



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 3, Number 1

January 2012



Welcome to another year of **Gleanings!** This issue includes photos I took while visiting Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, photos from Streptocarpus hybridizer, Bob Counsell, and Dale Martens chats about growing gesneriads from scales.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**

Mel Grice, Editor



Josh Heath sent these photos of *Nautilocalyx* sp. aff. *ecuadorensis* grown in his larger grow chamber under HO T5 lighting. "The plant is roughly 16 inches (40 cm) tall and produces about a bloom a day. So far, I think this one is my favorite *Nautilocalyx* species that I'm currently working with since it gets to a nice large size and is quite attractive both in foliage and bloom."



A Visit to Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses



Pat Hancock and I had a wonderful visit this fall with Paul Sorano at Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses. We were treated to behind the scenes access to areas the public does not usually see. I thought you might enjoy a glimpse of how they grow to perfection a wide assortment of gesneriads.

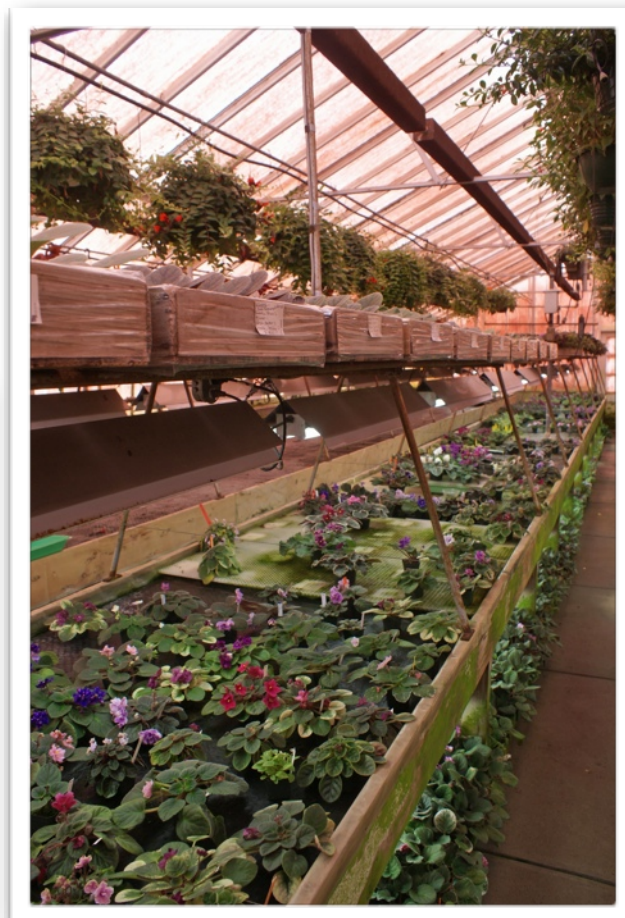
Mel







Plants are grown on capillary mats covered in black plastic with holes punched in them to allow the plants to soak up the correct amount of moisture.





(Above) Each employee has his/her own work station for handling cuttings and potting.

(Right) Several varieties of *Streptocarpus* leaves are propagated in the same wooden tray with orange markers "fencing" in each variety. White labels identify each variety.

