

PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

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November 2020



Carol Heimlink's *Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Boolaroo'

Message from the Editor: Donna Beverin

Hello Gesneriad Lovers!

Our weather during this November has been unseasonably pleasant in the 70's with no humidity. Working outdoors has been such a pleasure!

This is the time of year when I am bringing in the summer Sinningias: *S. tubiflora*, *S.* 'Carolyn', *S. aggregata*, *S.* 'Butter & Cream', *S.* Apricot Bouquet, *S.* 'Bananas Foster', and *S. sellovi* 'Towering Inferno'. It is a good time to check for pests and spray as well.

You can allow the stalks and leaves of the Sinningias to die back naturally or chop them off before bringing them indoors. I store the pots in my cool basement without light & water until spring when I see shoots, put them close to lights, begin watering and try to keep the new growth compact as possible. Indoors I have been organizing the plant room for the winter season by cleaning the plant stands, shelf liners, light

Pre-Pandemic MEETING LOCATION:

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

NCAC November meeting is Saturday,
Nov 21, 2020 10:30 AM Eastern Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88375440132?pwd=TnhTE1ocDhVWGV6TDVIWENTUXBhdz09>

Meeting ID: 883 7544 0132

Passcode: 802710

November 21th: Gesneriad Tools & Techniques
December 12th: Zoom program to be announced

To Join or renew your membership to NCAC please send a check to our Treasurer, Andy Meier. His address is located on our Membership list or you can send the editor an email at petaltones@gmail.com. Dues are \$10 per calendar year. Alternatively you can send your payment via PayPal using the email address: ncacotgs-gesneriads@yahoo.com

fixtures, glass terrarium containers and deciding which shelves to use for certain gesneriad and begonia groups. This year I am attempting to paint the walls, as well.

It is also a good time to check the light fixtures and change tubes if using the florescent tube fixtures, which many folks still are and I have a few as well. Mainly I use 5000K LEDs and am happy with them.

This winter I am making a "fiberous rooted" shelf or two. Here I shall grow African Violets, Streptocarpella, small Begonias, Streptocarpus, Primulinas and other fiberous rooted plants in hope of being more dedicated to their watering needs.

When putting together my shelving units I always leave one shelf where the light unit is very close to the shelf that I used for seeds and seedlings. Also at the bottom shelf I usually leave a very large space for large terrariums, tall begonias and gesneriads. My Chrysothemis was grown on the bottom shelf because it grew so tall and wide this year.

The highest shelf I use for displaying plants in bloom where I can see them and enjoy those amazing blooms! Most of my plants are wicked watered. (picture next page)

So I hope to see you at the November 21st Zoom meeting where we are sharing the tools, techniques, tricks, shortcuts and supplies we use for growing our plants. Should be very fun and educational! Stay well!

One of the things we miss at a virtual meeting is the social interaction. Although we are able to have some free discussions, it's just not the same as having a conversation in person. This month, we will have a less formal program where we can share our individual growing tips. This is an opportunity for everyone to get involved. I hope you have sent Donna something that others might find helpful in growing their gesneriads.

Speaking of tips, if you are not a member of the Gesneriad Society, you are missing out on a lot of great information and advice on growing found in the magazine 'Gesneriads' which you receive when becoming a member of the national Gesneriad Society. Dale Martens writes a regular column called "Back to Basics" with a wealth of information, not only for beginners, but for more experienced growers as well. I always find something interesting in her articles that I can use to grow better plants. This is a great way to connect with other gesneriad growers and learn from each other when we can't meet in person. And of course you can order from the national Seed Fund! See attachment to Petal Tones email for a list of available seeds.

Hope to see you this Saturday!



Donna's top shelf of one plant stand that she decorates and displays blooming plants.

Below we have a message from Carol Hamelink who was a member of NCAC when I first joined. I always admired her plants and her knowledge of gesneriads. I am excited to announce Carol has joined NCAC and it will be a pleasure to share her joy and expertise of growing Gesneriads! Welcome back, Carol!

Musings from a Novice Relapsing Gesneriphile

Carol Hamelink

Hello fellow gesneriphiles!

Most of you probably don't know me, but some of you remember me from when my husband Jim and I were previous members of the NCAC of the Gesneriad Society. I was even president of the club, not sure if that was 2007 or 2008, after which I soon kicked the habit.

With this extended isolation period due to COVID and the loss of my husband I am again drawn to the beautiful gesneriad plants to bring the joy of blooming house plants and the social engagement with other gesneriphiles. Although I was previously an avid grower and even received the sweepstakes honor for most blue ribbons when the NCAC hosted the National Gesneriad Convention (07 or 08?), I am once again a beginner.

