



PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

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Saturday, August 10, 2024 at our next meeting, Savannah Scollar, as our guest speaker, will be sharing her techniques for creating small terrariums. Location is The Emmanuel Methodist Church.

Savannah age 22 years old opened her shop, Easy Little Plants in the summer of 2023 in Olney, Maryland. She grew up as a super curious ADHD kid who could never stick to just one hobby. She always been super into bugs, fish, reptiles, plants, crafts, and cats. She was really shy at first, but was really driven to become more outgoing. She seriously just love people. Everyone has their own little world!

Savannah will bring a few small terrarium containers for \$4.00 if you need to buy one or you can bring your own container. Any glass container with a lid that is glass or plastic, not cork, wood or metal that would rust, is fine. Lid can be airtight or not. Hobby Lobby sells many sizes and prices: the picture is one that cost \$3.99.



Please bring raffle plants and small plants that can be shared in our terrariums.

Saturday, August 10, 2024 at 10:30 am is an In-person meeting at the Emmanuel United Methodist Church and is also a Zoom meeting for those who cannot attend in person.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87512172911?pwd=HKJkrTFTD3hKdMwK71QuM4KyniggPn.1>

September 14 th	Mini Show at the Church
October 12 th	Primulina culture
November 9 th	No meeting due to MAAVS show
December 14 th	Holiday luncheon and meeting at the home of Johanna Zinn

National Capital Area Chapter
of the Gesneriad Society (NCAC)
Emmanuel United Methodist Church
10755 Scaggsville Road, Laurel, MD 20723
Attention: The Church is a "NUT FREE ZONE"

President's Message

I am looking forward to another in-person meeting after a month break. Our program will be a hands-on workshop, which is always creative and fun.

Looking ahead, it's time to start making decisions about plants to show and designs to create for the show in September. Also, later this year we will be nominating and electing new officers and directors for the next two year term. Active membership is critical for the continued success of our chapter. Hope to see you there.
Barbara Stewart



Barb's *Kohleria* 'Strawberry Shortcake' blooming!

Gesneriad Convention Pictures

“The Gesneriad Convention in St. Louis was most successful with over 250 total entries and about 140 people in attendance. The quantity and quality of exhibits was outstanding.” Jill Fischer



Barb Borleske's hybrid *Primulina*



Barb Borleske's *Sinningia* 'Prudence Risley'



Barb Borleske's *Primulina dryas* 'Naine Argente'



Barb Borleske's *Streptocarpus* 'Heartlands Snow Crystal'



Barb Borleske's *Streptocarpus* 'Iced Pink Flamingo'



Best Lesser known gesneriad: *Glabrella mihieri* - Hung Nguyen *Glabrella* is a genus of gesneriads native to China. It was recently separated from the genus *Briggsia*. The plant thrives in a temperate climate and can withstand occasional freezing temperatures.



Best new gesneriad: *Petrocosmea sericea* 'Ice Shards' - Dale Martens The variegated mutation was discovered and registered in 2021 by Conrad Leighton. It is reproducible only from side shoots, not leaves. He shared a shoot with Dale Martens about 3 - 5 years ago. It prefers cool temperatures below 72 F and is wick watered.



Best Fibrous rooted gesneriad: *Columnea hirta* 'Light Prince' - Josh Higgins



Best in Class:
Petrocosmea nervosa -David Turley, our new NCAC member.



Best in horticulture: *Aeschynanthus humulis* 'Topaz' - Eileen Mc Grath



Best rhizomatous: *Achimenes misera* - Julie Mavity-Hudson



Best Sinningia: *Sinningia* 'Dale's Double Feature'

Foliar Mealybugs Barbara Stewart

I thought soil mealybugs were hard to get rid of, but foliar mealybugs take the prize. First, a disclaimer. This is not an authoritative scientific article. This is just my personal experience with a little research from the web. I love coleus and apparently mealybugs do too. Coleus seem to be mealybug magnets; however, mealybugs like a lot of other plants as well, including gesneriads. Most people would tell me to simply not grow coleus, but I am not there yet. Instead I am just waging war on the mealybugs.

