

PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

Volume 52 Number 4

April 2021



Johanna Zinn's stunning *Henckelia ceratosycus*
This *Henckelia* is a perennial original from the boarder between China and Vietnam. It usually blooms in Spring only. The fragrant flower size is large in comparison to other *Chirita*. Previously named *Chirita corniculata*.

NCAC April meeting
Saturday, April 10, 2021

Topic: NCAC April Meeting
Time: Apr 10, 2021 10:30 AM EST
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86032951078?pwd=MDZTY0FPQm96K2dTSGdlk29NVTNUQT09>

Meeting ID: 860 3295 1078
Passcode: 247368

Up and Coming Programs:

May 8th: Gesneriad Plant auction. See page 2 for more info.

June 12th: Hung Nyugen, "Sinningia on the Tourist Path: Brazil"

Guest speaker: Karyn Cichocki

Karyn's interest in gesneriads started with African violets, as her mother and both of her grandmothers grew them. She grew up on Long Island, New York and joined her first African Violet club in 1982. Then in 1994 she attended a meeting of the Long Island Gesneriad Society. It was their annual propagation meeting and she was sent home with a container filled with leaves & cuttings, which unfortunately promptly died.

Karyn and her husband moved to the NW corner of New Jersey that summer and found that a short drive would take her to Morristown NJ where there was a new gesneriad chapter that met at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum. It was suggested that she also join the chapter and then the national society.

Karyn is a life member of both AVSA and the Gesneriad Society and holds a master judges certificate for both societies. She enjoys participating in the horticulture and design sections of local, state and international shows & conventions. Besides indoor gardening, Karyn also enjoys outdoor gardening, hiking and bird watching.

Show News: September 10th, 11th, & 12th, 2021 Homestead Gardens, Davidsonville, MD

Bill: We have a signed agreement with Homestead Gardens. Our show schedule has been resubmitted and approved by The Gesneriad Society. National organizations have been contacted for inclusion of our show information in their publications. Finally, the Richmond African Violet Society, a Gesneriad Society affiliate, has decided to accept our invitation to join us. We can discuss any questions you have about any of this at our upcoming meeting.

Minh: Having secured a venue and the show, many thanks to Bill and his persistence. Please start growing at least one plant to exhibit for the show. We should be able to get an ad that many of you can distribute on social media very soon. Please mark your calendars if you haven't done so and I'm excited to see many well grown Gesneriads later this year!

Attention Members! Our May Plant Auction!

May Program: On-line Plant Auction

Barbara Stewart

Our program for May 2021 will be an on-line plant auction. If you have extra gesneriads to sell, you may auction plants, as well as leaves or cuttings. (It goes without saying that plants should be free of pests and disease.)

1. You will need to take a picture of the plant being sold and send it to Mary Schaeffer (schaeffermary@yahoo.com) who will put them all in a Power Point to present at the auction.
2. If you are selling leaves or cuttings, you can send her a picture of the whole plant (or plants if selling a collection) rather than the actual leaves or cuttings.
3. Sellers should also suggest a minimum bid, although it may be adjusted at the sale if it seems too low or too high.
4. We will also have plants from Mel Grice included in the auction.
5. The auction will begin after the business meeting. Bidders will use the chat feature to bid on each plant presented, and the winning bidder and price will be recorded.
6. Plants will be available to pick up at Johanna Zinn's house the following weekend during the in-person plant swap. To save time, buyers will be able to pay for their plants before the in-person swap at Johanna's using the chapter's PayPal account. Otherwise, pay with cash or check at the swap.
7. Sellers will have their plant material in bags labeled with the buyer's name to help make pick-up quicker and easier.

This is a great way to share our extra plants, and get some new plants as well. Since we are not meeting in person and having our monthly raffle, this will also help generate funds for the chapter while we have a little fun.

Bloomin' Now

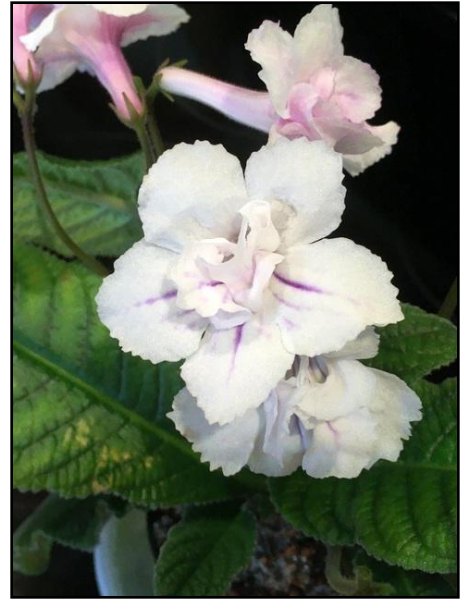


Donna's *Primulina ophiopogoides x linearifolia*, a seedling from a cross by Barb Borleski.



