



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

(articles and photos selected from chapter newsletters, our journal *Gesneriads*, and original sources)

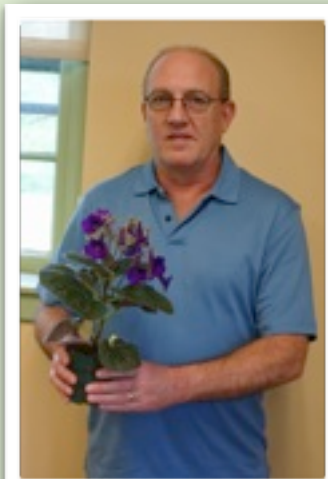
Volume 6, Number 5

May 2015

Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings!** This issue includes photos from the Omaha Flower Show, Tsh Yang Chen's article on the genus *Sinningia*, and photos from the African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Western New York's show.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**

Mel Grice, Editor



Ray Coyle, of Glendale, New York, USA, brought his new hybrid of *Sinningia* sp. "Ibitioca" x *S.* 'Flair' to the Long Island Gesneriad Society May meeting. "I made the cross in May 2008, and got a fair amount of seed, but only one germinated. I wanted to

get a plant intermediate in size and retaining *S.* 'Flair's bloom coloration. In that aspect I failed, but the bloom was interesting. Initially the plant remained small in size. By the fourth year it has gotten to about 9" tall. It grows under two T8 lights, about 10" from the source. It is kept on a humidity tray, gets eleven hours of light per day and is fertilized at every watering at ¼ tsp. per gallon of water. I hand water all my plants. I will now work to propagate it and think of a name for it and register it."



Omaha Flower Show 2015



Kohleria 'Bud's Solar Flare'
Brandon Erikson



Sinningia 'Anita Baldwin'
Brandon Erikson

All photos by Brandon Erikson





Episcia 'Noel'
Brandon Erikson



Kohleria 'Bud's Super Nova'
Brandon Erikson



Sinningia 'Li'l Georgie'
Brandon Erikson

All photos by Brandon Erikson





Streptocarpus 'Bud's Grape NeHi'
Brandon Erikson



Nematanthus gregarius 'Golden West'
MJ Bradley

Episcia 'Country Cowgirl'
MJ Bradley



All photos by
Brandon Erikson

The Genus *Sinningia*

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Brooklyn, New York, USA

(A presentation by Tsuh Yang Chen at the January 2015 meeting of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society)

Sinningia is my favorite genus in our favorite family. One of my first introductions to this genus was the amazing *S. leucotricha* plants in bloom that were exhibited at the GNYGS booth in 1994 at the New York Flower Show at the west side piers in Manhattan. I had never seen the "Brazilian Edelweiss" before and I was amazed at the gorgeous, woolly leaves and stems. [Of course, before I was seriously interested in houseplants, I knew of the common florist gloxinias, but these are so common, they almost do not belong to the "exotic" sinningias we love.] Here is a general introduction to the genus.

Sinningia is a genus in the Gesneriad family that is mostly tuberous – although some species are fibrous-rooted shrubs (e.g., *S. schiffneri*) and some produce only rudimentary tubers. Many species are "stoloniferous," producing satellite tubers (e.g., *S. tubiflora*), and most species are lithophytes (growing on rocks) or epiphytes (*S. douglasii*, *S. cooperii*), rather than truly terrestrial. At least one species, *S. polyantha*, is found growing on a beach in pure sand!

With over 70 species, the genus spans from Central America all the way south to Argentina; however, the largest concentration of species are found in eastern and southern Brazil, where they grow in both the humid Atlantic rainforest and the hilly savannah known as "campos rupestres" (see <http://www.worldwildlife.org/ecoregions/nt0703> for more info on this habitat). New species are still being discovered to this day in spite of the fact that the Atlantic rainforest today covers only 7% of its original habitat (and the campos rupestres are under threat from continuous human activity, such as agriculture, cattle-raising and mining).

