

PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

Volume 50 Number 3

March 2019



S. minima

Pat Bowling

Close up of *Sinningia minima* by Pat Bowling. This tiny plant is the latest *Sinningia* discovered in Brazil. Photo taken with her Samsung Galaxy Note 9.

President's Message Barb Stewart
Spring is almost here, and I am regularly checking for sprouting rhizomes. This is a good month to share any surplus rhizomes you may have before they wake up. Our plant of the month is *Amalophyllon* which also grows from rhizomes, so hopefully there will be a few on the raffle table. With spring shows coming up in many clubs, lots of our members exhibit designs. Last year I gave a basic design program with a hands-on workshop. This month I will get more specific with one of the design elements, color, which influences a design in many ways. Don't worry if you are not an experienced designer, I will include some design basics and demonstrations. Hopefully you will be inspired to try a design in your next show, or just bring one in for show-and-tell and get some feedback. Arrangements are lots of fun to do. Hope to see you there!

MEETING LOCATION:

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

We gather at 10:00am to get set up, with the meeting beginning at 10:30am. Meet the second Saturday of the month. Calendar yearly dues of \$10 are due in January or whenever joining.

Renew by March to keep your Petal Tones subscription.

Attention: The Church is a "NUT FREE ZONE" due to children with allergies so do not bring any food items that include nuts or peanuts. The area is a day care.

March 9th 2019: Using Color In Design by Barb Stewart

April 13th 2019: Summer Sinningias by Donna Beverin

May 18th 2019: Green Spring Garden's Plant Sale, 9AM to 3PM, in lieu of meeting

June 15th 2019: African Violet Species by Brian Connor
Members should send list of African Violet species they are growing to Brian for prep. (meeting changed to 3rd weekend because of the AVSA convention)

July/August – Date TBA; No business meeting; picnic most likely with Begonia Society

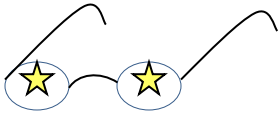
September 14th – Rare & Unusual Gesneriads webinar

October 12th – Problem Identification – **need presenter;** topic to include "how to identify what exactly is wrong with my plant" and includes pests as well as cultural issues

November 9th – Pat Bowling's program on micro mini sinningias (pending)

December - Holiday Party – **need host**

Our Treasurer, Sharon Long is collecting 2019 dues. She will be sending an email to members who have not paid for this year. If you know you owe dues, you may mail them to her at 1546 Heritage Hill Drive
Henrico, VA 23238.
Dues are still only \$10.00. Thanks for all who are up to date.



Wishfully Seeking to Grow

- Kitty Hedgepeth..... Episcias 'War Paint' and 'Black Mamba'
- Barb Stewart.....Gasteranthus, any
- Donna Beverin..... Liebigia speciosa
- Janet Carlton.....Streptocarpus leaf of any variegated hybrid
- Janet Carlton.....Streptocarpus 'Harlequin Damsel' leaf, cutting, plant
- Andy Meier.....Streptocarpus leaf of Streptocarpus 'Spin Art'
- Donna Beverin..... Eucodonia andrieuxii 'Woolly Morrión' rhizome or leaf

Bloomin' Now

This beauty, *Streptocarpus*' Ladyslippers Red Rose' (aka Dibley's Ruby), bloomed for me just in time for Valentine's Day. It's my husband's favorite strep because of its beautiful red coloring which hardly fades as the flowers age. This hybrid gets very large so you need space for it. In its 3.5" Oyama pot, the flowers are about 2" across but the longest leaf is already 14 inches long! Yikes! Generally, I keep it trimmed back but am waiting till our next meeting to give it a haircut so that the leaf can be gifted to another member. I successfully crossed this plant with my Harlequin Lace in the fall, and am now growing out about 25 seedlings in hopes of getting a reddish colored bloom with Harlequin markings. Keep your fingers crossed for me! Janet Carlton



← Nadya's *Streptocarpus* 'Angelina Jolie', blooming for the first time! A delightful plant - huge flowers on very short stems, and each one sparkles like the fresh fallen snow!



