

PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

Volume 51 Number 4

April 2020



Kitty's *Sinningia* 'Esther'. She picked 'Esther' up at the the Gesneriad Convention in Cincinnati last year, having no clue at all what it would look like. She is in love! This is its first bloom for her. The open flowers are an inch and a half long when open. The foliage is full and compact. She currently has it growing in a three inch Oyama self-watering pot.

President's Message: I hope this newsletter finds everyone and their friends and family safe and healthy. Our lives have all been turned upside down from this world-wide crisis. Although I am still working, I am doing some work at home and have extra time to get out in the yard and work in my gardens. Normally, I would be frantically getting ready for our spring violet show. I miss our meetings, plant shows, and plant sales. My plant stands will soon be overflowing, not with new plants, but with rapidly growing seedlings that would have found a new home on the raffle table or at a plant sale this spring. Of course, I am really going to miss the Gesneriad Society's Convention and plant sale this summer. On the other hand, since I can't go out and shop (except for food and the ever elusive

MEETING LOCATION:

Emmanuel United Methodist Church
10755 Scaggsville Road, Laurel, MD 20723

Please No peanut products permitted in the meeting room since the area is a child care room of the church.

At this time the next meeting date is not confirmed pending the situation with the CoVid-19 regulations.

April 11th, May 9th, : Canceled

June 13th : No decision yet.

July : National Convention canceled

August 8th: Meeting on Show/Sale Prep (hopefully)

Sept 11, 12 13th: NCAC's Show and Sale

October 10th:

November 21th:

December 12th: Holiday Party TBA

As of Now our Show is ON....

NCAC Show and Sale

Homestead Gardens

743 W. Central Avenue

Davidsonville, MD 21035

Show: Saturday, September 12: 1-6 PM

Sunday, September 13: 9 AM-3 PM

Sale: Friday, September 11: 1-6 PM

Saturday, September 12: 9 AM – 6 PM

Sunday, September 13: 9 AM – 4 PM

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toilet paper, hand sanitizer, and Ramen Noodles), I have more money to spend shopping on-line. As for future plans, we had already canceled our May meeting to participate in other events. June is still highly questionable, but we may consider a meeting in July. Hopefully things will be getting back to normal by summer. In the meantime, we are open to any suggestions our members may have. Petal Tones will have an issue in May, so think about writing an article or just comment on how things are going for you and how your plants are doing. Stay healthy!
Barb

BLOOMIN' NOW



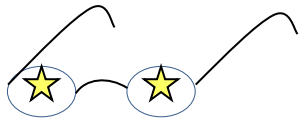
Bill's *Titanotrichum oldhamii*: "Last Fall I had quite a few rhizomes of *Titanotrichum oldhamii* so I planted them in different places, a couple of plastic pots under the lights, in a clay pot that I set out in the back yard, and in the ground next to a brick wall. The ones under the lights showed a lot of chlorosis including this one that I didn't realize I had planted in with an *Amallophylon*. I checked the clay pot and the rhizomes looked good, but they haven't sprouted. I am still waiting to see what comes up from the ground."



Bill's *Sinningia* 'Party Dress'. "A *Sinningia* that I am glad to have as it makes a decent home decoration!"



Donna's *Eucodonia* hybrid seedling.....close-up. The red hairs on the stems are beautiful along with the serrated edges of the leaves that have tiny hairs but not red.



Wishfully Seeking to Grow

Donna Beverin.....*Liebigia speciosa*, *Primulina leprosa*, *Achimenes pedunculata*.

Janet Carlton..... *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Damsel' leaf, cutting, plant

Johanna Zinn.....*Pearcea sprucei* and *Nautilocalyx x pictus* Jade

Nadya..... *Streptocarpus* :fresh pollen from a fantasy type and/or green edged (DEM hybrids)

Barb Koski *Drymonia variegata*

Bloomin' Now



Barb's *Episcia* 'Longwood Gardens'



Barb's *Sinningia* 'Deep Purple Blooming'



Barb's *Saintpaulia* 'Emergency'

Will there ever be a *Nematanthus* better than 'Cheerio'?

