

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

October 2019 - No. 68

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Our calendar:

October 15, 2019

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of October 21.

Sorry, we are unable to attend any fall shows this year! See our message at right.

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

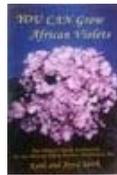
phone. 585-374-8592
Mon. thru Sat., 12-5 pm ET

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):



You Can Grow African Violets. Not an African violet, but a highly recommended reference for every African violet grower. Written by Kent and Joyce Stork and compiled from their popular columns in the African Violet Magazine. This 212 page book covers topics relevant for both beginners and more experienced growers. Written in an entertaining, easy to understand manner, this is a resource every African violet grower have.

Other literature we have includes, "Growing to Show", "Know and Grow Gesneriads" and the African Violet Magazine.

Much more! Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

What's news:



Going, going, almost gone.... Our glasshouse is largely dismantled. Construction of our new growing area will begin soon, and we hope to have it completed in a few months. In the meantime, we have plants everywhere, few in their normal place. What does this mean? For mail order, little will change. However, if you are planning to visit, you may be disappointed, since many plants will not be in plain view. Not to mention it's a bit "cramped" and inconvenient. By next spring, we hope things will have returned to normal--or better than normal.

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.

Our new miniature chimera is again in stock, '[Rob's Lucky Snowflake](#)', a new introduction this year. Streptocarpus inventory will be updated in another week or two, when plants have grown large enough to ship. Same is true for Episcia.

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" is in the eye of the beholder. This one is one of our favorites, both unusual and charming.



Microgramma heterophylla. Commonly known as the "clinging snake fern", this is a tiny, epiphytic fern with tiny, 1/2" finger-shaped, paper-like, fronds. One of our favorites because it will grow so small--perfect for small terrariums. Though not a difficult plant it's

Are you a member?

not especially fast growing, so it won't crowd out other plants in a small space and won't need constant pruning to keep it under control.

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

It does prefer a more humid environment to do well, so terrariums are perfect. We grow ours undercover. Being epiphytic by nature, it will cling to most anything it can get its roots into. This makes great as a ground cover and a good choice for doing something creative like topiary or grown on bark or porous rock (if kept adequately moist).

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

Grow in bright indirect light. It can be a good choice for a lower light environment as well--it just will grow more slowly if conditions aren't optimal. Propagate by tip cuttings or division. Keep very young cuttings or divisions under cover with high humidity at least until well established.

This month's questions:

I am using a fish tank for my African violets with good drainage and soil but should I put the top on it or leave it open? Also, should I put a light on top?

Unless you have extremely dry air, African violets won't need the extra humidity created by enclosing the tank, though it won't harm them either. Because violets will grow and bloom, you will need to be extra diligent about grooming and removing spent blooms, since decaying or rotting plant material can cause problems down the road. As for light, this depends upon how much ambient light you already have--my guess is yes, if you want them to bloom well. Sunlight would create a lot of heat inside the tank, especially if covered. You will likely have to add some kind of artificial light above the tank. If the light fixture is close to the tank, choose something that produces light without a lot of heat, since the heat can accumulate in the tank. Modern LED fixtures can be a good choice for this reason.

My self-watering violet pots are not allowing water to seep into the plants. How can I get them to work?

If the inner, unglazed, pot is clean, you may need to "start" or restart the process of water being absorbed into the inner pot and then wetting the soil. "Presoak" the inner pot--if you can, do this before you fill it with soil and pot your plant, if possible (i.e. keep submerged in water). At the least, soak it from the outside, and water the soil, so that there is moisture on both sides of the unglazed pot. Think of a sponge--a slightly moist one will absorb water better than one that's totally dry.

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