Barb's interesting propagation experience: This is a violet leaf which has rooted and produced babies. If you look closely, you can see that roots formed from the leaf blade and reached into the soil. I usually just get babies from the stem, but sinking the base of the leaf blade in the soil might produce more babies!

BLOOMIN' NOW



Barb S. *Alsobia* 'San Miguel'



Barb S. *Streptocarpus* 'Night Lights'



Donna's *Saintpaulia* NOID First re-blooming violet for me in a long time!



Barb S. *xRhytidoneria* 'Ako Cardinal Flight'

Green Springs Sale

May 18th our NCAC group will offer plants for sale at Green Spring Gardens annual Plant Sale from 9am to 3pm. Johanna has made arrangements for us to secure a booth area and there we shall place a tent to sell plants. Our concentration will be on Gesneriads with some educational hand outs and information about membership to our group. We are hoping our request to be next to the Potomac Branch of the Begonia Society will be granted since some members could work both booths. Parking is at the shopping center. There is no shade provided; Andy offered to set up tents for club use the day before the sale. Also Andy offered the use of his Credit Card scanner using Pay Pal. Members who expect to participate are: Barb K., Barbara S., Diane, and Brian. Karen, Johanna and Donna will participate with the Begonia Society and NCAC as they are able so members will have time to shop as they rotate in to help at the table. Johanna and Donna are looking into purchasing some plants from Gary Hunter. Please prop your plants so our sale is a success. You can offer other plants for sale as well. Should be a fun day for all of us to enjoy seeing the gardens, buying and talking plants! 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA

BLOOMIN' NOW



Doug's beautiful Streps! From left to right: Lois (not a proper name, but my naming because it is from a leaf taken from a plant owned by Lois), Gold, Lois again, Harlequin Lace, Falling stars, Ladyslipper Scarlet (same red that was shared at the last meeting). Back row: Falling Stars again, Gina, and Bristol's Met Lee. The bottom shelf is primarily inhabited by orchids. Each shelf is supplied by 4 T5 bulbs, two 3000K and two 6500K.



Bill Schmidt's *Achimenes* 'Glory'



Bill's *Saintpaulia* 'Tiny Wood Trail'

BLOOMIN' NOW



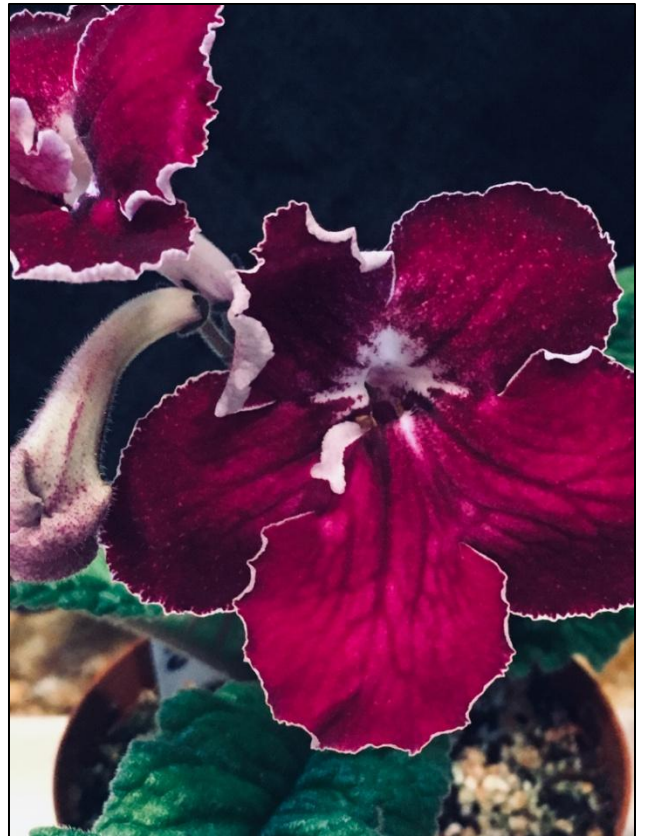
Kitty's *Primulina dryas* 'Nimbus'



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Polar Canary'



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Roulette Cherry'



Janet's *Streptocarpus* 'Janet's Wino'
Janet says this is one of her favorite *Streptocarpus* seedlings that she has been raising for years. The parents are unknown although one was probably a dark purple NOID. It's not registered, but she has been calling it Janet's Wino. The depth and variation of colors along with the striking white edging is what catches the eye.