I've always loved Kohlerias, perhaps my favorite genera, and was delighted that this was the topic covered in the first NCAC monthly meeting I stumbled across. Many thanks to Donna for an excellent summary of growing needs and tips, and to all of you for your contributions. I was again "hooked" and promptly attended the club's swap meet the following week where I picked up a box full of starters, and even some well-developed Saintpaulias. I cobbled together a small plant stand similar to what I did in the past and was growing. Trying to cover all needs, I made one shelf 2 tubes (T8, both warm and cool) and the other 4 tubes with Saintpaulias, Primulinas, and Episcias on top (2 tubes) and Kohleria and Sinningias on the bottom(4 tubes). I didn't keep notes on my growing habits from years past, but it had all seemed so easy then.

In my rekindled excitement I began to search for Kohlerias. A lot of new hybrids have been developed in the 10+ years I have been away.

Continued on page 3

I received a few cultivars from the swap that I had grown previously, Silver Feather and Flirt and some new to me, Beltane and Bud's Little Pig. I've even purchased a few online- Snakeskin and Dale's Copper Penny. I am happy to say that Flirt has taken off, although I see it is much happier on the 2 tube stand. Under 4 tubes the leaves were reaching down, under 2 the leaves are back to normal, there is axial sprouting and several new shoots coming up from the base, and it's looks like the beginning of blooms. Yay!

Bud's little Pig has perked up and happy on the 4 tube shelf. The leaves are a beautiful dark green and new shoots are forming at the base there as well. Unfortunately, Silver Feather (a much loved old favorite) is stagnating. Several of the rhizomes had sprouted, but did not appear to advance beyond that. I was disheartened when one of them died, as apparently, I no longer know how to grow Kohleria, an "easy" to grow genera. I put the pot on top of a tall cup, inches from the lights, I put the pot back in my prop box, but still saw no change. In an attempt to help Episcia seeds germinate, I placed a small pet bed heating pad plugged into my timer to heat during the light hours under the seed pot. This is barely warm to the touch, designed to heat only 12-15 F above ambient air. I only feel a mild heat on the bottom, so I'm fairly confident I'm not cooking them.

Not sure if that is working yet (online says 10 days to 3 weeks for E. germination and the first week in the "cold" may not count). Finally, I decided to try Silver Feather there as well. It's only been 2 days, but I believe I am seeing growth. Perhaps my home setting of 69°F is too cool (did I heat the house warmer in the past?). This is an 8 inch square pad, but I've now gathered Beltane and Snakeskin to this bottom heat luxury as well. Beltane was from cuttings and although they look perfectly healthy, I see no obvious growth even after almost 2 months. Snakeskin also looks healthy, but has many bleached lower leaves (as does Dale's Copper Penny), perhaps common with online purchases. I have yet to purchase temperature monitoring devices for my shelves, but the possibility of results from this small experiment is pushing me in that direction. I have several episcias growing on the top shelf. I thought they were somewhat more sensitive to cold than other gesneriads, but they seem to be flourishing in my winter home temps. Perhaps there is a temperature difference in the top and bottom shelf. Perhaps the heating mat I use to germinate my tomato seeds in the spring could be used under my prop box...

Gesneriads are fun to grow, but can be frustrating when others find them easy and we struggle. I'm glad to see the club is going strong (growing strong!) with many accomplished growers and am eager to hear everyone's tips and tricks. I am reminded by my kohleria adventure that minor differences can have an effect and that everyone needs to find what works for them. For me, more information is welcome.

PS: After hearing that Kohleria could be propagated from leaves I have put some down in a prop box. No sprouts yet, but they have rooted and at least one is growing a rhizome.

Carol Hamelink



Nadya's latest hybridized beauty... a gorgeous yellow Streptocarpus! Congrats!



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Myfanwy' "I love this little plant. The blossoms are simple, but plenty. And unlike 'Roulette Cherry', it is quite compact. The longest leaf on my plant is only 7.5 inches from soil to tip."

BLOOMIN' NOW



Janet Carlton's *Streptocarpus* 'Janet's Intention' enjoying the sun. It's a bi-color hybrid.



Streptocarpus
Ladyslippers Scarlet
© Janet Carlton 2020

Janet: "This Strep I received as a raffle table gift last year. Here is her first bloom. The depth of red is difficult to capture in a photo. It's not a "black" red, but looks somewhat darker than shown here."



Janet: "Although *Streptocarpus* 'Janet's Liz Taylor' did not meet the "no-toss test," she was given a home for the season out on the patio. In mid-October, she's still doing well and producing blooms. This is a sister seedling to 'Janet's Cloudburst,' and both are from a Dale Martens cross."



Janet's *Kohleria* 'Manchu'

BLOOMIN' NOW



Johanna's *Sinningia* 'Party Dress'



Bill Schmidt's *Achimenes* 'Glory'



Kitty's *Streptocarpus* 'Somerset Indigo Ice'



Achimenes henryi

Barb's plant

Johanna's *Achimenes* NOID. Not sure may be harveyi, admirabilis or erecta. Picture of Henryi is from New England Chapter's website, from 2017 show. Concensus, Johanna's plant is *A. henryi*. Update: John Boggan says *A. henryi* does not exist. All look like Admirabilis to him.

