

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

August 2021 - No. 90

For best results, view in HTML

 'Like' us on Facebook!

Our calendar:

September 4, 2021 .

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of September 10.

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

At this time all orders are guaranteed by any means.

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.

Join AVSA.

See further below in this column.

Contact us:

(Some of) What's New:

Check the website for all of the newest varieties. We expect to introduce new varieties over the coming months.

What's news:



Free light carts!

For anyone who is willing to pick them up and take them (not shipped). An example is shown at left (2 shelves lit, 2 shelves not lit). As a result of our extensive remodeling last year we no longer have a need for many of these carts. Made from aluminum, each cart has 3 shelves, each shelf with a light fixture using two four-foot T12 florescent bulbs. Carts are on wheels so can be easily moved, and dimensions are 74"h x 53"w x 23"d. If purchased new, such carts would sell for \$400 or more. Though used, all are in good, working, condition. As we don't want to have to disassemble (though this is not difficult), repackage, and ship them, they must be taken as is. If interested, please contact us at comments@violetbarn.com



Lots of kohlerias!

We have recently (re)potted plenty of [kohlerias](#), so have plenty in inventory, at an ideal size to ship. Many will be in bud or bloom, or will bloom soon. One of our light stands, full of them, is shown at left. We've talked about these plants before, as they are among our favorites and are very easy to care for. You'll find many of them on our windowsills in addition to those under lights.

Inventory updates.

[Mini wicking pots](#) are available, in limited quantities and colors, after an absence from our online catalog. For those who want a self-watering system for miniature African violets, or other small plants, these are a good solution.

This month's questions

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 Sundays 12-5
Please call ahead for appt.

Place an order for pickup!

For those living locally, we offer 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

I am uncertain how or how much to water my violets. You have said that you don't wick your plants. Does this mean you put plants on capillary mats without wicks? How do you water your plants?

We water our plants many different ways, depending upon the plant size, maturity, and what is most efficient for us. The best means is always to water plants individually, from the top. This forces you to make a judgement for each plant as to how much water it needs and to water accordingly. All other methods are shortcuts made for our convenience, and involves compromises.

When plants are very young and/or have undeveloped root systems, we will water individually, from the top. Small root systems can't tolerate overwatering and young plants are more easily stressed if soil goes too dry. Top watering is more precise, and the extra time spent watering is necessary at this early stage. When plants have grown a bit, and have more established root systems, we will place them on acrylic blankets (mats), and water from the bottom. This allows us to water hundreds of plants on each shelf all at one time. This means that individual plants might get a bit more, or less, water than they need, but they are mature enough to tolerate the imperfection, and (being in business) we need to use the most labor (cost) efficient means to water such a large number of plants. Some plants that don't go on blankets, yet are old enough to tolerate it, will remain in (11"x22" plastic) trays and are "scooped"--we pour a measured amount of water (a scoop) into the bottom of the tray to water 30-50 plants at one time from the bottom. No matter how we water, we let the soil begin to dry before watering again--surface of the soil is "dry to the touch".

My 'Bristol's Goose Egg', 'Bristol's Sally Mander' and 'Bristol's Potpourri', have no fragrance, with the exception of 'Bristol's Smelly Cat' which has a barely discernible fragrance after a first bloom appeared a week ago. I grow them under lights. I'm happy with the blooms and all are very prolific. Just wondering if it's the first blooms and the plants need to mature. It gets quite warm, over 80f degrees this time of year.

Most streptocarpus, and most gesneriads in general, do not have a scent. This makes these varieties, among a few others, special. They do have a "fragrance" or scent, the strength of which will depend upon the environment as well as maturity of plants and blooms. It will be stronger when conditions are relatively cool and humid, and air relatively still. If air is very dry or warm, as is the case for you, you might not notice the scent. We find it most noticeable early in the morning, especially if plants are recently watered, when conditions are cooler and damper. Given that your plants have only just begun blooming, you might simply have to wait for a few more blooms to appear on more mature plants, as well.