

# PETAL TONES



Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society

Volume 56 Number 5

May 2025



Dena's *Kohleria* 'Bud's Strawberry Shortcake'



Donna's (GRW) *Sinningia eumorpha* is highly variable with respect to flower color and pattern. There are varying degrees of lavender/purple shading in the flower, often with purple and sometimes yellow markings in the throat. Several collections of the species have been assigned variety names. Of these, only *S. eumorpha* 'Saltao' has become widely distributed, although seed is available of the others and may become seen more often. At one point *S. eumorpha* was very widely used in hybridizing. It was able to cross with micro-miniature species like *S. pusilla* and *S. concinna*, with the resulting hybrids being the first "miniature Sinningias". Examples include *S. 'Dollbaby'* and *S. 'Cindy'*. These proved to be the gateway to the plethora of miniature Sinningias.

## National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society (NCAC)

Emmanuel United Methodist Church  
10755 Scaggsville Road, Laurel, MD 20723  
Meets second Saturday of each month at 10:30am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83667560325?pwd=koQ8d2tp5FyQPD9CvekmeV0olaN8E5.1>

May 10th – Zoom webinar meeting :Growing  
Smithiana & Eucodonia: Two Sisters from Mexico

May 17th Green Spring Gardens Plant Sale

June 14th – In person & Zoom African Violet  
species program by Kitty

July 12th – No meeting due to the Gesneriad  
Society Convention in Parsippany New Jersey

Aug 9th – September NCAC Show preparation

Sept 13th – NCAC Mini Show at the Church  
Oct. 11th – In person & Zoom: How Doug Bolt  
grows his stunning *Streptocarpus*  
Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – Zoom business meeting  
Dec. 13th – Holiday luncheon and meeting

## President's Message from Barbara Stewart

This month. On the 10th we shall only be meeting via Zoom for an excellent webinar on some closely related rhizomatous gesneriads. Then we will be at Green Spring Gardens for the spring plant sale on the 17th. We shall be setting up on Friday for the sale on Saturday. Last year we had robust sales despite the rainy weather. Hopefully, there will be more sun this time. In any case, the more the merrier. Any help in the way of plant donations and time will be greatly appreciated. This is a good way to promote our group and the growing of gesneriads as well as a fund raiser for the chapter (and participating members). (This is also my birthday, so there will be cake!)

# Bloomin' Now



Donna: "This is one of my propagation boxes where I planted some Sinningia seedlings a while ago. The box was sitting on one of my plant shelves where I had a heating mat and three sets of LED lights and I got busy with other projects and basically just watered on occasion. Once this sinningia really took off, I took the lid off the container and it basically sat on the open shelf. I watch it grow, not realizing it could be a *S. eumorpha* that I've been trying to get a white variety of for many years. I hadn't looked at it for a few days but I knew it had buds. And Maria called me and was checking on the *S. euphoria* I gave members at a previous meeting. So I went in my plant room and checked my prop box where I got a huge surprise as it was full of blooms and the plant is humongous. I thought, could this white flowered plant be the *S. eumorpha*? After checking GRW I was sure it must be! And it is only growing in about 2 inches of soil in the bottom of the container. I really believe that plants like growing with other plants and I seem to get great specimens when they're in the prop boxes growing with other gesneriads. Several Kohleria cuttings next to the Sinningia are growing very well also. So I am leaving them be. If you took a seedling at the March meeting you are in for a beautiful plant like I have grown from Mauro's Brazil Plants seeds"



Barb Stewart: *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Polar Canary' "There was a question asked about the effect of temperature on variegated streps, as variegated African violets tend to lose variegation in warm temperatures. Dale Martens, who hybridized this plant, says she has found that temperature does not affect variegation in streps. However, a variegated plant may occasionally put out a plain leaf which may grow aggressively and crowd out the variegated leaves. If a variegated plant produces a plain green leaf, it should be removed quickly to keep this from happening."



