

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

March 2021 - No. 85

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Our calendar:

March 23, 2020 .

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of March 29 .

All of our shows have been cancelled thru 2021. If all goes well, we will hope to see everyone at a show in 2022.

Winter shipping continues thru March (guaranteed via Express). Spring shipping begins in April.

Free stuff and how to get it!

2022 AVSA Show awards.

Best Robinson collections

1st place: \$200

2nd place: \$100

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

(Some of) What's New:



Ma's Deep Secret. Our newest hybrid. Large deep garnet-red semidouble stars over dark green and white variegated foliage. Standard. Limited supply at the moment.

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

What's News:



Gesneriads as cut flowers (or in a terrarium)!

Credit: Karen Nottoson

These photos were emailed to us and we will quote the message in full. "I've been meaning to write about my experience with '[Rob's Boolaroo](#)', my first attempt at growing a trailing mini. First, this is one of the most

floriferous violets I have ever seen, it never quits! I found out quickly that the long stems are fragile, and will snap off if one attempts to groom them without supporting them with your fingers. Not wanting to discard the broken stems, I stuck two of them in a glass of water (along with two other casualties, a [Kohleria](#) and an [Episcia](#)) and left them in the window. They rooted out into the water and have been blooming non-stop, so far for over a year. It's like a living flower arrangement. I only add water when the level drops, and I spray with a weak fertilizer to foliar feed. I wrapped two more broken, rootless, crowns in sphagnum and put them in a fish bowl, no soil. These have also grown and thrived".

We have done the same ourselves, with [kohleria](#) in particular. They can grow tall, and should be pruned, or cut back, to keep them attractive and full. The tops can be treated like cut flowers, and will continue to grow and bloom almost indefinitely. Gesneriads are survivors, and generally easier to grow than one might realize. This is one wonderful, and creative, way of using them. Very well grown and cared for too!

Inventory updates.

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

Sorry, our shop is closed to visitors at this time.

Place an order for pickup!

For those living locally, we are offering **pickup service**. Save on shipping, and we'll have your plants waiting for you.

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

Both standard African violet and streptocarpus inventory will be updated on the site within the next week. If there is something you've been looking for, but haven't seen it lately, please look for it again soon. If we have them available, they will be listed.

Where's the soil? We mix our potting soils ourself. Of course we make enough for our own use first, then make extra boxes for sale. We are a bit shorthanded early in the year, and simply haven't had the time to mix enough soil to meet demand--we've been "rationing" it. This should be remedied in the next few weeks.

This month's questions

I couldn't help but notice everywhere I look online when people propagate from leaf, they all use only the stemside of leaf in medium, occasionally cutting off the top. No one ever attempts to root the top half of the leaf. I tried. It works! and better. More plantlets, faster, with less failure. I can't be alone on this, but no one ever shows it working, or even trying for that matter. What are your thoughts or observations?

You are correct. Actually, most any part of the leaf can be propagated. This is one of the great things about African violets, and most other gesneriads. Like streptocarpus, or begonias, you can root portions of the leaves or wedges--place leaf sections into soil like "bread in a toaster". Plantlets generally will be produced along the cut edge inserted into soil. The more heavily veined the leaf, the more plantlets. That said, it's simply easier to root violets by the petiole (leaf stem), and easier to learn and explain. It's a simple method that works, and we have lots of leaves to use. Sometimes, if we are given just a single leaf, and need to get the most out of it, we'll cut it into pieces and root both by petiole and cut sections.

I misunderstood where to cut off the suckers and I believe I cut out the center of the plant. Will this kill my plant? What will likely happen?

It won't kill the plant. If you cut the crown/center out whole, you can root it like a sucker (see our "restoring violets" lesson). Firmly press the base of the crown or sucker into a small pot of moist soil, then place in a baggie or clear covered container. It will root in about 4 weeks, at which time you can remove from baggie. The crownless plant will produce a new center--likely many of them, along with more suckers. Let them grow to a large enough size, then remove all the suckers but one (the one that remains will be your new plant) and root the suckers you removed. This is how most "chimeras" are propagated (see our [lessons](#) on these as well).