

Petal Tones



National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society Newsletter

Volume 47 Number 7

August 2016



Brian's *Streptocarpus* 'DS Waterfall'

President's Message

I saw a few of you at the Convention in Delaware last month. Not as many as I'd hoped, but it was good to see some of you make it to a really beautiful show. The Best in Show was an amazing *Streptocarpus* grown by Ron Myhr out of Toronto. Drew and I went up with NOTHING to show, but because of some begging by the local Convention Chair who had Brian Connor bring a few things up. (Brian came up on Wednesday night). Amazing scores on plants that Drew didn't even want to enter. I don't have the scores in front of me, but I think 3 of the 6 plants scored over 95 points and were eligible for Best in Show. LESSON: Don't be too critical of your own plants – enter, enter, enter. I didn't enter anything and saw some blue ribbons that weren't as nice as some of the same plants I had on my shelves at home.

NCAC meetings are held at BEHNKES NURSERIES
11300 Baltimore Ave, Beltsville, MD 20705

Behnkes opens at 8:00am if you would like to browse and shop before the meeting. Gather at 10am to get set up, with the meeting beginning at 10:30am. Meet the second Saturday of the month. \$10 yearly dues.

August 13th: Build a Terrarium with Johanna Zinn
By-Laws Committee Meeting

September 10th: Episcias: Varieties, Culture, and botanical History, presented by Drew Norris

October 8th: Karyn Cichocki will discuss her Gesneriad Collecting Trip to Ecuador. Nominating panel for election of new officers will be determined.

That being said, I want everyone in the Chapter to think about plants for our next show – which we will likely have at the end of May, 2017. We still have to find a venue for the Show – Behnkes is both too busy at that time of year and the Show area will be too hot. We're looking for a Mall or Botanic Garden or other location where we can set up all day on Friday, have judging start early on Saturday and have the show open to the public on Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday. The National Capital Chapter covers a very wide geographic area. We have members coming to us from "almost Delaware" in the North to Richmond in the South. Surely there has to be at least one location willing to allow us to Show our plants. When the Baltimore Chapter held its shows we had them in the Laurel Mall (doesn't exist anymore), Savage Mill and the Cylburn Arboretum in Baltimore. No fees were charged for any of those locations. Baltimore African Violet Club has its shows at the Shops at Kenilworth in Towson, again

without any fees. Richmond African Violet Society holds their show at a nice Arboretum down there. Surely there is something, somewhere, where we can hold a show. It doesn't have to be in DC. Remember, it's the National Capital Area Chapter. Sure, it would be a drive, but I have no objections to having the show in Richmond or Baltimore. I know I can get us a site in the Baltimore area.

Our meeting this month, on August 13, could be a very fun one. Workshops are always fun. But we will have to brave the heat and hope that the day isn't in the high 90's. Our room at Behnkes is not air conditioned and summer meetings are difficult there. If we continue to hold summer meetings (and I think we should), what would you all think about having them at a member's home? Many clubs have all their meetings at member's homes. Our Chapter isn't so large that most of us wouldn't be able to host a meeting. The picnic at Barry's home at the end of August hosted both National Capital and the Baltimore African Violet Club. Let's discuss this option on Saturday.

I hope you are all planning to participate in Johanna's Terrarium Workshop. Many of our plants require the extra humidity that a closed glass container can provide, but we've all had problems with the plants suffering in the enclosed container for other reasons: lack of fertilizer, too wet a soil mix causing root rot, fogging of the glass so that the plants are virtually invisible. Johanna will teach us how to get past these common issues. I'm going to bring some cuttings and small plants suitable for terrarium culture. I hope others do too. Shop this week for your container. I've found the very best source for glass containers is Home Goods. I can get nice large containers for under \$15. We can't bring in huge containers (under 10" in diameter, I think) but many of our plants want some height. Look at tall mason jars, pasta containers, large brandy snifters. The ideal container would be 10" in diameter and 18" tall. Wish I had a case of them!

See you all in a few days. Happy growing! Jim

August Meeting

Johanna Zinn

For the August meeting, members who would like to plant a terrarium should bring a 6" to 10" terrarium for planting. I could bring a pretzel jar for those who don't have one, but let me know if you need one. Moss, scissors, gloves, charcoal; saran wrap to cover the terrarium, and plants will be provided.