Barb's *Eucodonia x Achimenes dulcis*





Barb's unnamed hybrid of Aeschynanthus



Barb's unnamed hybrid of Aeschynanthus closeup



Barb's NOID Sinningia



Barb's unnamed mini Sinningia





Dena's *Saintpaulia* 'Ma's Melody Girl'



Bill's *Sinningia* 'Anne Crowley'



Bill's *Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Ooey Gooley'



Sharon's *Episcia* 'Harmony's Slinky Pink'



Dena's *Primulina* 'Dreamtime'



Close-up of flower

GRW; *Primulina* (*Chirita*) 'Dreamtime'

***Primulina* 'Dreamtime'**. 2000, IR00729, John Boggan, DC. (*P.* sp. 'New York' x *P. flavimaculata*). Cross made Apr. 1996, planted May 1996 and first flowered Mar. 1997. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Stemless basal rosette with opposite leaves to 12 in. across or more. Leaves bright green, sparsely hairy, 6-7 in. long, 3-4 in. wide, ovate with ½ -1 in. petiole, crenate margin, acute tip and cuneate base. Calyx pale green, split, peduncle to 6 in. with 6-8 or more flowers per leaf axil. Corolla salverform, pale yellow, similar to seed parent but slightly larger. First published 1997, *CrossWords* 21 (2) 3. First commercial listing 1999, McKinney's spring cat.

*Primulina* 'Dreamtime' is a John Boggan hybrid, one parent of which is [P. sp. "New York"](#).



*P.* 'Sweet Dreams' is a sibling of [P. 'Dreamtime'](#), a cross of the *Primulina* species ['New York'](#) and [P. flavimaculata](#). Together they illustrate how variable plants from the same cross can be, even when both parents are species. In this case, *P.* 'Sweet Dreams' has a purplish cast to the tube, whereas that of *P.* 'Dreamtime' is more white.

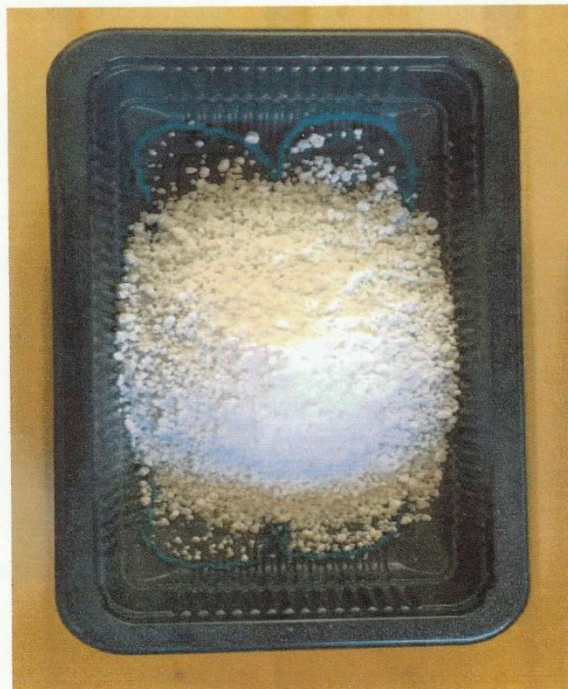
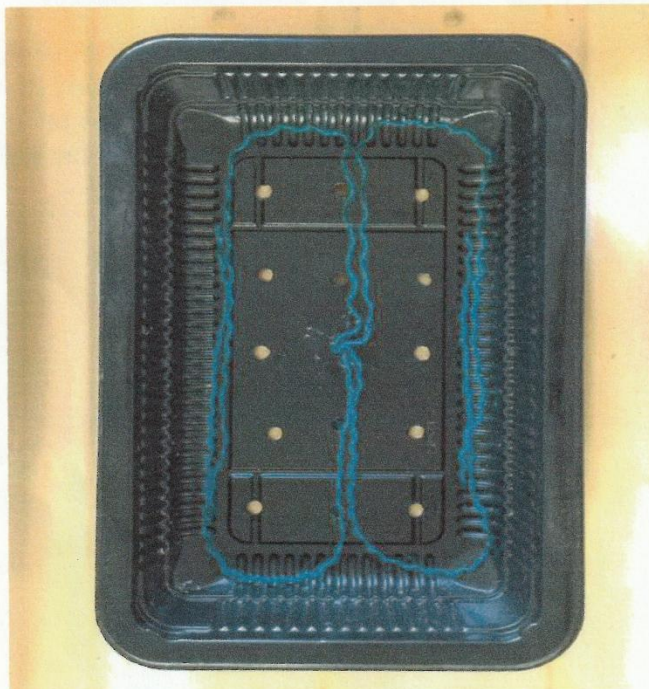


