



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

(articles and photos selected from Chapter newsletters, our journal GESNERIADS, and original sources)

Volume 2, Number 6

June 2011



Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings**! This issue includes photos from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society Show; photos from the African Violet Society Flower Show; Tim Tuttle chatting about buttons, zippers, and stolons on *Petrocosmeas*; and 2011 Convention Speakers and other important information you need to know about the Philadelphia Convention.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings**!

Mel Grice, Editor



Sinningia leucotricha x bulbosa

See more photos from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society Show on the next page.



Sinningia 'Bewitched'

Photos from the Puget Sound Gesneriad Society Show



Chirita sp. "New York"



Sinningia 'Magic Moment'





Sinningia macropoda



Saintpaulia 'Ness' Bashful Blue'



Kohleria 'Pink Shadows'

Photos courtesy of Peter Shalit



Columnea 'Indian Feather'

Gesneriads at the 2011 African Violet Society Flower Show — Cherry Hill, New Jersey, USA



Saintpaulia 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler'



Sinningia 'Venetian Moon'



Saintpaulia 'Cirelda'

Photos courtesy of Mel Grice



Columnea 'Orange Sherbert'



Saintpaulia 'Orchard's Bumble Magnet', *Saintpaulia* 'Jolly Orchid',
Saintpaulia 'Skagit Lil Gem'

Buttons, Zippers, and Stolons

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Most of what we know about cultivating *Petrocosmeas* is still pretty new information. Many, or rather most, of the species we are growing now only arrived on our plant stands and show tables within the last decade. As we are growing them more, and our time spent with these plants is increasing, we're seeing for the first time in many cases just what sort of peculiarities these wonderful *Petrocosmeas* are capable of. Buttons, zippers, and stolons are just three of the manifestations my *Petrocosmeas* have produced in the last few years. Since these may be new to growers, exhibitors, and judges of *Petrocosmeas*, I thought I would discuss them in a short post.

Buttons —

On the right is Dale Martens' photo of a "button" that appeared on her plant of my hybrid *Petrocosmea* 'Keystone's Bantam'. Recently there was a lengthy discussion about this phenomenon on *Gesneriphiles*, when a plant exhibited with such a button was marked down in judging. The judges, who were all expert and seasoned judges, had not encountered this anomaly before. One of them contacted me to ask if *Petrocosmeas* "normally" did this. I've seen several plants of *Petrocosmea rosettifolia* do this during the winter when I was resting them by keeping them drier than usual and cool. *P. 'Keystone's Bantam'* does this often, and since it is hybrid of *P. rosettifolia*, I suspect it inherited this trait from its *P. rosettifolia* parent. I have also seen this once on *Petrocosmea forrestii*. In all cases, the plant produced a new whorl of leaves from the center of the "button" and the plant regained full and attractive symmetry within the rosette in the next cycle of growth.



To the left is my photo of *Petrocosmea* 'Keystone's Bantam' at its first flowering. You can see the center button in the photo. The button appears to be a dense tuft of golden yellow hairs and does not represent poor culture or a rotted or diseased center. It appears to be a normal, although not that common feature of these plants. It is my opinion as a grower and judge that it should not be faulted or penalized in judging unless in the opinion of the judges it detracts from the overall ornamental value of the plant. But, that's just my opinion... and opinions are like noses... everybody has one.

Zippers —

The next phenomenon in growth patterns of *Petrocosmeas* is what I call zippering or zippers. A

healthy plant, usually with a few years of age, suddenly starts to produce a center growth point within the crown of the rosette that begins elongate into a linear growth point. The normally circular rosette can often become more oval in shape, and if grown on, the plant often splits into two or three crowns. Eventually these will totally split or separate producing two or three new crowns. I see this occur often in *P. forrestii*, and its hybrids, as well as the various forms of *P. rosettifolia* and their hybrids. I have seen it occur once in *P. minor* also. In all cases the plants were three years old or more when this happened. See the photo below of *P. forrestii* at five years of age, with a zippered crown, which eventually became three separate crowns. The plant flowered very heavily during this period. It appears to me to be more a factor of age than a cultural flaw.



Petrocosmea forrestii with a zippered crown



Look closely at the plant in the center of the row on the left above... the one with the yellow ribbon. This photo shows a group of *Petrocosmea* 'Short'nin' Bread' entries at a convention show a couple of years ago. The third place winner was a plant with a zippered crown. It beat out some other specimens with more typical round crowns. The judges, in this case, did not penalize this plant for the zippered crown – which again, they should not do unless it detracts from the ornamental value of the entry. Good judging in this case as it demonstrates a panel of judges who were familiar with the habits of these plants. (*P. 'Short'nin' Bread'* is a *P. forrestii* hybrid so it likely got this trait from that parent.)

Stolons –

Stolons are yet another trait of healthy *Petrocosmeas* that we are seeing from time to time. I've seen it on several species and hybrids so it appears to be possible on just about any *Petrocosmea*. I have not identified what might be triggering this trait other than the plant deciding that it wants to make some stolons. I find it a "cute" phenomenon on most Pets.

Congratulations to B. J. Ohme of Perfect Petals for his first place winning entry of *Petrocosmea*. 'Short'nin' Bread' at the



recent AVSA convention in Cherry Hill, NJ. Wisely, the judges recognized the additional ornamental interest that the stolons provided to this entry and gave B.J. his blue ribbon. *P. 'Short'nin' Bread'* is a plant that, in my opinion, is most ornamental when shown in bloom. But traits such as stolons can add ornamental interest. (Photo courtesy of Dale Martens)

So, there they are, the quirks that our *Petrocosmeas* are capable of conjuring up to keep us fascinated and infatuated with them. These may be just the beginning of the wonders we will unlock as we enter into a new era of hybridizing with this genus.