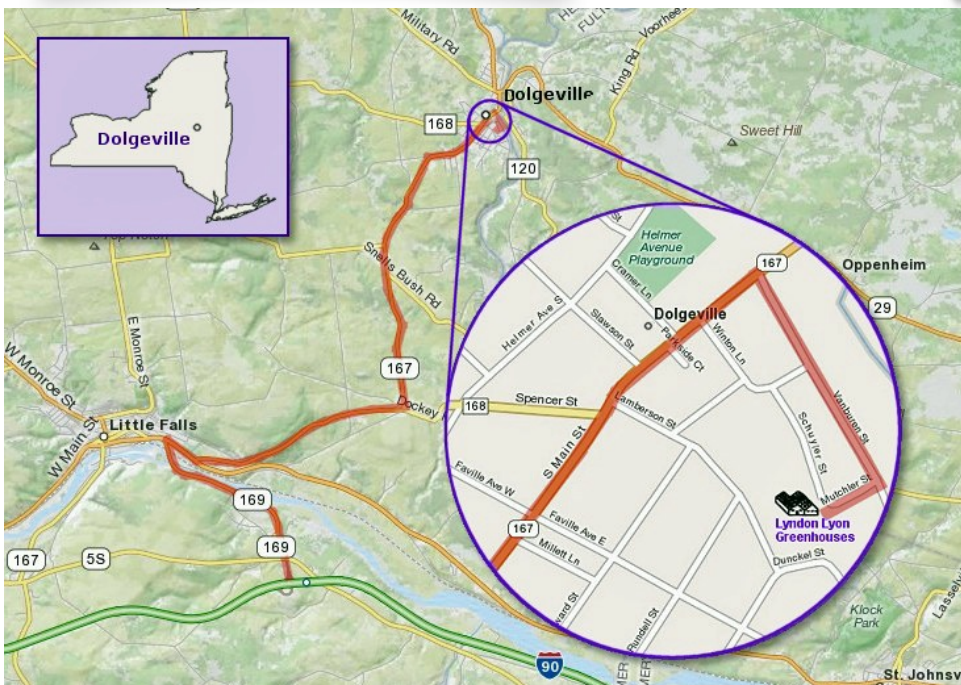


(Below) Paul Sorano discovered that inverting every other plastic pot in the tray allows for adequate spacing between young *Streptocarpus* plants.





Paul Sorano showed us how he hybridizes new varieties with just his pocketknife and his thumbnail. He cuts open the pollen sacks and places pollen on his thumbnail. Then he transfers the pollen to the stigma of another flower. (Of course, the red flower on the right would still be attached to the plant.)



Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses is located in East Central New York, in the foothills of the beautiful Adirondack Mountains, just 10 minutes off the New York State Thruway (Interstate 90).

PO Box 249
 14 Mutchler Street (for GPS users)
 Dolgeville, NY 13329-0249
 Phone: 315-429-8291

www.lyndonlyon.com

Winter shipping is available.

Streptocarpus photos from Bob Counsell

Weston-Super-Mare, England

counsell14@wellsea.fsnet.co.uk

I seriously started hybridizing in 2008 after being enthused by Dale Martins' exploits. She never seemed to stop dancing. My first hybrids were pretty but not different enough. My idea was to produce compact plants with a high flower count. After creating hybrids such as *Streptocarpus* 'Somerset Lavender Dream' and *Streptocarpus* 'Somerset Toledo', I started to use a *Streptocarpus lilliputana* hybrid – *Streptocarpus* 'Fernwood's Jimminy Cricket' and then things started to happen. The best cross was *Streptocarpus* 'Salmon Sunset' x *Streptocarpus* 'Fernwood's Jimminy Cricket' which produced some very compact plants which after two years were still in 12cm pots. They produced plenty of flowers with regular feeding with liquid tomato fertilizer at 1/4 strength.



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Lavender Dream'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Toledo'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Cerise Sunset'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Dawn's Light'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Jimminy's Delight'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset White Lilac'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Sunshot'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Summertime Blues'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset New Dawn'



Streptocarpus 'Somerset Violet Gem'

Back to Basics: Growing from Scales

Dale Martens <dalemartens@mchsi.com>
Sherrard, Illinois USA

I'm reflecting on the fun at the convention in July. I showed some photos at the GHA meeting of new *Smithiantha* hybrids that I grew from the individual scales of rhizomes. Afterwards several people asked me how I did it.

My objective was to take rhizomes that had recently gone dormant and would probably not sprout for another three to four months and get some plants from them to bloom "off season" in the spring rather than their usual blooming time of summer to fall. So far I've been successful getting plants from individual scales from all sorts of gesneriad genera. I got a blue-ribbon-winning show plant from *Diastema latiflorum* by sowing scales at the end of December and the show was at the end of March. Keep in mind that scaly rhizomes consist of scales that are modified leaves. Scaly rhizomes are often produced underground by some gesneriads to help the plant survive unfavorable conditions such as drought. Scaly rhizomes can be very long which means they travel to expand the area where the plant can

grow. Sometimes scaly rhizomes can be produced above ground in the axils of the leaves.



