, meaning applying shading (walking on the glass to apply that ugly pink paint you see), then too little in winter (meaning scraping off the excess shading). Temperatures are hard to regulate--hot and dry in summer, cool and wet in winter. Though the sun is "free", heating, cooling, and our time, isn't. The new growing area will be more "state of the art", less costly to operate, and more environmentally friendly for our plants.

For those who planned on a visit, we suggest doing so after the construction is complete, likely by early in 2020, though we are still open to visitors during our listed hours. In the meantime, we continue to grow and ship plants--business as usual.

Inventory updates:

"Seller's choice" specials have been moved to a different page on the online shopping cart, called "[special offers](#)". Our past listings led to some confusion, as not all of the offers could be listed all of the time.

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 on AVSA, visit www.avsa.org

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

[Kohlerias](#) have returned fully to our online listing. Inventory of miniature [sinningia](#) and [petrocosmea](#) have been updated as well. *Sinningia speciosa* will be updated in another few weeks.

The weird, unusual, or charming:

We grow lots of plants, many of them simply because we like them. Many for their beauty, but some because they are just different. Of course, "beauty" and "different" or "weird" is in the eye of the beholder. This one is just different and cute.



Ficus 'Lance Leaf'. A wonderful little creeping ficus. Thin, lace-shaped leaves that lay flat and shingle upon each other as it spreads. An attractive, hard to find, variety that does well in small containers or terrariums.

The thin, leathery, leaves are deep green, about 1/2" to 3/4" in length, and appear alternately along thin, wiry, stems. It has a nice spreading habit, never looking sparse or stringy. This makes it good as a ground cover or, if grown large enough, a full-looking plant for a window or windowsill. We like to keep ours pruned and relatively small. It grows easily, but not overly fast, so is easily maintained and won't be as invasive as some other ground covers can become.

Care is fairly straightforward. Moderate light, temperature, humidity, and water--normal "household" conditions. It will tolerate less light, if you don't have it, as well as some neglect. We grow ours under lights with our other houseplants, use a light potting soil (plenty of perlite), and water heavily from the bottom--mostly for our convenience. It doesn't seem to mind and grows happily. Propagate from tip cuttings, or divide once it has spread into a larger clump.

This month's question:

I bought a small African violet with some other things that were not important to bring into the house right away. Well, sadly, we got home about 7 pm and didn't remove the violet. I went to church the next day, got home about 1 pm, and then remembered the poor thing! It was easily 110f degrees in the car than morning, if not more. She looks bad, I just feel horrible. All her leaves are drooping and just looks terrible. My first thought was to cool her off with some water, she was very dry by then. After reading through your site, I think she is now too wet. Can I save her?

*You are not alone, so don't be too hard on yourself. When packing for shows, we've found plants left in boxes from the previous year. Some tuberous plants, like *Sinningia*, or rhizomatous plants, have even survived.*

If the wilting was due to the heat and being dry, your violet should (at least mostly) perk up within a few hours of a good watering. If the peat in the soil ball had gone completely dry, it may be hard to re-wet, so give it a good soak and judge by the weight of the pot if it has absorbed the water you gave it. If the soil is damp and it doesn't perk up, it may have been damaged too much by the heat to recover. If it perks up, then droops again after a subsequent watering, then you may have overwatered it. In any event, aim for moderation at this time--out of the bright sun, and kept moist, not soggy nor dry. For now, water from the top, as you can control the amount of water better this way based upon its needs. Give it a chance to recover without subjecting it to any more stress.

I would like to convert my African violets to the same soil mix as I replot each one, eventually having all of my plants in the same mix. You recommend 50% vermiculite or other similar component, but what should I use for the other half? I don't understand

"soil-less" mix. I have about 20 plants in my collection, many are needing repotting now.

100 people will give you 100 different soil recipes. Ingredients like vermiculite and perlite serve to break up and aerate the soil. Vermiculite will hold more water than perlite. Basically, the idea is to add more perlite the wetter you keep your plants. We use both in our mix. "Soil-less" just means not containing any top soil or garden loam--i.e. is peat based. The term came into use 50 or more years ago, when many growers still used heavy topsoil rich potting mixes for their houseplants. With the ready availability of sterile, peat-based, "soilless" mixes, few do today. Our recipes? the "all purpose" mix, for example, is about 40% peat, 40% vermiculite (two grades), and 20% perlite. Our "wicking" soil, contains about 50% perlite.

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