Donna's *Chrysothemis pulchella* 'Black Flamingo'. Growing fast, this plant is called 'The Monster'! It grows so fast from a sprouting tuber. This is the second repotting into 8 inch pot. In background is a prop box of *Sinningia* 'Owlsees Red Hot' to share at the swap.

Bloomin' Now



Janet Carlton: "This is *Streptocarpus* 'Janet's Petticoat' which is from a Dale Martens cross. It's been growing several years and, for the first time ever, started producing pink in the blooms! The third photo shows the normal white bloom. Only blooms facing the sun in my kitchen window turned pink. I had alternated in a different fertilizer a few days before and wonder if that made a difference."

I have a question for Mr. Gesneriad. How do you encourage rhizomes to come out of dormancy?
Thanks!
Peggy MacDonald



Jim Roberts

Most rhizomes have a very specific growing period, built into their genetic code, so that they will be in active growth when their natural environment is the most favorable. It wouldn't due for an *Achimenes* to pop up out of dormancy just as their dry season begins. Some plants only go dormant when there is a change in the environment that prevents their survival above ground. The rhizomes formed below the surface form and then sprout almost immediately. Plants such as *Kohleria*.



And then there are plants that form rhizomes above the ground as well as below. Either as tight bundles that look just like the underground ones, or as long stringy growths looking for another place to put down roots like many *Seemannias*. These stringy growths need to be planted immediately once removed from the plant.

So all of that to simply reply that I don't know of a way to encourage dormant rhizomes to start growing. When they're ready they start up on their own. Put them in a plastic bag with a little vermiculite and just wait for signs that they're ready.

A few notes:

1. One of the common names for *Achimenes* is "Hot Water Plants." They may be brought out of dormancy (or so the word is) by soaking them in hot water. I have no details on how hot or for how long, but if you have lots of rhizomes of a particular *Achimenes*, run a quick experiment and report back to the group.
2. Some "rhizomatous" plants never seem to form rhizomes that you can dig out of the pot and store. The stem modifications we call rhizomes in these plants are so thin that we can't find them. *Pearcea* and *Monophyle* are examples. These plants should be kept just slightly moist until new growth starts back up. If I don't see anything after a few months I'll generally dump out the pot and look for any small piece of green growth. Finding none it'll all get tossed. Never let non-rhizome forming rhizomatous plants get dry and go into dormancy.
3. While I don't know any ways to bring rhizomes out of dormancy, the individual scales of a rhizome can be brought to life at just about any time. Just as the rhizome is a modified stem, the scales are growth hormone packed leaves. Once they are removed from the stem they want to grow. Rub the rhizome to knock off the scales and place them ON THE SURFACE of a pot of damp growing media. Put it in a closed baggie, under lights, and watch the rhizomes spring to life. Day length can trigger dormancy, but under lights plants can grow and flower at any time. 'Mr. G'

My Achimenes

Barbara Stewart

I have a number of Achimenes laying dormant on my plant shelf right now. They include many new varieties I bought last year which started with only one rhizome. They had all sprouted, but only produced one or two blossoms. They were all grown on wicking tubs to keep them from drying out during the season. With my busy schedule, they have sat dormant on their tubs all winter.

Achimenes 'Red Elf' is always an early riser. (See photo to the right) Mine has already sprouted and bloomed. I check every once in a while to see if anything else is sprouting. Nothing so far, so I emptied one pot to see if there were any rhizomes left in it. Having lost many Achimenes in the past, I was happy to see some signs of life. The plant was *Achimenes* Sib "Flying Dance", a free one I received with my order last year. The largest rhizome had a tip that appeared to be sprouting. Although I started with one rhizome, the pot now had seven.