JANET'S LITTLE MIRACLE

JANET CARLTON'S

Kohleria Bud's Little Pig – miracle!



6/13/20



← 11/3/20



7/8/20



5/29/20



Janet: "This is the *Kohleria* 'Bud's Little Pig' miracle plant I've been growing from the mush that arrived from a mush rhizome in May! That stuff was "planted" into a solo cup on 5/29, and the sprout finally graduated up to a 3" pot on 10/8, so it's a little over 4 months old. I removed some bottom leaves to allow for planting the stem a bit deeper to allow it to grow more roots to help support and stabilize the plant."



Donna's & Johanna's *Amalophyllon macrophyllum* <http://www.genera-gesneriaceae.at/genera/amalophyllon.htm>

BLOOMIN' NOW



Barb's *Achimenes admirabilis*



Barb's *Smithiantha multiflora*



Barb's *Streptocarpus* seedling



Kitty's *Sinningia leucotricha* 'Max Decking'. "I posted a wish for this plant in Petaltones' "desperately seeking" in 2017. Karyn Cichocki from New Jersey saw my request and sent me a starter plant. Now I have a beautiful specimen with a tuber the size of a lemon. Thanks Karyn! You see, "[Wishfully Seeking](#)" works!"

BLOOMIN' NOW



Jim Robert's *Microchirita* (Phuket species) growing in Florida



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



Bill's *Nautilocalyx* 'Burle Marx'

BLOOMIN' NOW



Donna's surprise: *Achimenes* bi-color NOID



Barb's *Sinningia* NOID



Barb's *Sinningia speciosa* unnamed Regina hybrid x burgundy double seedling (NOID)



Barb's *Streptocarpus* 'Midnight Poison 2'

BLOOMIN' NOW



Barb's *Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Boolaroo'



Barb's *xAchimenantha* 'MM's Jenli'

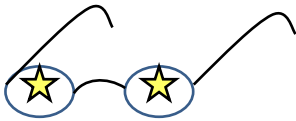


Donna's *Kohleria* 'Peridots Rolo' still blooming



Donna's *Sinningia* 'Prudence Risley', the non-stop bloomer!

Wishfully Seeking to Grow



- Donna Beverin..... *Liebigia speciosa*, *Primulina leprosa*, *Kohleria* 'Emily Roberts'
 Janet Carlton..... *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Damsel' leaf, cutting, plant
 Barry Woolf..... *Sinningia cardinalis* 'Innocent' & *Sinningia* 'Gabriel's Horn'
 Johanna Zinn..... *Pearcea sprucei* and *Nautilocalyx x pictus* 'Jade'
 Nadya Warther-Gibson *Streptocarpus* :fresh pollen from a fantasy type and/or green edged (DEM hybrids)
 Barb Koski *Drymonia variegata*
 Kitty Hedgepeth..... *Streptocarpus* 'DS Rediska' →

NEWS



Ron Myhr's announcement in *gesnerphiles*: "I was posting recently received botanical articles on the GRW, one of which is the first description of a new *Henckelia* species from India, *H. collegii-sancti-thomasi*. Named after a famed educational institution in Kerala, India.

Janet Carlton: "I finally got around to planting some *Kohleria eriantha* (open pollinated) seeds which I received over the summer. They were SO tiny that although I tried to sprinkle in just 5, probably 15 or 20 seeds were actually planted. This is my first attempt at raising *Kohleria* from seed, so keep your fingers crossed. Since I can only manage a few new plants at a time, I used a new technique which requires a lot less room. Rather than planting the seeds in a square deli container, they went into a solo cup with soil mix. That cup was then dropped into a larger clear plastic cup which was covered with cling wrap to keep it moist. As the seedlings start, they'll get moved as necessary." Janet Carlton



BLOOMIN' NOW



Dave's *Sinningia* 'Mark Twain' x self



Barb's *Sinningia* NOID



Kitty's: '*Streptocarpus* 'Roulette Cherry' ... one of my favorites. Its only drawback is that it can become a huge monster if you don't keep the foliage in check."



Nadya's *Streptocarpus* seedling she hybridized!



Send me a question about your gesneriads! Hope you are all growing well! Mr. Gesneriad

BLOOMIN' NOW



Dave's *Sinningia* 'Cindy Ella'



Dave's *Sinningia* 'Spill the Wine'



Dave's *Eucodonia* Noid



Dave's *Sinningia* 'Mini Lavender'



Donna's *Seemannia sylvatica*



Donna's *Seemannia sylvatica*

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', *Episcia* 'Blue Nile', *Paradyrmonia campostyla*,

Sinningia 'Freckles', *Sinningia* 'Maiden's Blush'



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



Johanna's outstanding perennial *Titanotrichum oldhamii* growing in her back yard.

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

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 Treasurer via PayPal using the email address:
ncacotqs-gesneriads@yahoo.com

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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