The first step is to know your enemy. Their life cycle is short. The female lays 100-600 eggs, depending on the species, then she dies. The eggs hatch in about 7-10 days and the females get to work sucking juices out of your plants. The males develop wings but have no mouth parts. Their sole purpose is reproduction, and when that job is done they die. Some mealybugs can reproduce asexually, though. The complete life cycle is from 6-8 weeks, depending on the species. You can do the math and see how you can suddenly have an explosion of pests in no time, particularly in warm weather.

There are lots of different methods of control. Mealybugs can be sprayed with a variety of products such as insecticidal soap, pyrethrins, spinosad (Captain Jack's Deadbug Brew), neem oil, and imidacloprid (Bioadvanced products). The problem with spraying is it only works when it hits a bug. Mealybugs are not hard to kill, they are hard to find and kill. Mealybugs are very good at hiding in places that are difficult to see or spray. Repeated treatments are necessary. (I tried a common remedy of using alcohol on a cotton swap to get rid of a few bugs on one plant, and a half hour later I was still at it.) Dish detergent will also work. I am testing out drenching the whole plant in a bucket of water with a squirt of Dawn. I also dunk the pot in case any nymphs are lurking around the soil. I have found systemic drenches to be a good follow up treatment. Bioadvanced concentrate can be used as a systemic drench to kill bugs as they feed and will protect plants for several months.

Some people like to use biological controls, as there are predatory insects that like mealy bugs. However, you need to know what species of mealybug you have in order to get the right predators. This has not been a practical option for me, so I have not tried this method. Hopefully my multi-step approach will take care of the problem and I can enjoy my plants pest free again.

Barbara

Bloomin' Now



Barb Stewart's *Sinningia* 'Anne Crowley' seedling



Close up of Anne Crowley



Barb Stewart's *Sinningia* 'Spanish Skirts'



Close up of Spanish Skirts

Bloomin' Now



Kitty's *Sinningia* (Thad's) 'Party Dress'



Kitty's miniature *Sinningia* in lavender-blue. She would like to know if someone can ID this mini for her!



Kitty's *Sinningia* 'Tomorrow'



Kitty's mini *Sinningia* 'Cindy Baby'

Bloomin' Now



Barb Stewart's *Streptocarpus* 'Stardust Fantasy'



Barb Stewart's *Sinningia* 'Clara Louise x bullata'



Donna's *Sinningia tubiflora* old and new blooms



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Carolyn'

Ikea Baggebo Display Cabinet Make an Indoor Greenhouse

Donna Beverin

Lately I have been thinking about and implementing new ideas on how to display my plants in a more decorative rather than utilitarian manner in the house. So one project I began is growing some plants in my Ikea 'Baggebo' display cabinet. I found out about the Ikea cabinets on Facebook when I noticed postings on my Facebook page. During Covid the hobby of growing plants surged and Ikea cabinets became popular as indoor greenhouses.

There are many **Youtube** videos describing the process of setting up the cabinets, step by step. Many people buy the larger models and have elaborate set ups, adding insulation to seal any spaces, small fans & humidifiers. There are many supplies available to upgrade the cabinets. The possibilities are endless with some using removable wall paper on the back panels and replacing the glass shelves with designer acrylic shelves. To the sides, some add Plexiglas or clear insulation secured using a blow drier to make a more humid environment. Personally, I like the open mesh sides for better air circulation.

