

# VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

December 2019 - No. 70

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## (Some of) What's New:



'Like' us on Facebook!

## Our calendar:

### December 14, 2019

Orders must be placed no later than this date for guaranteed safe arrival by Christmas when sent by Express mail.

### January 7, 2020

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of January 13. *Sorry, due to the holidays, no international shipping in December.*

### February 20-23, 2020

#### CT Flower and Garden Show.

At Hartford Convention Center. Find us at booths 802 & 804, near the entrance. For more info: [www.ctflowershow.com](http://www.ctflowershow.com)

## Winter shipping!

Safe delivery is guaranteed when shipped by Express mail only and signed for upon delivery.

## Free stuff and how to get it!

### 2020 AVSA Show awards.

Best Robinson collections  
1st place: \$200  
2nd place: \$100

## Write a review.

Write a review before ordering,



**Bristol's Show Off.** Another of our new streptocarpus. Very showy! Very large, white, ruffled, blooms with purplish-red streaking from throat. Easy grower and good bloomer. Limited number available at this time.

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



**Cork Bark.** A new item added to our supply pages. Cork bark is great for terrariums and vivariums because it is mold and rot resistant. Also useful for mounting orchids or other epiphytes, since it can be kept wet and roots will readily grow onto it. And, it's decorative!

## What's News:



## Some good cheer for the holidays.

Meet the kids of Charter School of Applied Technologies of Tonawanda, NY. These 3rd graders are our future!

The boys and girls are in a greenhouse enrichment program developed by instructor Cinde Cozad with the purpose of propagating African violets. We donated leaves (something in abundant supply here) for use in the class. The class is propagating violets by two methods, in water and in soil, and will watch to see which method will produce plantlets first.

Class members will also be learning about and discussing the plight of the native African violet (*Saintpaulia*) in its Tanzanian environment due to deforestation and other factors, and their role as stewards of the earth. Knowledge gathered from their study will lead to other propagation efforts for other endangered species.

Love those smiling faces, and what a nice story for the holidays!

## 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 weird, yet also different and charming.



***Polypodium aureum* 'Mandaianum'** . Also variously known as the "hare's foot" fern or "bear's paw" fern. We like to collect ferns with furry or odd rhizomes, and this one has one of the furriest! Knowing

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



this, a friend gave us a small piece of rhizome years ago. Little did we know it would grow as well (or as large) as it did. A plant can fill an otherwise empty space in a room with its large fronds.

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Open to public Wed-Fri, 12-5 pm

The broad, wavy, fingered, fronds have a fancy, lettuce-like, look and can grow to 2-3 feet long, or more, with "fingers" of 8-10 (the young plant pictured is in a 2.25" pot). The real attraction is the rhizomes--as thick as your thumb and super furry. These will quickly multiply and spread as the plant grows, producing a thick mat of fuzzy "feet". The fronds can be decorative as well--we have a collection (too many) of old, dried, fronds saved for this purpose.

Since we have limited space for "fun" (as opposed to sales) plants, it is one of the few large plants that we grow. It is extremely easy to care for, and will tolerate some neglect. We grow young plants under lights, and move to natural light in windows when larger. It is happy in moderate, indirect, light, and will tolerate less, if needed. Water in moderation as well--it is not fussy, though it will consume more water as it fills the pot with rhizomes. They will grow quickly and can be divided once it fills its pot or available space. To propagate, divide or root small sections of rhizome.

**This month's question:**

**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](http://www.avsa.org)

Has your collection grown far beyond violets? Consider joining the Gesneriad Society. For more info: [www.gesneriadsociety.org](http://www.gesneriadsociety.org)

Can you tell me what is going on with my violet. I ordered it several months ago and have one more that has these same patches. There is no water on the leaves. I recently moved them from a shaded, east facing window to a south facing window filtered by stained glass. I use violet potting soil from Home Depot in a self-watering pot and fill approximately every 10 days using bottled water and Schultz African Violet Plus. (a photo was provided)

*Generally speaking, we can't argue too much with your care or environment, and the plants look happy enough. Since you mentioned a change in location, to a brighter window, this might offer an explanation. If there is any direct sunlight/heat, this can cause such patches on the leaves. Some varieties are more sensitive than others--think of it as damage from sunburn.*

*One other suggestion, though the plants look okay. When using self-watering pots, use a soil containing at least 50% perlite--we'll guess that the soil you purchased does not. Otherwise, plant roots will stay too wet in the dense soil. This might also contribute to the patches above. If leaf tissues are holding excess water, they are more likely to be damaged.*

Will 'Baby Bio' be okay to feed? I'd like my plants to remain small as I've bought some miniature clay pots. Will it be hard to keep them small?

*They will stay small if they are miniature varieties, though if a larger growing variety is sufficiently root-bound it will grow smaller than it's potential. Only plants that are genetically miniature will stay small regardless of pot size or care. If it's a plant purchased from us, the size of the variety will be shown on the pot label. We prefer plastic pots, especially for minis, but clay is fine. You'll just find yourself watering more frequently to keep the tiny root systems moist. We are not familiar with 'Baby Bio', but as a houseplant food, it should be fine for your violets.*

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