

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

November 2019 - No . 69

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(Some of) What's New:



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Our calendar:

November 23, 2019

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of December 2.



Bristol's Peppermint. Our newest streptocarpus. Sdbl. frilly peppermint-pink and whiteblooms. Flat, compact growing, foliage. Easy grower and bloomer.

Buckeye Patent Pending. (not shown) Semidouble to double medium blue frilled pansy with pink fantasy splashing, variegated white to green edge. Medium green and white TL variegated foliage. Large standard.

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

What's News:

Free stuff and how to get it!

2020 AVSA Show awards.

Best Robinson collections

1st place: \$200

2nd place: \$100

Construction update.

The glasshouse is gone and the structure of the new growing area is in place. Electrical, HVAC and insulation work to be done shortly. If all goes well, we hope to move plants into the area by this time next month.

Winter shipping.

Though we continue to ship to almost everywhere through the winter, our shipping policy and guarantees are different. Safe delivery can be guaranteed on orders when *Express mail* (this will cost you more) is selected and signed for upon arrival. When sent by *Priority mail*, it is at *customer's risk*. We provide tracking information and likely arrival times on all orders when shipped.

Inventory updates.

A full selection of [streptocarpus](#) is again available, as are most [sinningia](#). More [episcia](#) will be added to our listing soon.

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 a bit of all three.



Streptocarpus thompsonii. A odd, small growing gesneriad. It has small, roundish, leaves and a spotted stem, and will readily bloom with sprays of tiny, very light, lavender-blue almost white, flowers.

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Mon. thru Sat., 12-5 pm ET

Our shop and glasshouse at:

7209 County Road 12

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Open to public Wed-Fri, 12-5 pm



Though it can grow much taller and wilder, we like to grow ours as a small bonsai. With regular pruning, it will branch and the stem will thicken and leaves will grow smaller, giving it the appearance of an old "tree". This makes it perfect for those who want a nice bonsai specimen without spending years working at it.

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

Though it readily blooms, the flower stems can be a distraction when grown this way, since they extend well above the plant and give it a less "tidy" appearance. If blooms are what you want though, it readily produces them. Care is the same as for African violets and most gesneriads. Provide bright (not intense or hot) light, use a light, porous soil. Water when soil surface is dry--it likes moist soil but won't tolerate extended periods of soggy soil. We grow ours under lights, but have also done so in windows with success.

Propagation is easy. Tip cuttings will readily root in moist soil in a matter of weeks. It will also readily self-pollinate and produce seed pods, which ripen readily and germinate easily for those so inclined.

This month's question:

I am challenged by a symptom of some violets in my collection. The newest crown leaves are turning grey and dry. I've also noticed an absence of, or drying up of, any new buds. Once I remove the gray leaves, the plant stalls in growth and seems dormant.

I don't see any mites under magnification, lessened the lights from 14 to 13 hours, changed fertilizer and sprayed. I'm careful about watering. The temps here are about 66 during the day, high 50's to low 60's overnight.

(Note: photos were provided). They don't look good. In addition to the centers, the leaves shown seem very thick, hard, and brittle. More than one thing can cause this. Mites would be one, but you say you've found no evidence of them, so it is more likely a cultural/environmental issue. Your temperatures seem very low. Anything below 60f degrees can cause these symptoms, so this is the first thing we would change. Nighttime temperatures should be at least in the lower 60's, with daytime temps at least 70f or above. At colder temps, plants will have tight centers, thickened and brittle foliage, and will stop growing--seeming to go "dormant" as you describe.

You also described your lighting (in a follow up email). Though 13 hours isn't extreme, the intensity of the light is high--about 50% more than we would provide at the distance you have them above the plants. T8 florescent bulbs are brighter than the old T12's. A pair of them should be at least 18"-24" above most varieties of African violets. One of the plants pictured, we know from experience, doesn't like that much light and will grow much like you see it if given too much. Though low temperatures are most likely the bigger problem, the intense light is only making things worse. We would adjust both and see how the plants respond.

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