To this genus belongs the very decorative common florist "gloxinia" (*S. speciosa*), as well as some miniature species (*S. pusilla*, *S. concinna* and *S. muscicola*), which have been extensively used in hybridization to produce numerous beautiful smaller-sized hybrids. Many plants in the genus make attractive houseplants or garden subjects, and those from southern Brazil and Argentina especially have proven to be hardy to zone 7 (or even 6) in the U.S. In addition to attractive flowers, some species are grown for their beautiful pubescent leaves (*S. leucotricha*, *S. hatschbachii*, *S. canescens*, *S. piresiana*, *S. globulosa*). Succulent fanciers also love many species, particularly those with large exposed tubers or caudices (*S. bulbosa*, *S. macrostachya*, *S. lineata*, *S. sellovii*). Flower color is mostly red, although some species have orange, yellow, lavender-purple, green and white flowers (with or without spots). A few species also have fragrant flowers (in particular, *S. tubiflora*, some clones of *S. speciosa*, *S. richii*, *S. lindleyi* and *S. guttata*).

Some favorite species:

1) **High-light species:** These species are grown on a south window.

S. aghensis: this plant is not commonly found, and it is unusual for the extremely tall flower peduncles, the tallest in the genus. Once established, it produces dark purple flowers if given enough light (which is, desert cactus-level sunlight).

S. sp. "Ibitioca": one of the most attractive species, it tends to be a bit finicky in indoor cultivation, but has extremely attractive soft, light green leaves and purple flowers.

Related to *S. aghensis*, it can grow a large tuber, and also easily produces satellite tubers.

S. speciosa: several clones of this species require higher light, including "São Conrado" and "Cardoso Moreira" (this last one is also noteworthy for growing a tall stem, instead of a flat rosette, and it comes in two color forms, pink and purple).

S. bulbosa: growing on the beach in the city of Rio de Janeiro, it has attractive red flowers, and can grow some of the largest tubers in the genus.

S. tubiflora: easy to grow, makes lots of satellite tubers. It requires strong sunlight to bloom (some members have reportedly bloomed it under lights).

2) Bright-to low-light species: These are some of the species I have bloomed under a 2-tube (40-watts) light stand or on a bright north window.

S. speciosa: some clones are from shady rainforest floors (such as "Domingos Martins") and require less light. I have a clone of 'AC1503' that blooms regularly and comes back from yearly dormancy under the light stand.

S. araneosa: a very attractive plant, with furry leaves and nice bright red flowers.

S. amambayensis: a tall shrub with bright red flowers, but drawbacks with this plant are the very sticky leaves and stems, and persistent dead leaves (in nature, the dead leaves remain on the plant to protect it from the cold).

S. nordestina: attractive smallish flowers (red, with yellow throat, spots), looks like a smithiantha. It comes back every year from small tubers.

S. iarae: lovely cerise flowers, soft foliage. There's also a lighter-salmony clone.

S. eumorpha: various clones, with lovely white flowers, some with more purple and yellow/green in the throat, attractive dark leaves. A favorite of hybridizers.

S. leucotricha: I was somewhat surprised that mine ("Max Dekking" clone) blooms under such low-light conditions, but it can also take higher light. A perennial favorite.

S. rupicola: same as above in terms of lighting. A rare species; leaves are distinctly dark, dull-grayish green.

S. globulosa: lovely furry leaves, unusual flower calyces when in bud (red and furry).

S. defoliata: An anomalous species, it produces an enormous, often-single leaf. It flowers before the leaves appear, on a bare tuber.

S. richii: tends to produce lots of satellite tubers, also fragrant flowers, but needs more humidity for more constant blooming under my conditions.

S. aff. reitzii (Iporanga and nearby area): this is a tall shrub, with pink or red flowers, it can grow a large tuber. It also produces lots of satellite tubers. It is distinguished from the "true" *S. reitzii* (a.k.a. 'Corupá' or sp. 'New Zealand') in that it produces a single flower from the pedicels, whereas *S. reitzii* has two flowers per pedicel.

S. macropoda: lovely species, soft scalloped leaves; in spite of its name, more of a medium-sized tuber than truly a giant one.

S. cardinalis: also can be grown in higher light, but has bloomed in a north window.

S. guttata: lovely shrub with spotted white flowers; some clones are fragrant. It can be finicky to come back from tubers. It can also be grown under shadier conditions.

S. lindleyi: a shrub that can also be grown as a succulent as its stem can get quite thick and large. Distinctive in having green flowers that are fragrant.

S. concinna and *S. pusilla*: mostly require enclosed growing for more consistent blooming.

3) Some recommended hybrids:

S. 'Tinkerbells': as someone at the meeting noted, it's "indestructible." This small hybrid blooms well, comes back from dormancy regularly and propagates easily via cuttings. It was made by a former GNYGS member, Elena Jordan, on her Manhattan apartment windowsill, a cross of *S. aggregata* and *S. concinna*. A must-have plant for all.