"Some folks from RAVS were interested in how to propagate *Sinningia speciosa* from leaf cuttings. Jay Sespico gave this program with handouts several years ago. I tried it per his instructions and it worked out well. I have attached each page separately. I hope you can use it in Petal Tones."

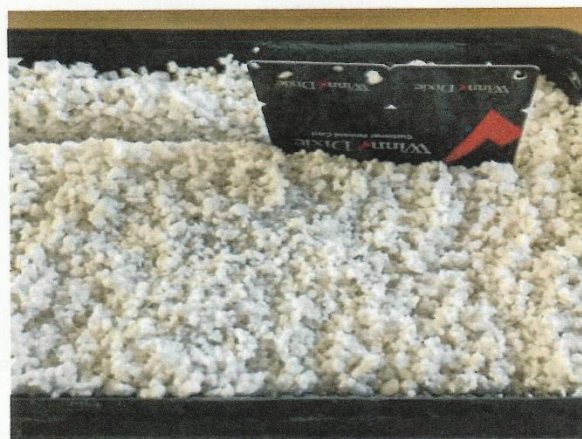
Jill Fischer

Editor: Thanks Jill!

containers. It might be interesting to note that I wick everything. So I'm careful to arrange the wick in such a way as to have the best moisture distribution. Also, I have discovered that you just can't have enough aeration holes for air circulation in the propagation container.



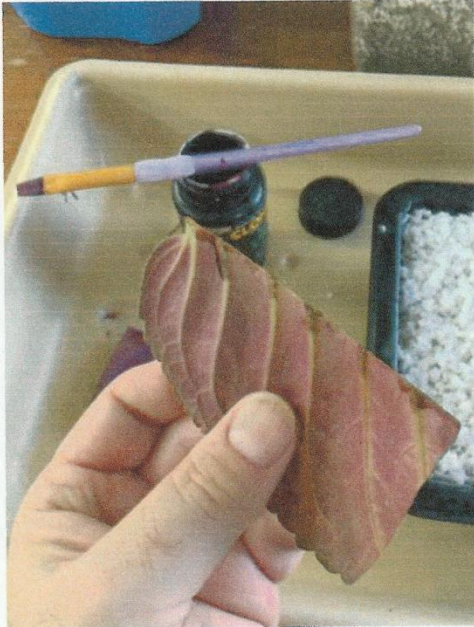
Then I fill the container with perlite. I used to use perlite exclusively. Lately, I have found that if you have a well draining soil mix, that will work just as well. After I water the container and pre-moisten the medium I make deep furrows to receive the leaves. I find that a spare discount card from a food store works really well for this purpose. I suppose your VISA card would work just as well.



Jay Sespico photos



The trickiest part of the whole process is to apply Clonex® to each leaf rib. I find that this method of propagation is hard on the parent propagation material, so the leaf needs a little encouragement to produce roots as soon as it possibly can. I use an artist's paint brush to apply the Clonex® to each rib. Then I give the Clonex® a few minutes to dry.



