


VioletsFun

The Violet Barn newsletter

February 2023 - No. 108

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 'Like' us on Facebook!

Our calendar:

No events or shows scheduled at this time.

International customers.

International shipping will resume week of March 20. We will begin accepting international orders March 1.

Winter shipping in effect.

Safe arrival guaranteed only by **Express** mail when signed for upon delivery.

Free stuff and how to get it!

2023 AVSA Show awards.

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

Write a review.

Write a review on product pages before ordering. 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.

What's news:

Website changes.

The informational pages (plant care, library, FAQ, etc). of the website are not currently available while we extensively update the site. The online catalog and shopping cart pages are available and unaffected. If you have bookmarked the online catalog, go directly instead to violetbarn.com

Change in packaging.

We will soon begin shipping plants in different packaging. It promises to be an improvement in many ways. More uniform, less breakage, and easier to wrap (by us) and unwrap (by you). Also prettier! This should begin in the next few weeks. As we are unable to find reliable sources of small, round, pots, we have begun growing all of our plants in square pots. Soon, all of our plants will be grown, and shipped in, square pots with the new packaging.

My plant looks like this:



It likely is getting too much strong light. Very strong light can often turn otherwise green leaves reddish in color. The two plants shown at left are examples of this. Think of it as "sunburn" on plants.

At far left is a basket of Aeschynanthus hanging in our large south facing window. Foliage is typically dark green with a hint of red beneath the leaves. When grown under our lights or in other windows, it is much more green. In this very bright window, it has turned almost entirely red. It remains very healthy, and does bloom. It's a tough plant, and we intentionally grow it here to block the strong sun from the room and other, more sensitive, plants.

To its right is the underside of a streptocarpus leaf. This photo was sent by a customer who had it growing under very strong LED lights. Again, it's otherwise healthy and growing normally. We've seen this on some of our streps as well when the light is too

email. comments@violetbarn.com

mail. POB 9, Naples, NY 14512

phone. 585-374-8592
Mon. thru Sat., 12-5 pm ET

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

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

strong. After reducing the light over this plant, we were informed that new growth didn't have this reddish backing.

Natural light can vary by window and season, among other things, and finding the right window can be a matter of trial and error. Artificial light is more controlled, but given the choices available today, finding the right light for your plants can be complicated. We get *many* questions concerning this. We find that many growers are using lighting systems designed for growing high light (or even full sun) plants, not African violets and related plants that prefer more "indirect" or "partial" sunlight.

As a rule, T8 florescent bulbs are brighter than the old T12's (T5 are even brighter), and most LED fixtures are brighter even than most T8 florescents. Unlike florescent bulbs, which will give brightness information (lumens), LED fixtures rarely do so. For LED, the wattage is a good approximation. For reference, this is what we use over a 4 foot long shelf: a 10 watt LED strip, about 18" above the plants, for about 12 hours a day. This replaces the one T8 florescent bulb we formerly used, and the two T12 bulbs we used prior to that. "Full spectrum" lighting is best, but isn't a must. This is a simplification, of course, as individual bulbs and fixtures can vary, and plants under them can have differing light requirements. It's a starting point. Make adjustments based upon how your plants grow and bloom.

is month's question

Recently, I've moved some of my violets to my work cubicle. My office runs 24/7 and the fluorescent lights are on all of the time. The plants seem really hardy and happy, but are not blooming. It's been about six weeks since they have been relocated. I'm wondering if African violets require a period of darkness in order to bloom.

Though (a short, at least) period of darkness is beneficial, African violets can grow and bloom without it. Six weeks is not enough time to say with certainty but, in your case, I think the issue is not too much light, but too little. Assuming the lights you are referring to are those that light the room, and not a table lamp directly above the plants, they won't provide enough light for your violets to bloom.

African violets need much stronger light than what we need to work at a desk and read. If your violets are otherwise healthy and growing, and single crowned (no suckers except in case of trailing varieties or species), but not blooming, they are asking for more light. If growth is loose or leggy and/or leaves are reaching upwards, these would be other signs of inadequate light. If your cubicle can accomodate it, and your workplace allows it, you might consider adding a small lamp above your plants. You can add a timer to the lamp, turning the light on and off when desired. When you see blooms, you'll know it's getting enough light.

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