The "Dog" Show at the May Meeting



Jim judging the Dog Show with members



August Meeting cont'

If you have some, please bring terrarium plants to share or to put on the raffle table. We will be planting horticultural terrariums---ones that are used to provide extra humidity for plants that need high humidity to survive. We will be using long-fibered sphagnum moss for our planting medium. It is readily available and easy for beginners to use. Please send me any other planting medium that you use for terrarium plants. Our branch members have different growing conditions and will benefit from other growers' experiences. Send them to me [jazinn@cox.net] by Friday afternoon, and I will include them with the handouts on Saturday.

Terrarium Containers and Where to Find Them

For those of us who grow plants in terrariums, finding appropriate containers is sometimes a challenge. Even with internet shopping available to most of us,

purchasing a terrarium that is just the right size, shape, height, appearance, or price can be difficult. Fortunately, in addition to using containers designed as terrariums, begonias will grow in most clear containers that have a cover or can be covered. Some will grow well in the extra humidity provided by the sides of the container, and will not need a cover. Glass containers that work well include bowls, brandy snifters, large hurricane lamps, cloches, fish bowls, pickle jars, aquariums, cake dish or cheese covers, trifle bowls, and display boxes or cases. Many of these can be purchased new at kitchen stores, craft stores, at discount stores such as Ross, Marshalls, or T.J.Maxx in the home section, Target, or at pet stores. Home Goods stores in our area have a very good selection of inexpensive glass containers suitable for terrariums. Glass cloches or terrariums can be purchased at local nurseries or via the internet or catalogues. Put a deep saucer under a cloche to hold your planting medium and you have created a contained atmosphere. Containers purchased without a cover can be sealed with glass circles cut at a glass shop to fit the opening, with plastic wrap, or with disposable plastic plates available at party or grocery stores. Many stores sell clear glass plates that work well as terrarium lids. Used containers can be purchased at antique/junk shops, Goodwill or Salvation Army, or garage sales.

A Small Bit of Convention News!



Hemiboa strigosa grown by Eileen McGrath won Judges Award of Merit



Sinningia araneosa grown by Paul Kroll



Another view of Eileen's Hemiboa

By-laws Committee will be meeting briefly after the club meeting on August 13th to discuss the next amendments, and anyone is welcome to attend. The next topic to be discussed will be clarification of duties of officers, the board and committees. See the announcement for current changes in this issue.



Drew with his *Centrosolenia porphyrotricha*



Dave Zaitlin's *Sinningia speciosa* 'Buzios'



Blue ribbon winner: *Sinningia speciosa* hybrid by Carolyn Ripps for Best Gesneriad



SWEEPSTAKES IN ARTISTIC – to Barbara Stewart with 3 blue ribbons



Ron Myhr's *Streptocarpus* 'Rose Scentsation' won best Gesneriad in show & Old World Gesneriad



Mary Schaeffer's blue ribbon winner: *Sinningia* 'Butter and Cream'



Johanna Zinn with *Nautilocalyx pemphidius*

There are pictures and videos of the Convention on the National website. You will enjoy checking them out!

<http://www.gesneriasociety.org/conventions/2016-convention-wilmington-delaware/>

Proposed amendments to Bylaws – August 2016

Article III: Government Section 1. Elected Officers

Current wording: Section 1. Elected Officers. The elected officers shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two or three Directors, each being a different person. The officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Chapter. The officers shall hold offices for two years or until their successors are elected. No officer, other than the treasurer, shall be eligible for more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Proposal 1:

Section 1.

Elected Officers and Directors.

The elected officers shall be President, VicePresident, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Directors, each being a different person.

This clarifies the content of this section which state both Officers and Directors are elected officials and specifies there will be 3 Directors instead of 2 or 3.

Article III: Government -Section 2. Board of Directors

Current wording: Section 2.

Board of Directors. The Chapter shall have a Board of Directors consisting of the elected officers and the chairmen of the standing committees.

Proposal 2:

Section 2.

Board of Directors. The Chapter shall have a Board of Directors consisting of the elected Officers, Directors, and the chairmen of the Standing Committees.

This clarifies that the Directors are included as members of the Board

Article III: Government -Section 3. Standing Committees.

Current wording: Section 3. Standing Committees. The standing committees, whose two-year terms shall correspond to the terms of the elected officers, shall be Hospitality, Membership, Publications, Program, Propagation, and Ways and Means. Additional standing committees may be appointed by the President when necessary.

Proposal 3:

Section 3.

