

VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

March 2022 - No. 97

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Our calendar:

April 5, 2021 .

International orders must be placed by this date for shipment week of April 11.

May 26-28, 2022.

AVSA Convention Show.

(Inter)national show held this year in Little Rock, Arkansas. Details to come. visit avsa.org

Winter shipping.

Select **Express shipping** to guarantee safed delivery of your plant order.

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.

(Some of) What's New:

Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

What's news:



Almost ready for spring!

We've been busy all winter propagating and potting, getting our inventory back to normal levels. Covid caught us by surprise and it's been a struggle to keep up the past two years. Though some plants remain in low supply, we should have sufficient inventory and variety this year for most.

Winter shipping remains in effect until mid April. Though warmer weather may have arrived where you live, and is improving here, it remains unpredictable, as do delivery services.

Inventory updates.

[Mini wicking pots](#) are back! For those who wish to wick-water, this was a very popular item in the past. They are now back in inventory, in four different colors. We plan on offering "standard" (for 4" pots) size wicking pots later this spring.

Begonia and streptocarpus inventory has just been updated. For those waiting for miniature sinningia, we are propagating these now and hope to have many available later this spring.

What's that?



[Sinningia macrostachya](#). A species native to southern Brazil and Uruguay, and relatively new to cultivation. An attractive plant that is easy to grow but requires a bit of patience. It took us a while to learn exactly what made it most happy, but rewarded us for the wait.

It is of moderate size and upright growing, producing lots of bright orange, tubular blooms above the foliage. Multiple stems will join at the base in a woody trunk growing from the tuber, giving it a bushy appearance and fuller look as it matures.

We've grown ours both under lights and in windows, and have discovered it does best in bright windows. It's done well for us in both

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 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

a west facing and obstructed south facing window. It tolerates, even likes, some amount of intense sun and warmth. That, plus the bit of nighttime coolness from the windows, seems to push it to bloom, which you might otherwise have to wait for. It also likes an exposed tuber (as in the photo), and very light, porous soil. It does like to be watered, but the exposed tuber and light soil keeps its feet from staying too soggy. Propagation is done by tip cuttings, or by rooting leaves.

Be patient, as the tuber can take some time to grow to the size pictured, and your first blooms won't appear until the plant matures and you provide it the proper environment. Once done, it is a wonderful plant, attractive even without blooms, and more so when blooming.

My plant looks like this:



If your trailing violet looks like this, it needs repotting, or restarting. This photo was sent to us recently asking for advice. It's shown in the pot it was shipped in, more than a year ago.

A bare trunk or "neck" will appear on any violet in time. Because trailing violets, by nature, are spreading, branching, faster growing, plants, bare stems can appear more quickly and be more unsightly. To prevent this, pruning can be helpful in encouraging more branching and fuller growth. Feel free to treat your trailer as a "shrub", pruning and shaping it as you wish--you won't harm it, it will just fill in with more growth. Provide it room to spread, as well. This variety, though miniature, is (was) in need of a larger pot. Use a pot just a bit larger than the root system. Since trailers want to spread, and grow horizontally, shallow pots are best, as roots will not grow very deep.

For this plant, our best advice would be either repot it, pinching the tips to encourage growth to fill in the empty spaces, or restart it. To restart, cut the ends of the stems and root the tips. This is how we propagate our trailers--much faster than leaves. Firmly fill a pot with soil, moisten, then press the tip into soil so that it is well anchored. Place in clear container or plastic baggie. It will be rooted in a month, at which time it can be removed from the bag or container. See the "[plant care](#)" pages on the website for a detailed how to.

This month's questions

Our note: Though the following was sent to us last year, more as a complaint, not a question, we are reprinting it, and our response, as it can be instructive, as "parents" of our plants. It's subject line read "failed plants".

Just thought you would like to know, but most likely do not care... I bought eight plants from you six months ago. Several have died. And none of the four African violets have bloomed. One plant (not a violet) was a complete joke. It was obviously a complete rip-off as it was just a two-leaf cutting that never grew. A waste of money.

Sorry you are disappointed. You ordered a number of different plants--all have similar, but not identical, care. Should any problems arise along the way, we are always available for advice and/or problem solving. Telling us after the patient has died doesn't help the doctor cure the patient. Plants are living things and, like children, each is different in it's own way. Plant care, like parenting, is a learned skill and requires changes in care along the way. Plants will tell us what they need. It is our job to listen and provide them what they need to thrive.

How are they watered? In what size pot were they repotted/grown? What is the light--all light is not the same in type, intensity, or duration. What is the environment--temperature, humidity? What is the water source, what is the make up of the soil,



etc? These are just some of the questions to be asked. In what way did they die--what were the symptoms? If there is a problem, they will tell us.

As for the plant with the "two leaves", this was likely the streptocarpus you ordered. Though not mature, it will bloom even at this size, and likely had buds when you received it. This is the nature and appearance of this plant when young. It grows quickly--under normal care it would be a large (blooming) plant in a 5" pot by now. Should you have any questions about the plants you still have, we are available by email (photos always help), or phone.

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