Useful Info About Pro-Mix Growing Media

By Janet Carlton

Many Gesneriad growers try out various growing mixtures and the Pro-Mix line is frequently considered. If you've wondered about which mix to use, how to store it, or whether your water will kill the biological components, read on . . .

Recently I had a little "accident." I wanted Pro-Mix HP growing medium for my streps. It wasn't available locally, so I purchased 2.8 cubic feet of it online without realizing how much that is. I could barely drag the box from the front porch into the house! (Compare the size of the bag to my adult sized shoe-speck in the photo.) Bwahahaha.



After we were done laughing, I wondered where on earth to store it all. Was the garage OK? I checked with a specialist from Premier Tech Horticulture (the manufacturer) about temperature restrictions since the mix contains biologically active components. He provided useful info on a number of topics.

Mixtures and Use:

There are several Pro-Mix mixes optimized for various uses. These are made of peat moss plus active ingredients and have a pH of 5.2-6.2.

Two commonly used mixes for gesneriads are Pro-Mix BX which contains vermiculite, and Pro-Mix HP (high porosity) which contains a higher percentage of perlite than BX.

BX has been recommended by some strep growers for starting seedlings and propagating leaves. However, HP is recommended by the manufacturer for both propagation and growing of *Streptocarpus* because it does not retain as much water.

Growers generally blend any Pro-Mix media with at least 50% perlite to support optimal moisture levels, regardless of watering method used. Tweak the ratio to meet your needs.

DO NOT sterilize these mixes! Sterilization kills the beneficial Mycorrhizae and natural microorganisms in the growing medium and makes it easier for pathogens to become established.

Storage/Temperature Recommendations:

Pro-Mix media should be kept in closed containers to prevent bugs and such from getting into it.

Cold and freezing temperatures will not harm the mix, but high heat (above that of your typical home) will degrade it via composting and loss of the microbial components. So no long term garage or outdoor storage.

Water/Chlorine/Chloramine:

Chlorine and chloramine are two chemicals commonly used to kill dangerous microbes in our municipal water sources. Chloramine is used in Northern Virginia.

While chlorine is easily removed from water by standing or boiling, chloramine is more stable, persists much longer, and is not easily removed by boiling.

When asked if these chemicals impact the biological factors in Pro-Mix media, the horticultural specialist stated: "There is no clear answer as to the impact of chloramines on BIOFUNGICIDE and MYCORRHIZAE. However, the amount of microorganisms in PRO-MIX are high and although the chloramines may kill some of these beneficial microorganisms it will not kill most of them. The BIOFUNGICIDE, which is a bacillus bacterium, reproduces quickly and the population can bounce back within 2 days. The bottom line is that the BIOFUNGICIDE should not be detrimentally impacted. MYCORRHIZAE, which is a fungus, does not reproduce as rapidly. It is a more complex microorganism, but there does not appear to be any information on the effects of chloramines on fungi."

For information on removing chloramines from water, this article is helpful:

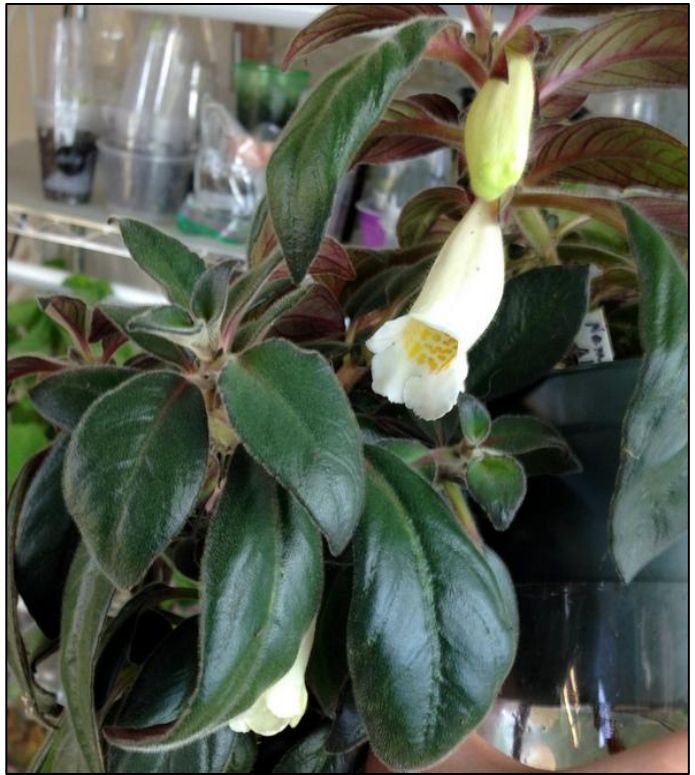
https://www.morebeer.com/articles/removing_chloramines_from_water