Adapted and reprinted with permission (original post on Tim Tuttle's blog — A Passion for *Petrocosmea*, June 1, 2011 — <http://petrocosmea.blogspot.com>). Check out Tim's blog archive for other informative postings.

2011 Convention Speakers

Paul Kroll, Speakers Chair 2011 pfkroll@roadrunner.com
East Aurora, New York, USA

The lineup of speakers for the Philadelphia convention is an impressive one, as always. We are pleased to have both scientific presentations and those that will be informative and less scientific for those who have requested them. Here is the schedule:

Thursday, July 7 — Lecture #1: "The Phylogenetics of the genus *Petrocosmea*" by Michael Kotarski, Ph.D. (Niagara University, Lewiston, New York). Twenty-eight *Petrocosmea* taxa were used to construct a relatedness tree using five chloroplast and two nuclear genes. These data give us an idea of species distinctions for this group.

Thursday, July 7 — Lecture #2: "Ask the Experts: A Growers Forum". This forum, which features a panel of expert growers from all over North America, will be interactive with attendees. Paul Kroll, as Speakers Chairperson, will moderate this discussion. Learn how different growers grow and produce their spectacular show plants. Questions may be sent in ahead of time to Paul Kroll at pfkroll@roadrunner.com.

Friday, July 8 — Lecture #3: "*Gloxinia* and *Seemannia* (and Who Knows What Else)" by John Boggan (Smithsonian Institution, Department of Botany, Washington, DC). This talk will cover the history, taxonomy, and culture of the genera *Gloxinia* and *Seemannia*, touching a bit on hybrids and hybridizing potential in these genera as well as their potential as bedding and container plants.

Saturday, July 9 — Lecture #4: "Genetic Diversity in *Sinningia speciosa*: History and Origins of the Florist *Gloxinia*" by David Zaitlin, Ph.D. (University of Kentucky). This presentation summarizes the results of molecular genetic research conducted over the past several years. Cluster analysis has shown that (1) there are at least three distinct genetic lineages within *Sinningia speciosa*, (2) *S. macrophylla* is included in one of the lineages, and (3) the cultivated "gloxinias" included in the study all group with wild plants from around the city of Rio de Janeiro. Also to be covered are hybridization studies that implicate *Sinningia guttata* as the source of the peloric (upright and symmetrical) flower trait seen in modern florist *gloxinia* cultivars.

Appeared originally in *GESNERIADS* Vol. 61, No. 2, Second Quarter 2011, Jeanne Katzenstein, editor. Keep informed about *gesneriads* by becoming a member of The Gesneriad Society and receiving our quarterly 56-page journal.

Gesneriad Hybridizers Association at Convention

Everyone is welcome to join us at the GHA meeting Wednesday evening from 8:15 to 10:00 p.m. to hear Jon T. Lindstrom who is an associate professor in the horticulture department at the University of Arkansas where he teaches two plant materials courses as well as plant propagation. His research area encompasses ornamental plant breeding and evaluation. With gesneriads, he and his students focus on *Sinningia*, especially on hybrids that exhibit winter hardiness in Zone 7 and south. Releases from his breeding program include *Sinningia* 'Arkansas Bells', *Sinningia* 'Arkansas Empress', *xSinvana* 'Mount Magazine', and *xVanvana* 'Harlequinade'.

Convention 2011

The Gesneriad Society's
55th Annual Convention
Loews Philadelphia Hotel
1200 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA, USA
July 5-9, 2011

Hosted by the Liberty Bell Chapter

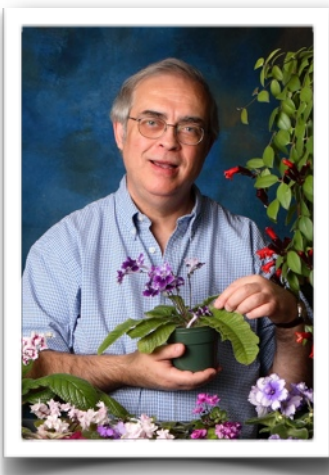
Flower Show and Plant Sales
open to the Public with FREE admittance
Friday, July 8 — 9 AM to 5 PM (sales)
2 PM to 5 PM (show)
Saturday, July 9 — 9 AM to 12 PM (sales)
9 AM to 3 PM (show)



Parking information for day-trippers:

Park America Garage for Convention Parking —
Special all day rate (not overnight) for Friday \$8; Saturday regular rate is \$8.
The garage is located about a half-block down 12th Street across from the hotel.
Mention The Gesneriad Society to get the rate on Friday.

If you are registered for convention, make sure you check your email for important convention information, including the special discount coupon for overnight parking at Park America!



From the editor —

The July issue will probably be later than usual because of the Philadelphia Convention. Look for photos in the next issue.

See more Convention information on the Society's website www.gesneriadsociety.org. Please continue sending photos and articles. If you have suggestions, comments, or items for possible inclusion in future issues, please feel free to contact me at editor.gleanings@gesneriadsociety.org.

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Membership and Changes of Address

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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 on the back cover 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, Slide Programs and Seed Fund. Membership begins upon receipt of dues.

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I wish to make an additional tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

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Students and Speakers Convention Fund

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