Jay Sespico photos

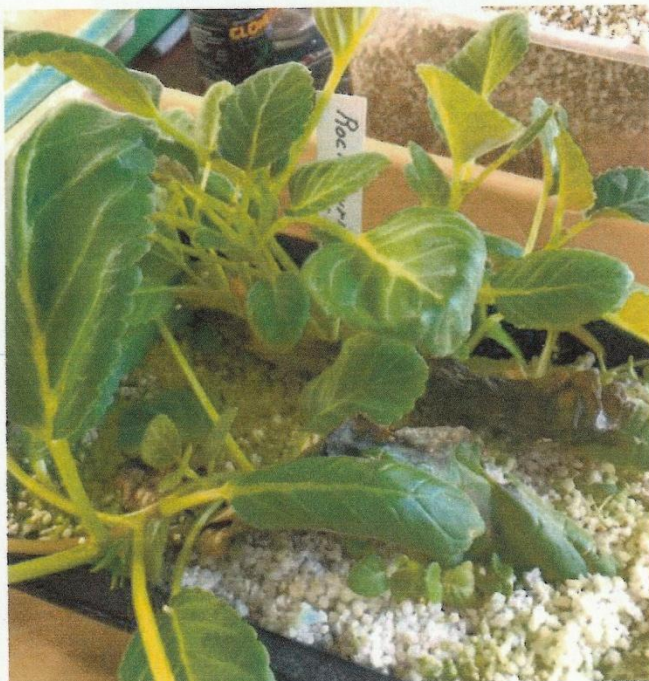
I'm careful to place the leaves as deeply and evenly into the furrows as possible. It is important to get this part right the first time, so I fuss with this part a bit and try not to be in a hurry. This is the way it should look when you're finished.



I cover the container with plastic wrap to keep the humidity as high as possible around the rooting leaves. Yes, it's the same food wrap I would use to wrap a sandwich up in! Have you ever noticed how similar cooking and good plant culture are related? Oh yes, don't forget to put the label inside!



Set the covered propagation container on the growing shelf right under the lights. The propagating leaves need good light to stimulate them into a rapid growth cycle. You've already insured that the leaf will root with Clonex® and covered the container with plastic to insure that the leaves won't dry out. Also, I feed the leaves right from the beginning with 1/4 teaspoon of fertilizer to one gallon of water. The rooting leaves and growing plantlets need good nutrition to produce healthy baby plants. In about eight weeks, this is what happens.



See how the parent leaf has completely spent itself to produce new little plants?

Now they are ready to pot into individual pots.

Jay Sespico photos

Adapted and reprinted with permission (original posts on Gesneriphiles Internet Discussion Group.)



# Gesneriads Gather in the Garden State

The 2025 Convention Team is looking forward to our gathering at The Gesneriad Society's 68th Annual Convention to celebrate our favorite plants. Mark your calendars for **June 29 to July 5, 2025**, and join us at the Sheraton Parsippany Hotel in north-central New Jersey.

We will gather for our **third "recent" convention in New Jersey**: the first in 1988 in New Brunswick; the second in 2002 in Morristown; and now in 2025 in Parsippany. This part of New Jersey is familiar to many of our Gesneriad Society members who have gathered nearby at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum where the local gesneriad chapter members have held gesneriad shows and sales since the late 1970s. Who could forget the Flamingo-Fests?

The convention program will give us many opportunities to gather and share our passion for gesneriads. Exhibitors from across the continent will be entering a **large variety of plants and other entries in the flower show**. We shall also have a **large selection of plants for sale** from commercial and individual growers offering plants, tubers, rhizomes, and cuttings that cannot be found elsewhere. You're sure to find many new additions for your collection. Silent and live auctions also offer unique opportunities for acquiring rare treasures. We shall have **lectures, moderated discussions, and panels of gesneriad growers** to share their

experiences. There are programs to interest all. There will be a **judging school** for new and experienced judges to improve their knowledge of gesneriads. Numerous **volunteer opportunities** abound to help all contribute to our Society, and this is a great way to meet and make new friends!