I decided to try out the smallest cabinet, made of metal called Baggebo for only \$39. It was a process to assemble the cabinet, but I took my time and succeeded putting it together one nice, spring afternoon on my deck. I did not insulate my cabinet. I am using the glass shelves but added in some magnetic 'spice' racks found on Amazon. I purchased the white variety I learned about on the Facebook page called, **Ikea Greenhouse Club**; however I found the clear acrylic magnetic shelves that allows light to travel to the lower levels below the rack and bought those. The magnets are really strong and I was pleasantly surprised at their quality and strength. Since the Baggebo is made of metal I have put more of the magnetic spice racks on the outside of the cabinets where small plants get ambient light from the cabinet. I am using 12 inch LED lights easily installed after making a space for the cords to get through in the back side of the cabinet. Some hobbyists have put 2, 3, 4, and 5 Baggebo cabinets side by side to make a large, decorative growing areas. It was discovered if you put 3 side by side, removing the sides of expanded metal panels, you can use them as shelves that fit across all 3 cabinets. For under \$25 Ikea also sells smaller table top greenhouses that are good for propagation or display.

I am growing many of my Peperomia collection in mine along with a few gesneriad and begonias. Even without any insulation the humidity stays 60% to 80%. I am really enjoying looking at my plants and rearranging and watering the plants in the Baggebo #1. Yes, I did succumb and have a second Baggebo that I have assembled and put lights in but no plants yet. May take out the lower shelf to make room for my two *Alocasias* and other tall plants that thrive in higher humidity.



Donna's newly assembled cabinet



Donna's cabinet full of plants



3 in a row with panels removed in #2 & #3 to create a wide open space. Panels can be used as shelves to span the width of the cabinet.



More photos on next page. Maybe you'd like to making one for your plant collection ! Right: *Episcia* 'Chocolate Soldier'.



Episcia blooming in my cabinet, a non-stop bloomer.



I have my cabinet set up with Barrina and DWEPTU twelve inch LED lights. Come with 3 ways to install. Using a surge protector power strip, I plug it into a Teckin Smart plug so lights go on and off at the schedule I program in on my phone app. I have 2 lights on each shelf. They sell nice containers to hide the power strips and wiring but have not purchased one yet.

I assembled my Baggebo #2 and installed a few lights but have not put in plants yet. And this is not its final home because I am moving things around in my bedroom where it will end up by itself on another wall. I was excited when I thought to try the magnetic spice racks on the sides. They hold up to 11 pounds on each shelf if adjusted properly but my plants are not that heavy. Besides the ambient light I do have overhead, a 4 foot LED that allows me to grow more plants on my dresser in front of southwestern window. A great video by Kaylen on Facebook's Ikea Greenhouse Club's page showing details of how she set up her 3 Baggebo's.

<https://www.facebook.com/513928616/videos/pcb.1476336819460692/700870131122074>



Bloomin' Now



Dave's *Kohleria* 'Strawberry Fields'



Dave's *Primulina maxtimer*



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Anne Crowley' grown from seed many years ago. I put this pot on my deck in the shade after taking all the stems off to give it a rest. It has been ignored since the beginning of summer. Being in the back of the second shelf it received occasional sprays of water dripping from the top shelf of the plant stand. During the heat wave did not receive much water at all. I went out today and was surprised by this beauty that grew and is blooming rather symmetrically, too! Beautiful pot given to me by Harold Belcher many years ago. Needless to say I needed to give it a big, long drink of water and brought her inside to enjoy!

Wishfully Seeking:

Members can ask for gesneriads they would like to grow and share gesneriad plants they have to share with others, as cutting, rhizomes, seeds, etc. So please email Donnabeverin@gmail.com with your requests.

Barb Stewart seeking:

Chrysothemis pulchella 'Black Flamingo'
Petrocosmea (any)

Andy Meier seeking:

Sinningia speciosa (Florist Gloxinia) 'Periodots Darth Vader'
Streptocarpus 'Samantha'
Variegated *Streptocarpus* leaf.

David Turley seeking:

Paradrymonia
Christopheria xantha (was *Episcia*)
Primulina lutea (was *Chirita eburnea* (yellow form))

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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 \$15 per year. You can send your payment to NCAC 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. National 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/>