Last month we watched a great webinar on Achimenes by Julie Mavity-Hudson, and I picked up some valuable tips for growing my Achimenes this year. One tip was to plant fewer rhizomes in a pot, so the blossoms have more room to develop. Since these rhizomes were pretty small, I probably would have planted them all in one pot. However, I will divide them into 2 pots to try to get a better bloom count, planting them horizontally just below the soil surface and spreading them out. This will also give them more room to branch when I pinch the tips after there are three sets of leaves.

I am looking forward to seeing what treasures are buried in my other Achimenes pots.

One additional tip from Julie was that the best ones for a September show will probably be the ones that sprout in May. This will give most Achimenes time to reach full potential before winding down for the winter. 'Red Elf' might not make it to show, but hopefully I will have some other candidates in those pots.

I also have a bunch of new rhizomes I ordered recently that are ready to plant, so I need to get busy!

BLOOMIN' NOW



Barb's *Streptocarpus* 'Raydar's Mollie'



Janet's *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Lace'

BLOOMIN' NOW



Janet's *Streptocarpus* 'Falling Stars', One of her favorites.



Janet: "This is another of my seedlings doing nicely. I love the orange streaking in the throat against a deep violet." Janet has not named it yet.



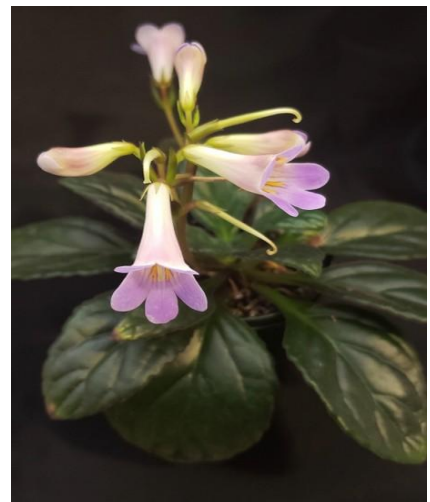
Janet's vase of gesneriads. *Streptocarpus* purple NOID, 'Ladyslippers Blue Halo', 'Janet's Happy' & *Kohleria* 'Silver Feather.' Purple noid is the first *Streptocarpus* Janet was ever given!



Donna's *Kohleria* 'An's Cheerleader'



Donna's *Primulina* "New York"



Barb's *Primulina* 'Nimbus'



Barb's *Gloxinella lindeniana*



Donna's *Smithiantha multiflora* seedling



Donna's *Sinningia* NOID seedling

Bloomin' Now



Dave's *Gloxinia perennis*



Dave's *Kohleria* 'Strawberry Fields'



Dave's *Columnea scheidiana*



Dave's *Kohleria* 'Red Ryder'



Dave's *Sinningia* 'Mark Twain'



Donna's *Sinningia* 'High Voltage'
with seed pods



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Spanish Skirts'



Lyuba starts by packing each rhizome in vermiculite in a baggie with the name of the plant, then she wraps each baggie in paper towel. Then she wraps all the baggies with a flexible Styrofoam insulation, and wraps that in plastic packing tape. Next she put the package between 2 Styrofoam trays like the ones that come with ground beef at grocery store. Then she rewraps everything in the flexible foam and tape. She inserts the entire package in a small manila envelope and then into a large padded envelope.



Needless to say they arrived in perfect condition from the Ukraine! This is my second order with Lyuba and with the cold weather she wanted to be sure they arrived safely. My order arrived in 3 weeks. I paid by Western Union. I recommend her as a reliable vendor.



Lyuba's Facebook address <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100051329496777>

Wishfully Seeking to Grow

- Donna Beverin..... *Liebigia speciosa*, *Primulina leprosa*, *Primulina petrocosmoids*, *Kohleria 'Costa Rica'*
- Janet Carlton..... *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Damsel' leaf, cutting, plant
- Barry Woolf..... *Sinningia* 'Gabriel's Horn'
- Johanna Zinn..... *Pearcea sprucei* and *Nautilocalyx x pictus* 'Jade'
- Kitty Hedgepeth..... *Streptocarpus* 'DS Rediska'

Kohleria 'Ni's Nasca' purchased from my first order from Lyuba last autumn 2020.