**Register ASAP!** Early entry to plant sales on Wednesday night from 8-8:30pm is for convention registrants only and is based on your registration number. Plant sales will be open to the public on Friday and Saturday, but the best selection is available for convention registrants earlier.

If you have never been to a Gesneriad Society Convention before, we invite you to **join us in New Jersey!** Bring a wish list of plants, your plant questions, your auction donations, a show entry or several – and be prepared to come away with new friends, your questions answered, and new additions to your plant collection!

## Sheraton Parsippany Hotel

199 Smith Road, Parsippany, New Jersey 07054

Our castle-themed hotel is in a park-like setting with a walking path around a lake. The smoke-free hotel has an indoor and an outdoor seasonal pool, business center, fitness center, and spa. Our contracted guest rooms have mini-refrigerators and complimentary WiFi. Parking at the hotel is complimentary for guests and visitors.

Our convention hotel is located about 24 miles from Newark Liberty Airport. The hotel currently has no airport shuttle service, but other transportation options will be pursued and information posted on our website as convention nears.

For the most direct hotel reservations at convention rates, go to <https://book.passkey.com/e/50845833>. You may also call 1-888-627-8148 and inform Reservations you will be attending The Gesneriad Society Convention 2025.

Our convention rate at the Sheraton Parsippany for traditional rooms (1 king or 2 double beds) is **\$149 including a hot and cold buffet breakfast** (for 2 per room). Add \$10 for triple and \$20 for quad occupancies. For other room options (larger or superior rooms or suites) visit the hotel website or contact <jkatzenste@aol.com>.

To guarantee convention rates, reservations must be received by June 23, 2025 (or earlier if our contracted room block has been filled by that date). Rooms are subject to applicable taxes (currently 14.625%). Check-in time is 4pm and check-out time is 11am. Rates are in effect three days before and three days after our convention week so plan to come early and stay late to enjoy all that the area has to offer.

Amuse Restaurant serves breakfast Monday to Friday from 6:30-10:30am and on Saturday and Sunday from 7-11am. Amuse Bar is open for dinner from 4-11pm.

## Important Changes for Hotel Meals in 2025

**Breakfast** – Note that a complete buffet breakfast is included in the \$149 Sheraton Hotel room rate. Hotel hours for breakfast currently are 6:30-10:30am weekdays and 7:00 to 11:00am weekends.

**Lunch** – Note that the Sheraton Hotel restaurant does not currently provide any lunch service so all convention attendees will need to provide their own lunches. Options include many local eateries (short car or Uber distances); order-in for delivery to the hotel; earlier purchased lunch items can be kept in the mini-refrigerators in all hotel rooms; lunch can be skipped after eating a large breakfast, etc.

<https://gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2025-convention-parsippany-nj/>



## Wishfully Seeking:

Members can ask for gesneriads they would like to grow. Members who have gesneriads to share as cuttings, rhizomes, seeds, young plants and tubers please list those here. So please email [Donnabeverin@gmail.com](mailto:Donnabeverin@gmail.com) with your requests.

### **Barb Stewart seeking:**

*Chrysothemis pulchella* 'Black Flamingo'  
*Primulina brassicoides* 'Marble Leaf'

### **Andy Meier seeking:**

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

### **Jill Fischer seeking:**

*Columnea crassifolia*  
*Gesneria pedicellaris*.

**Bill Schmidt is seeking** *Achimenes* 'Glory'

### **David Turley seeking:**

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

### **Maria Walueff seeking:**

*Columnea* midget (She lost hers during vacation)

**From Church personnel: Please use the Youth Room on our upper level for your meetings until further notice. I'm not sure when the water damage repairs will be completed in Room 3, but will let you know. There will, of course, be no extra charge for using the different space!**

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

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Show Chairmans: Jill Fischer & Barb Stewart

Directors:  
Donna Beverin  
Peggy MacDonald  
Kitty Hedgepeth

NCAC website: [www.nationalcapitalgesneriads.org](http://www.nationalcapitalgesneriads.org)  
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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](mailto: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/>