

VioletsFun

Violet Barn newsletter

July 2023 - No. 113

(Some of) What's New



K's Sweet Silas. Lovely semidouble light pink pansies with white eye and purple fantasy. Nice medium green and white, quilted, TL variegated, standard foliage.

Check the website for all of the newest varieties.

Display and sale - November 5

Join us for some "Violet Fun" on November 5. Rather than travelling with our plants to a show, we are having the show here. We are currently growing many plants for display, both large (standard violets and streptocarpus) and small (miniatures).

Sales plants will be available of the displayed, and not displayed, plants--the "show" plants will be for sale as well. Free advice (if requested) and refreshments also provided.

As we've been unable to have regular visitor hours for some time, we hope many of you are able to visit then. We hope to make it worth your time. If you do plan on attending, let us know (comments@violetbarn.com) so we can plan accordingly. If you cannot, we hope to do a video tour of the display that will be posted for viewing.

I plan to attend

Weird, unusual, or charming



Pyrrosia nummularifolia. This tiny fern is one of our favorites and easiest to grow. Native to Indonesia, this little fern has creeping rhizomes that will attach and grow along most anything it can grab onto. This makes it great as either a ground cover or topiary, where it can be allowed to spread. Terrariums, container gardens, or vivariums are perfect uses for it.

Since it grows so easily, we try to keep ours a bit more under control. We've grown large specimens as a hanging window basket, letting it spread over the pot rim. Typically, we'll just keep it pruned and tiny in a smaller pot. Being a tropical plant, it will thrive in an enclosed container but this isn't necessary, and is not the way we grow ours--its out on the shelves with our other plants. It is tolerant of some dryness, but we tend to water ours a bit heavily from the bottom. Soil should be porous and light. Lighting is easy--moderate light as for any houseplant, though it will tolerate less without much fuss. Propagation is easy by rooting tip cuttings or rhizomes, or simply by dividing a larger plant.

My plants look like this - a question



I have recently gotten back into having plants and purchased from you 5 mini violets and 7 streptocarpus this spring (3 months ago). Most of the plants are dated August 22. They are all still in their original pots. I used "Oyama" pots in the past and have some of these ready to use for these plants now. I bought some of your "wicking" potting mix to use in the pots.

Question is, when I repot them, is it bad to do when they are blooming? Will they go into shock or something? Also, should I gently try to shake off the existing soil mix before putting them into the wicking mix in the new pots? There will be straight perlite in the bottom of the Oyama pot, with wicking mix on top.

To start, they look like they're well grown and cared for. You've got a green thumb. All can be repotted. You can pull away some of the existing soil if it's easy, but you don't need

to be extreme about it. The mini violets should not go into a pot much larger than what they currently are in--best not bigger than 2.25", and absolutely no larger than 2.5" in diameter.

As for the streps, they are very ready for repotting. You can go into a 3" if they have a full root system. It appears they do by their appearance. They typically don't like to be soggy, but can tolerate a constant-watering system like the Oyama pots if they have a good size root system and are not overpotted. After repotting, we would suggest you not fill the reservoir with water and, instead, water from the top when the soil surface is dry. This will avoid overwatering while the roots get reestablished after repotting. When you see that the plants (especially the streps) have grown a bit, you'll know that they have established new roots in the added soil, and then you can fill the reservoir.

Don't worry about them being in bloom. If they are ready, they are ready. The streps may never stop blooming, so you might wait forever! Our habit is to remove the mature bloom stems and leave the smaller buds. This will force the plant to focus on growing roots and leaves once repotted. Don't worry, if you have a good environment and they are well cared for (and yours appear to be), there will be more blooms soon enough. (Our thanks Mary Beth for allowing us to use both her photo and her question).

This month's questions

(We print this as a companion to the above discussion)

My order arrived in great shape. I have a question. I'm a novice at this. I plan to repot these two violets in a couple of weeks into the self-watering pots I bought from you. I'm confused about how to put (and how much to put) the wick into the root ball. When repotting, should I remove soil from the root ball, place the end of the wick into what's left of the root ball, and then add soil to fill the new pot? Or should I simply poke a hole in the bottom of the root ball with a pencil, stuff the wick into it, and pinch the hole closed?

The **mini wicking pots** are decorative and convenient for a small collection, but we grow far too many plants to use them. Since we don't wick our plants, the soil they are shipped in, though very light, is not ideal for long term success when watered this way (note: our "regular" soil is about 50% vermiculite and 10% perlite, the "wicking" mix over 50% perlite and 20% vermiculite, the remainder peat). When you repot the plants you will need a soil mix containing at least 50% perlite. You need not replace all of the existing soil (don't "clean" the roots), but remove whatever excess old soil you can when repotting.

There are many approaches to wick placement. Personally, we run the wick as far up into the soil/root ball as possible. Holding an empty pot, thread the wick through a drainage hole, then pin one end of it to the pot rim with a thumb when filling pot with soil. Once the plant is potted, you can gently pull the wick end to center more in the pot, and pull a bit from the bottom so you don't see it protruding from above the soil. This is fast and easy for us, but most any method will work, so long as the wick is well inside the pot and soil.

Calendar

July 19, 2023.

Final meeting AVGS Rochester
Messiah Lutheran Church, 7 pm.

August 1, 2023

International orders must be received by this date for shipment week of August 7.

September 15-16, 2023

Ohio State AVS Convention
Kingwood Gardens, Mansfield Ohio.

November 5, 2023

Display and sale at the Violet Barn, all are welcome. Exhibition plants and much more for sale.

Contact us

Email: comments@violetbarn.com

Mail: PO Box 9, Naples, NY 14512

Phone: 585-374-8592 (M-S 12-5 ET)

Sorry, we're currently closed to visitors

Notes

We want you to succeed!

Plant not growing well? Don't wait until it's too late. Send us a photo and an outline of care and environment. You are not alone--perhaps we can help.

Having success?

Let us know and share your story.

Write a review get a free plant

Write a review on the product pages of our website before ordering. Get a free plant added to your order.

Place a pickup order!

For those in the area, we offer pickup service. Save on shipping and we'll have your plants waiting for you.

[More info...](#)

Are you a member?

African Violet Society of America

Sign up through our website and get a free plant added to order! More info: avsa.org

Gesneriad Society

Has your collection grown far beyond violets? Consider joining the Gesneriad Society. More info: gesneriad.society.org

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