S. 'Prudence Risley': a complex hybrid, easy to grow and bloom, with attractive, large red flowers.

S. 'Amizade': a cross of two small, rare and very beautiful species, *S. hirsuta* x *S. kautskyi*, it's much easier to grow than either parent.

S. 'Li'l Georgie': another beautiful miniature, a cross of *S. muscicola* x *S. concinna*. Floriferous and forms multiple crowns.

S. 'Magic Moment': a cross of *S. conspicua* x *S. amambayensis*, it's much more manageable and easier to grow than either parent.

Reprinted from *GloxNews*, the newsletter of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society, Volume 50, issue 6, February 2015, Tshuh Yang Chen, editor. <http://www.nygesneriad.org>

Coming Events



59th Annual Gesneriad Society International Convention

Marriott Oakland City Center, June 30 to July 4, 2015.
Hosted by the San Francisco Chapter of the Gesneriad Society.

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org>



Northeast Regional Show and Sale

Frelinghuysen Arboretum, Haggerty Education Building, 353 East Hanover Ave., Morristown, NJ 07960, October 3 - 4, 2015.

Hosted by the Greater New York, Frelinghuysen Arboretum, and Long Island Chapters.

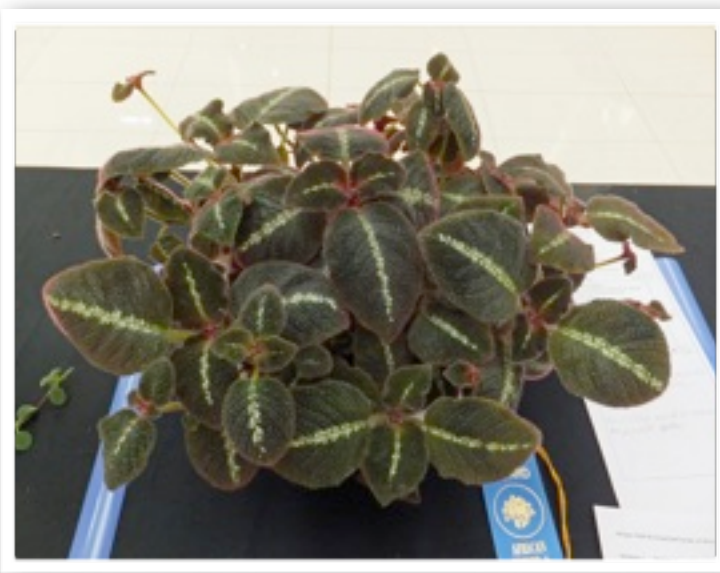
Contact: Karyn Cichocki

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African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Western New York Show Photos



Drymonia species (*cuyabenensis* ined.)
Best in Show
Paul Kroll



Episcia cupreata 'La Solidar Bronze'
Paul Kroll

Mel Grice photos



Above — *Nematanthus* 'Apres'
Elaine Geiger

Right — Natural Garden
Holly Pohl





Sinningia defoliata
Paul Kroll



Sinningia sellovii
Judy Niemira



xSmithicodonia 'Heartland's Joy'
Judy Niemira

Mel Grice photos



Artistic design
Paul Kroll



From the editor —

I have spent two weekends in New York State this month. Thanks to everyone who made my visits so memorable! You will see more photos in future issues. Hope to see many of you at the Gesneriad Society Convention in Oakland, California this summer.

If you have suggestions, comments, or items for possible inclusion in future issues, please feel free to contact me at melsgrice@earthlink.net

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Renewals — Send dues to the Membership Secretary. A Renewal Notice is sent two months prior to the expiration date of your membership. (The expiration date is printed on your mailing label/membership card received with each copy of *Gesneriads*.) Please remit your dues prior to the expiration date to avoid missing an issue as we are not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late payment of dues. Back issues may be ordered from Publications.

Application for Membership — The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

WELCOME — membership in our international society includes quarterly issues of *Gesneriads* — *The Journal for Gesneriad Growers*, a copy of *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*, a packet of gesneriad seeds and a wealth of information about our chapters, flower shows, publications, research, programs and seed fund. Membership begins upon receipt of dues.

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