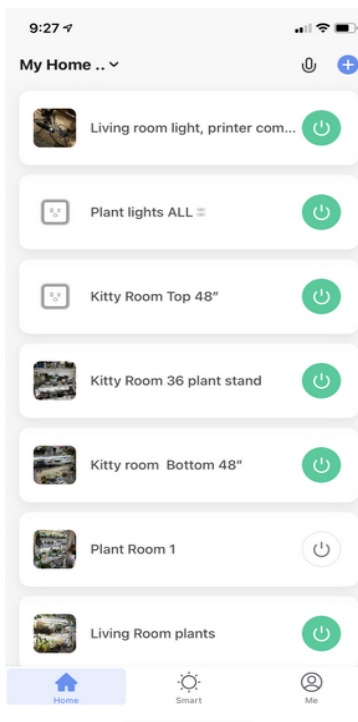
I have discovered smart plugs. Minh Bui gave away his power strips with timers to members on our raffle table at a Gesneriad meeting in 2019, saying he was installing a Smart System for his lights. I was intrigued but did not investigate further. Minh said he could control his plant lights with his phone anywhere on the globe. I was listening but joked with him that I still do it the “Vanna” way, clicking on and off all the switches twice everyday. So I have about 6 light stands in three rooms and some are next to one another. About a week ago I did some online shopping and read up on the smart plugs. Finding them on Amazon I bought a pack of two round ones and tried them out. There are many companies making them and they are all similarly priced. I decided to go with a company named Teckin.



So once they arrived I opened up the small box and read the directions and set about getting the free app for my phone. After downloading the app I began the installation procedure for my first smart plug. Choosing the plant stand in my living room I plugged my power strip with all 7 of my light plugs attached to it, into the Teckin Smart Plug. My phone recognized it and I just followed the directions to set up with the 2.4 GHz setting for my internet. My house has 5.0 GHz but I could adjust for the installation. Then I followed the directions on the ‘Smart Life’ app on my

phone and Bingo! All the lights on the stand went off and on with a touch of a virtual button on my cell phone. Then I set up the second smart plug. So I wanted to order more plugs and noticed the rectangle plug that fit into the sockets so you have room for two per wall outlet.

So I bought 2 sets and now have all my plant lights on smart plugs. In the app I was able to make a group called Plant Lights and all the lights will go on and off with one button. You can personalize each plug and/or all in a group. You can set the timer to off and on, name your Plug, ID each plug with a photo icon and set up with Alexa or Google Assistant for voice control. I shall purchase a few more to enjoy this push button luxury for many other appliances in my home. I suggest you give it a try. Good-bye to my Vanna routine!



Virtual Flower Show Exhibitor Rules

The Gesneriad Society is hoping you are taking photos of your plants and will pick the five best to enter in the upcoming Gesneriad Society Virtual show. This year's schedule includes artistic and arts classes so think about submitting one or more such entries.

1. Only members of The Gesneriad Society are eligible to submit photos.
2. Each exhibitor may submit up to five photos; only one photo per email.
3. Large file sizes are preferred, with a minimum file size of 100kb.
4. Photos may be taken from any angle and must be in focus; while photo quality is not explicitly to be evaluated, bear in mind that good presentation of the subject will impress viewers.
5. When choosing classes for entries, exhibitors should keep in mind that New World gesneriads are those that originate in North/Central/South America and the Caribbean; Old World gesneriads are those that originate in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australasia (Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, New Guinea, and other Pacific islands).
6. Photos submitted for Classes 01 through 23 must have been taken between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021.
7. Photos submitted for Classes 01 through 22 must be color; photos submitted for Class 23 may be color or monochrome. Photos must not have been exhibited in the 2020 Virtual Flower Show.
8. Photos submitted for Classes 01 through 16 must be of plants grown by the exhibitor for at least three months when photographed.
9. Photos for Classes 01 through 16 must be of one plant on its own with as much of the plant included as possible and exhibiting the characteristics of the plant.
10. Photos submitted for Classes 17, 18 and 19 may include more than one gesneriad. If there are several gesneriads in the photo, the subject line of the email must indicate the name of one plant in the photo (see rule #13). However, each gesneriad in the photo must be listed in the email and identified as to its location in the photo.
11. Close-ups of parts of a plant are only eligible for Class 23.
12. Photos submitted for Class 24 must be of arts and crafts that have never been entered by the exhibitor in any Gesneriad Society Convention Flower Show and must have been taken between January 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021.
13. The subject line of each email must include the class number, plant name (one gesneriad plant name for classes 17, 18 and 19 if several gesneriads are in the photo), and the name of the exhibitor. Example: "Class 01 – *Sinningia hirsuta* – your name." If someone else took the photo, that person's name should be put after the exhibitor's name: Example: "Class 01 – *Sinningia hirsuta* – your name, the photographer's name."
14. Classification and nomenclature issues will be settled by the classification team, whose decisions are final.
15. By submitting photos to The Gesneriad Society website, the photographer agrees that submitted photos may be reproduced in all Gesneriad Society publications, including the journal *Gesneriads*, newsletters and social media, with attribution given to the photographer. Use by the public is not permitted, unless permission is requested from and is expressly given by the photographer. The enforcement of any violations of the photographer's copyright will be the responsibility of the photographer.