I'll have gallon sized bags for sale at our next meeting at \$3 per bag. Let me know if you would like me to save you a bag. Happy growing!

BLOOMIN' NOW



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Prudence Risley'



Donna's *Nematanthus albus* 'Santa Teresa'



Dave's Mini *Sinningia* 'Laura'



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Anne Crowley' x self seedling



Mr. Gesneriad,

I recently had to judge a *Primulina Medica* as an exhibit, and our panel struggled with judging this plant which none of us have grown. It was a beautiful plant except for the outer row of leaves which all curled under. We wondered if this was characteristic of this plant or a cultural issue, as most *Primulinas* we have grown do not show this issue. Afterwards, the exhibitor took off the row of leaves (and shared them), and the plant looked much better. Here are pictures of before and after. Barbara Stewart



Mr. Gesneriad replies:

Barb: The old leaves should have been removed. I have the plant and the outer row of leaves look like her plant after grooming. If she took them off to share and could see for herself that the plant looked better the judges should have seen the same thing. Even if the exhibitor said the curled leaves were how the plant grows the judges can comment that the plant would look better without the curled leaves. If they looked healthy but curled they should still come off for a show where the plant should look good.

Example, an *Episcia* with stolons running off in all directions would lose points, even if all the stolons were healthy. Upright growing *Sinningia* often lose their lower leaves. Would they do well without other stems hiding the bare spots?

Primulina, like *Saintpaulia*, have common characteristics. One is that older leaves turn yellow.

Plant Sales at Meetings: Sales are allowed at meetings (as long as plants are pest-free), as previously decided at the meeting of March 2015. Members can “offer” plants for sale in Petal Tones so that they know what/how many to bring if someone wants to purchase plants. The seller will split their sales with the club 75/25%.

DON'T FORGET THE RAFFLE TABLE!

At every meeting our members bring extra plants, cuttings, growing supplies, magazines, books, seedlings and donate them to the raffle table. Tickets for the raffle are only 3 for a dollar and everyone who attends the meeting gets one ticket just for showing up (including guests). Here's what you'll see on the table at a meeting: Gesneriad plants, rhizomes, seedlings, tubers, leaves, cuttings, seeds, companion and/or garden plants, magazines, pamphlets, pots and gardening supplies and other plants we love to grow like begonias and houseplants.

The Richmond African Violet Society 2019 Annual Show and Sale

“Violets Around the World”

April 5th (Plant Sales),

April 5th – 7th, 2019 (Show and Sale)

Sponsored by and held at:

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

1800 Lakeside Ave, Richmond, VA

804-262-9887

<http://www.lewisginter.org/plan/index.php>

Admission to the show and sale is free; however, there is an admission fee for visiting the garden. **Adults \$13 Seniors (55+) \$11**

Show Hours

Saturday, April 6, 2019 **1:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

Sunday, April 7, 2019 **9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

Plant Sale Hours

Friday, April 5, 2019 **1:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

Saturday, April 6, 2019 **9:00 am to 5:00 pm**

Sunday, April 7, 2019 **9:00 am to 4:00 pm**

Info: Barbara Greenawalt

Email: barbgreenawalt@hotmail.com

Editor note: This show features Gesneriads also.

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Show: Bill Schmidt

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Ki Imai

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web@nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

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 (email copy of current year's newsletter).

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.

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

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