Gary Hunter

Nematanthus 'Cheerio' has survived as a very special minor flowering plant since it was created by Bill Saylor of Brewster MA in 1977. A hybrid between two species, *N. wettsteinii* and *N. radicans* (gregarious), which by great fortune inherited the best from both parents, plus vigor.

N. wettsteinii is the smallest *Nematanthus* species with shiny leaves and orange candy corn - like flowers. *N. radicans* has shiny leaves but does not flower quickly. Both grow slowly. *N. 'Cheerio'* has midsized shiny leaves with an orange guppy shaped flower at every leaf axil. It is seen occasionally in the commercial system in hanging baskets.

I was fortunate to have known Bill Saylor and his wife Carol. I visited him several times where he would show me his hybridization projects. He was an expert in the Gesneriad family of plants and was a genius in seeing the possibilities in hybridizing. Most of the named *Nematanthus* hybrids were created by him. I don't know of anyone dedicated to the genus *Nematanthus* now.

So what's so good about 'Cheerio'? People are attracted to the leaves which are shinier than you would think possible. The bright orange flowers make the common name 'Goldfish Plant' seems believable. Over the years, we have grown and sold tens of thousands of 'Cheerio's. I don't see any other *Nematanthus* variety that is better!

<http://www.garysspecialtyplants.com/>



Jim's gorgeous basket of *Nematanthus* 'Cheerio' loves life in Florida. Jim inherited this plant from Brian. It is never out of flower and as a judge's panel would say "well clothed in foliage."

Donna's young plant is doing well from a small plant purchased last spring from Gary Hunter. Since wicking she is having better luck with growing to bloom because she would lose them from under watering.

Nadya Warthens-Gibson's *N. 'Cheerio'* in her own words: "*Nematanthus* 'Cheerio' whose hobbies include blooming sporadically, harboring soil meales and eating toddlers!! This one lives in between two light stands (10 hours a day) and it periodically puts out flowers here and there "

Bloomin' Now



Johanna's *Columnea schiedeana* in her greenhouse. Johanna in Australia standing by an outstanding *Streptocarpella* specimen. She assumes it was a column filled with the plants, but she didn't want to paw through the vegetation to find out.



Johanna's *Hencklea*



A visitor to Johanna's greenhouse where we all love to visit!

Bloomin' Now



Sinningia 'Owlsee Red Hot'. This plant (above) is grown in a 10 inch azalea pot and was started from a tip cutting 3 years ago. Brandon Erikson is both the grower and photographer. Although just at the beginning of its bloom cycle - there are nearly 50 buds and open blooms. He grows this plant on his light shelves in his basement in Omaha, Nebraska and only brought it upstairs to get the photo. Alcie Maxwell is the hybridizer of this cultivar. From Gesneriad Society's Facebook page.

[#gesneriad](#) [#gesneriadpropagation](#) [#gesneriaceae](#) [#sinningia](#)



Johanna's *Sinningia*, 'Owlsee Red Hot'. The above two pictures are Johanna's plant. She did not know the name of this beautiful *Sinningia*, but friends from Facebook confirmed it is 'Owlsee' Red Hot' Alcie also confirmed and he is is one of our long distant members!



Donna's *Sinningia* 'High Voltage' Many flowers and lots of buds. Easy bloomer.



Janet's *Kohleria* 'Red Ryder'. Today (4/10/20) this *Kohleria* bloomed for the first time! It was received from our raffle table a couple of months ago and, as the name suggests, it has an intense deep red coloring. The plant is developing many more blooms and should bring a nice spot of color to my kitchen window in the next week or so!



Kitty's *Sinningia* 'Freckles'



Dave's *Sinningias* 'Mother of Pearl' (top) & 'April Snow'

BLOOMIN' NOW



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Dem the Gypsy Baron'



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Ladyslipper's Red Bicolor', aka 'Dibley's AK Sassy Girl'



Donna's *Streptocarpus* 'Zlotko'



Donna's *Sinningia* 'SimSim Saliviem' with a new little shoot growing from the tuber.



Smithiantha multiflora seedlings. I think every seed germinated! Time to move them again.