Standing Committees. The Standing Committees shall be Hospitality, Membership, Publications, Program (delete), Propagation, Ways and Means, and Show. The chairmen of Standing Committees shall be appointed by the President, and shall serve a two-year term corresponding to the term of the elected Officers. (Additional standing committees may be appointed by the President when necessary)

- This amendment deletes the Program committee because this responsibility was given to the VP in a previous amendment, but never corrected in this section.
- Since Standing committees are permanent and continuous, the Show committee is added.
- The last sentence is deleted because the President cannot add Standing because they are listed in the Bylaws. This really refers to the President's authority to appoint "special" committees which is addressed in the next Section.
- Added sentence about how chairmen are appointed to clarify previous wording.

Potomac Begonia Branch of the American Begonia Society's yearly Show & Sale



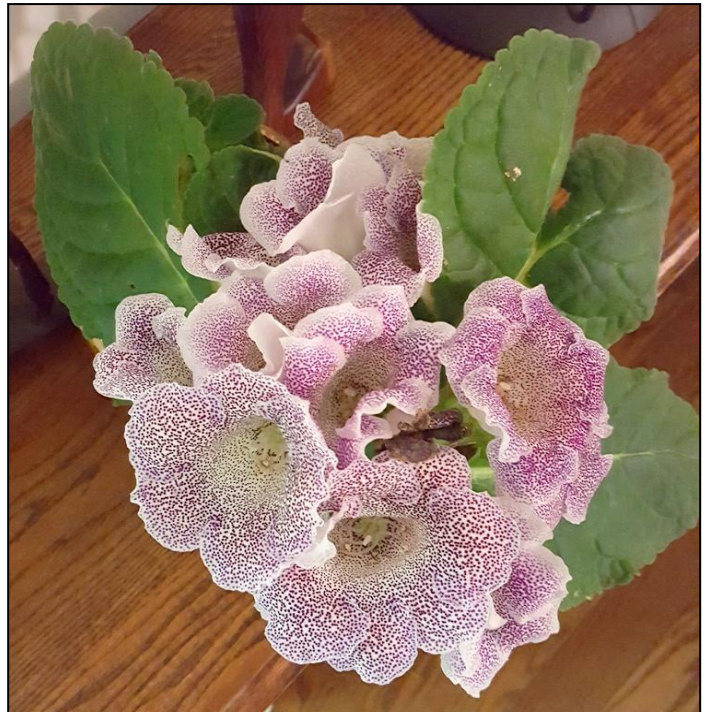
The Begonia show and sale will be Saturday, August 27th from 9:30am -4:30pm and Sunday, August 28th from 12 noon until 3:30pm. The sale will include a selection of plants from Florida, terrarium plants and hard to find Begonias!
Green Spring Gardens 4603 Green Spring Road
Alexandria, VA (703) 642-5173

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/>

Bloomin' Now



Streptocarpus above and below: Grown by Sherry Costas both from the same broken leaf which she found at the Toronto Convention when she were there. She was surprised at the difference - unexpected since she didn't know they could come out different. Sherry is one of our members who lives far from our meeting place but came to our show.



Sherry's *Sinningia* 'Darth Vader x self'



Sherry's *Sinningia* 'Diva'





Sherry's *Sinningia* 'Pedra Lisa'



Sherry's *Episcias*: She has no idea of the names. The light green one was rescued from a gift shop during a Clifton Day (Va) celebration a few years ago. It's a vigorous, prolific plant and is definitely winning the battle for space in that pot.



Barb's *Streptocarpus* 'JJ's Redhead Fantasy'



Barb's *Nematanthus* Yellow NOID



Barb's *Streptocarpus* 'Can Can'



Barb's *Sinningia warmingii*



Barb's *Streptocarpus* 'Kahinta'



Brian's *Streptocarpus* 'DS Mozart'



Brian's *Streptocarpus* 'DS in Lace'



Donna's *Sinningia* seedling NOID



Brian's *Streptocarpus* 'DS Margarita'

Planting and Growing a Terrarium with Gesneriads

By Neale Stuart-Merriman

Reprinted from Petal Tones February 2010

The January 2010 program was, as predicted, quite a treat for all of us. Neale Stuart-Merriman has a strong background in building terrariums. That knowledge and experience came through loud and clear as she shared her techniques with us. Neale brought a finished terrarium with her so show us what our efforts should look like after a few months. She suggests planting 3-4 months before a show so that everything will grow together. So if you haven't planted your terrarium yet, get to it now.



You'll notice that she keeps the name tags in the terrarium. It's so very easy to forget what's in the planting, and it's also very important to list everything in the planting for the show. At the meeting she put together a terrarium in a 12" square container, using mostly *Gesneriads*. She likes to allow one third of the terrarium to be blank; i.e., without plants, so that the eye is drawn into the space and experiences a feeling of being in the middle of the space and being able to look around as if the design is reality. Variations in height are important to add interest, and it's vital to keep plants in scale with the size of the container.