16. Photos may be submitted beginning on May 1, 2021. The deadline for submission of photos is May 31, 2021.

Submit photos, one per email, to: gesneriadawards@gmail.com.

Section A – Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 01 – New World tuberous species
- Class 02 – New World tuberous hybrids
- Class 03 – New World rhizomatous species
- Class 04 – New World rhizomatous hybrids
- Class 05 – New World fibrous species
- Class 06 – New World fibrous hybrids
- Class 07 – Old World species, excluding saintpaulias
- Class 08 – Old World species, *Saintpaulia* species
- Class 09 – Old World hybrids, excluding saintpaulias
- Class 10 – Old World hybrids, *Saintpaulia* hybrids

Section B – Gesneriads Grown for Ornamental Value Other Than Flowers (fruit and calyces are permitted, but no flowers or buds showing color; a plant should have some special quality of color, texture or growth habit to be entered in this section)

- Class 11 – New World gesneriads
- Class 12 – Old World gesneriads

Section C – Lesser-Known or Seldom Seen Gesneriads (information regarding habitat, source and cultural requirements must be supplied by grower)

- Class 13 – Species in flower
- Class 14 – Species not in flower
- Class 15 – Hybrids in flower
- Class 16 – Hybrids not in flower

Section D – Gesneriads Outdoors

- Class 17 – Gesneriad(s) grown in a garden
- Class 18 – Gesneriad(s) grown in an outdoor planter
- Class 19 – Gesneriad(s) growing in situ/native habitat (information describing where the photo was taken must be included)

Section E – Artistic (gesneriad material list optional)

- Class 20 – Arrangements of fresh-cut and/or dried or treated gesneriad material (title optional; under water arrangements may be entered in this class)
- Class 21 – Arrangements of growing gesneriad material (title optional)
- Class 22 – Plantings of growing gesneriad material (terrarium, tray landscape, natural garden)
- Section F – Arts (names of the gesneriads represented must be provided)
- Class 23 – Photos of parts of a gesneriad (close-ups of flowers, fruit, foliage, etc.)
- Class 24 – Arts and crafts representing gesneriads (information required explaining the medium chosen, techniques and/or processes used in the creation of the entry)

<https://www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2021-convention/>

Plants for Sale

Dave Anderson's plants for sale. \$5.00 each with \$9.00 Shipping.
Contact Dave: Davidanderson1952@yahoo.com



Diastema vexans, *Sinningia* 'Mother of Pearl', *Episica* 'Blue Nile', *Paradrymonia campostyla*, *Sinningia* 'Freckles', *Sinningia* 'Maiden's Blush'



Begonia eleagnifolia, *Nematanthus* 'Cheerio', *Pteris cretica* (fern)

President: Minh Bui
Minhbui82@hotmail.com

Vice-President: Barbara Stewart
Bstew771@verizon.net

Treasurer:
Treasurer's Assistant: Andy Meier
Orchids00001@yahoo.com

Secretary: Carol Hamelink

Newsletter Editor: Donna Beverin
Petaltones@gmail.com or
Donnabeverin@gmail.com

Committees:
Hospitality: Peggy MacDonald
Publications: Donna Beverin
Propagation: Barb Stewart/Donna Beverin
Membership: Peggy MacDonald
Ways and Means: Brian Connor
Show Chairman: Bill Schmidt

Directors:
Donna Beverin
Bill Schmidt
Peggy MacDonald

NCAC website: www.nationalcapitalgesneriads.org
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 You can send your payment to NCAC into our Assistant Treasurer, Andy Meier via PayPal using the email address: ncacotgs-gesneriads@yahoo.com. Please include a note with your Name, Address, Phone number & email address.

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/>

Permission to reprint from Petal Tones is granted to other Gesneriad Society editors, provided that credit is given to the author and the publication.