Brazil is not allowing any international packages or letters to be mailed from their country until further notice due to Co-Vid 19. Mauro has our seed order ready but cannot send them yet. Time to see if any of your 'stash' of older seeds are viable! Have fun!

BLOOMIN' NOW



Donna's *Chrysothemis pulchella* 'Black Flamingo' orange bracts first appearing with little yellow flowers embedded in center of bracts. In second picture first flower has emerged.



Donna's *Sinningia speciosa* 'Regina da Vista' from Mauro's seed at Brazil Plants. The first blooms open and hang like bells.

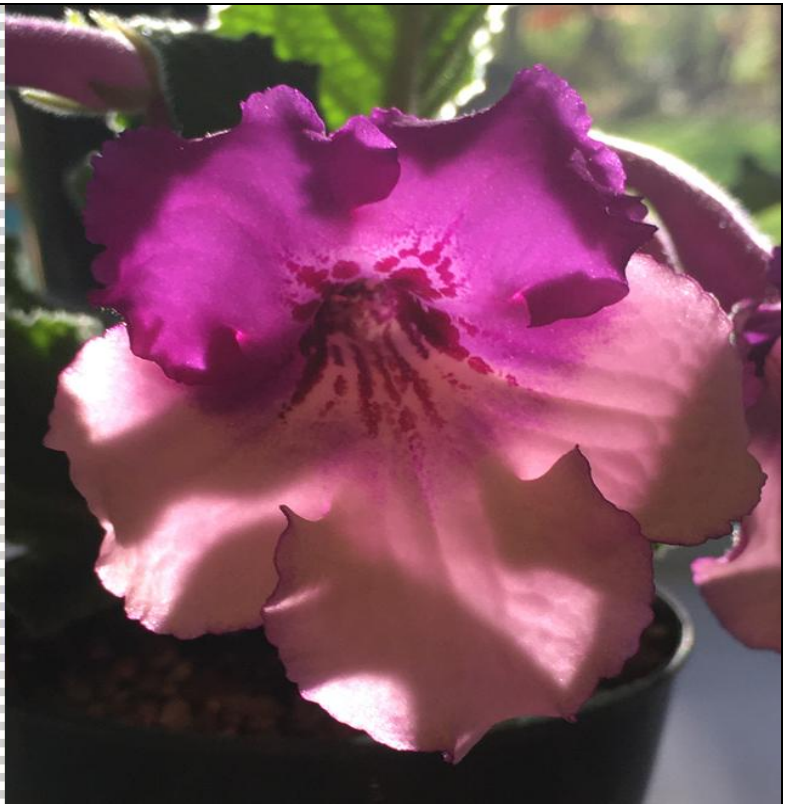


Donna's *Sinningia speciosa* 'Regina da Vista'. Interesting leaf veining. When buds first open they hang down and then begin to rise up so you can see inside the blooms. More blooms keep coming and coming! I did notice a light fragrance once but I shall keep checking to confirm.

BLOOMIN' NOW



Sinningia speciosa seedling without and with flash, under LEDs. Stunning in real life! Not fragrant that I can perceive. This is one of the seedlings I grew out from Gesneriad Hybridizers' Association Seed Fund. The seeds were from a cross by Jay Sespico: "(*Sinningia speciosa* 'Sentsational Pepperpot' × *Sinningia speciosa* 'Pedra Lisa') × (*Sinningia speciosa* 'Sentsational Pepperpot' × *Sinningia speciosa* 'Thad's Gas Planet') — A peloric red onto a blue nodding flower that had a strong scent. I was hoping for a fragrant red."



Janet's Strep seedling. Here is what she has to say: "This is one of my strep hybrids, still being assessed. When front-lit, it shows deep violet and bright yellow petals with interesting markings. However, when the sun shines from behind, it glows with a most gorgeous "blush" of pink tones where the yellow had been."