Remember, plants grow faster in a terrarium, under high humidity and otherwise perfect conditions. If you choose plants that are "just the right size" today they may be way out of scale by the time of the show. Look for interesting differences in texture and leaf color, and if well balanced the space can look great even without an open flower.

A few additional tips:

- 1) Neale uses a mixture of milled sphagnum with a standard soil mix. Avoid anything with perlite or vermiculite. These materials are not found in nature and will ruin the natural effect you are trying to obtain.
- 2) Do not let the soil show, especially at the front of the terrarium. On curved-sided terrariums the front of the terrarium is on all sides.
- 3) Use live moss, or even sheet moss to cover soil that may be exposed otherwise.
- 4) Fill in deep areas behind rocks or driftwood with overturned pots or other containers. This will reduce the amount of soil mix you will need and also keep the overall moisture level of the soil down.
- 5) A grate or screen over stones at the bottom of the container for drainage, covered with long fibered sphagnum or nylon stocking to keep the soil mix from falling into the drainage area, will help keep you from overwatering.
- 6) Don't feel that the terrarium you put together is ONLY for the show. A properly planted terrarium is easy to care for and will provide months, if not years of enjoyment. You may have to do some trimming, and plant replacement as plants overgrow their space, but the increased humidity make them ideal for an office setting where you may not be able to grow many *Gesneriads* out in the open.
- 7) The best moss is sidewalk moss. For those who don't know what that is, it's the moss that grows in the cracks between sidewalk slabs. Here is some on my patio.



If you break it up and put it through a sieve, each little plant will form a colony. Sprinkle the plants on a porous brick sitting in water in an enclosed container and you will always have moss available for a dish garden, terrarium or as groundcover in a bonsai pot

Step-by-Step to Planting a Terrarium



Start by placing large rocks or driftwood



Fill behind the rocks with soil and overturned pots and then start placing plants for height and color



Add some glass beads for a water effect in front and more plants to fill the space. (leaving unplanted space to draw the eye in). Sit back and watch your version of a grotto by the pond grow together and become more real looking as time passes.

Note from the Editor: To encourage members to contribute content to our Petal Tones newsletter the following incentives have been approved.

- 5 raffle tickets with 3 month expiration will be given to each member who submits an article with 3-5 paragraphs in length on a specific topic.
- 3 tickets with a 3 month expiration will be given to each member who submits 5 pictures
- \$25 gift certificate of the winner's choosing will be given for best article of the year
- \$10 gift certificate will be given for best photo of the year, to be voted on at the end of the year.

Also I would be glad to “clean up” any photographs before publishing in Petal Tones if you would like. Please share you experiences with your plants in a short article, or a visit to a green house or to another plant lover's collection. You'd be surprised how other folks will enjoy reading about your experiences! Thanks, Donna

NCAC Meeting Program Schedule for 2016

August 2016: Hands on Terrarium Workshop, with materials provided to set up and maintain a small terrarium Gesneriad. Each member should bring a container of their choice to make a terrarium.
Presenter: Johanna Zinn

September 2016: Episcias: Varieties, Culture, and botanical History, presented by Drew Norris

October 2016: Karyn Cichocki will discuss her Gesneriad Collecting Trip to Ecuador. Nominating panel for election of new officers will be determined.

November 2016: Meeting at the Mid-Atlantic African Violet Show with Jim Roberts and Drew Norris discussing setting up grow light stands.

December 2016: Holiday Party
New officers are elected

NCAC website: www.nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

NCAC Blog: <http://dcbgesneriads.blogspot.com/>

Website & Blog: Corey Wickliffe
web@nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

President: Jim Roberts
Marriottsville, MD 21104
410-227-2324
jim.roberts@wildblue.net

Vice-President: Andrew Norris
Marriottsville, MD 21104
extensionofgreen@yahoo.com

Secretary: Barbara Stewart
bstew771@verizon.net

Treasurer: Barry Woolf
1301 Malus Court
Fallston, MD 21047
410-879-1654
Woolfphoto1@comcast.net

Committees:

Hospitality: Harold Belcher

Programs: Andrew Norris

Membership: Corey Wickliffe

Newsletter Editor: Donna Beverin
editor@nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

Petaltones@gmail.com or

Donnabeverin@gmail.com

web@nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

Directors:

Victor Nicholas

Harold Belcher

Donna Beverin

The Gesneriad Society website

www.gesneriadsociety.org