Smithiantha rhizome section and individual scales

First of all, clean the whole rhizome. Then decide how many plants you are willing to grow because most of the scales will give you plants. See the first photo that shows a few scales removed from a large *Smithiantha* rhizome. The scales are sprinkled on top of a moist, not soaking wet, soilless mix that has extra vermiculite and perlite added. Do not use fertilizer, as that will cause

algae to form on the surface of the mix. It's best to use a container with a clear lid for extra humidity. Do not put the container in direct sun. Within three weeks sprouts will emerge. See the second photo and you can barely see roots are also emerging from the pointy tip where the sprouts are. I wait until the sprouts are about an inch tall before placing the new plantlets in another enclosed container. I use a greenhouse tray with a lid and plant each young plantlet slightly above where it emerged from the scale. Wait two weeks. Then remove the bottom two leaves and pot the plant up to the next lowest set of leaves. If it happens to be leggy, then take off the bottom four leaves and bury the stem up to the next lowest set of leaves. Wait a week and then slowly acclimate the plants to room air. When the plant is potted in its own pot, that's the time to start using fertilizer at whatever rate you use for your other gesneriads.

Keep in mind that often plants grown from scales will not be as large or tall as those grown at their "normal" sprouting time from a whole rhizome. Because I grow on plant stands, I consider shorter plants to be a bonus!

This article appeared originally in GESNERIADS Vol. 61, No. 4, Fourth Quarter 2011, Jeanne Katzenstein, editor. Read other interesting articles like this about gesneriads by becoming a member of The Gesneriad Society and receiving our quarterly 56-page journal.



Plantlets emerging from individual scales

JUDGING SCHOOL

The Northern Illinois Gesneriad Society and The Gesneriad Society invite you to attend our Judging School on May 20, 2012, at 3 S 472 Batavia Road, Warrenville, Illinois. It will be presented by Dale Martens, hybridizer, lecturer, and Director of the Gesneriad Hybridizers Association. Learn how to judge this diverse and beautiful plant family. Registration forms are available, or contact Bonnie Formella at 815-434-0545 or at fornel8@aol.com



The photo on the left appeared in the December issue of *Gleanings*. It is actually *Monopyle ecuadorensis* instead of *Monopyle grandiflora* as previously captioned.

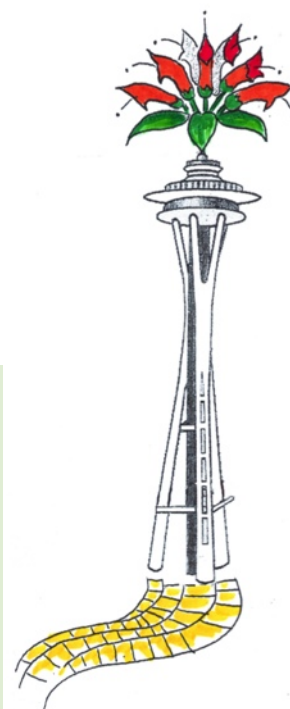
Jeremy Keene
PhD student, Plant Systematics (Gesneriaceae)
Ohio University
Department of Environmental and Plant Biology

2012 Convention, Seattle, Washington

July 2 - July 7, 2012
Gesneriads in the Emerald City

Register today at:

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/conv2012/index.htm>





From the editor —

I can't believe that this is the beginning of the third year of publication for **Gleanings**. It seems like only yesterday I started work on the first edition.

Please continue sending 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.

Happy New Year to all!

Mel

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Paul Susi, Development Chairperson
117-01 Park Lane South, Apt. C1A, Kew Gardens, NY 11418
For additional information, contact: <development@gesneriadsociety.org>.

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The Gesneriad Society Membership Secretary, Bob Clark,
1122 East Pike Street, PMB 637, Seattle, WA 98122-3916 USA

Changes of Address — Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary <membership@gesneriadsociety.org> 90 days prior to moving to avoid missing an issue. The Society is not responsible for replacing issues missed because of late notification of address changes. Back issues may be ordered from The Gesneriad Society Publications.

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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