Bloomin' Now



Bill's *Episcia* 'Silver Skies'



Bill's *Kohlerias* 'Red Ryder', 'Strawberry Fields', & 'Flirt'



"Here are some pictures of an issue I had with one of my seedlings, *Smithiantha* 'Jan's Surprise' x 'Tropical Sunset'. You know it is time to repot when the pot is so full of rhizomes that they start sprouting from the bottom. I couldn't pull it out from either the top or the bottom without damaging something. So the pot had to be sacrificed. Now I have lots of babies!"
Barbara

Mr. Gesneriad: How do I treat African violets with powdery mildew? Something safe and effective would be good! Peggy.

If you have powdery mildew I've heard of a few treatments. The first is a product called Immunox. Mix according to the label with warm water. You'll likely have to spray a few times, and spray plants near the ones with the problem as they're likely harboring spores. The second option is to sprinkle cinnamon on the affected leaves. Cinnamon seems to have special anti-fungal properties. It also helps when rooting leaves if you have a problem with stem rot. The third is to use Lysol spray. Make sure you spray over the plant so that the mist/ spray falls onto the affected areas. **DO NOT SPRAY THE LEAVES DIRECTLY.** The propellant is very cold and will freeze the leaves. To prevent mildew from happening to begin with you need to increase air circulation around the plants. Also, mildew is more common in the winter. Night temperatures in many plant rooms (in the basement) or near windows are pretty cool and allow dew to form on the leaves. May not be an issue with fans blowing over the leaves. But if it still is consider running your lights at night to keep the temperature a bit higher and reduce the temperature difference between night and day.
Good Luck, Mr. Gesneriad



Bloomin' Now



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Towering Inferno'. This tuber is kept in my cool basement all winter. Never before did it produce a stem, especially a blooming stem so early. I put it under an LED light in the basement when I saw the little shoot emerging. Time will tell if the big tuber will send out more stalks during summer outdoors on my deck.



Donna's *Amalophyllon divaricatum*



Donna's *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Goose Egg' is definitely fragrant.

Dave's sale plants when we meet again. (below photos)



Raffle Table: just a reminder of fun waiting for us when we can meet again!

At every meeting our members bring items to share on the raffle table. Tickets for the raffle are only 2 for a dollar and everyone who attends the meeting gets one ticket just for showing up. Each person puts their free ticket into the "pot" and everyone gets a chance to select one item from the raffle table. Then the raffle continues by pulling the purchased tickets. Here's what you'll see on the table at a meeting: Gesneriad plants, rhizomes, tubers, cuttings, seeds, magazines, pamphlets, containers, lights, gardening supplies and other plants we love to grow like begonias, orchids and other companion plants. We get a great selection of items for the raffle table from our generous members. Please remember to label your plants and check for pests. Also, it is a good practice to isolate your new plants when you get home before adding them to your collection.

Note from Editor: Hello members. We are all missing our NCAC meetings, especially now in spring when we usually share our cuttings and seedlings prior to summer. Please share pictures of your blooming plants on our Facebook Page. That is a fun way to stay in touch! Barb, Peggy & Janet are looking into Zoom meetings.

As Co-Chair of the Propagation Committee, I would like to know if there are any Gesneriads you are looking for besides the ones listed in our Petal Tones. I can try to locate them and if possible raise from seeds. I do have a stash of seeds in the frig that I have not planted yet. I may have seeds of something you are wanting to grow. At this time of year rhizomes are all the rage so if you are looking for a rhizomous plant let me know. I think I should be able to mail out small pieces of rhizomes as my postal carrier picks up mail from my mailbox. Stay safe and well my friends! Donna

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NCAC Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/174442276299173/?ref=bookmarks>

The National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society welcomes all interested Gesneriad growers. The most familiar Gesneriad is Saintpaulia, more commonly known as the African Violet.

Dues are \$10 per year

Back issues from previous years available on website. Membership runs the calendar year and can be pro-rated.

The international Gesneriad Society is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to the study, growing and enjoyment of the gesneriaceae. Membership dues are \$25 /year for individuals and \$26 for a family. Benefits include seed fund of hard-to-find plants, reference materials, yearly convention & cultural webinars.

Membership requests should be sent to Bob Clark, 1122 E Pike Street, PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916. Membership includes a subscription to the society journal, Gesneriads. You can subscribe on line also.

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/>

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