



# Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 4, Number 10

October 2013

Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings**! This issue includes photos from the New England Chapter Show, my article on *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión', Quentin Schlieder's experiences growing *Sinningia conspicua*, and Ben Paternoster's photos of *Titanotrichum oldhamii*.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings**!

Mel Grice, Editor



Dennis Krumb from near Cincinnati, Ohio, USA sent this photo (right) of *Sinningia hirsuta*. The photo exhibits nicely why the name was chosen.



# Photos from the New England Chapter Show



*Sinningia* 'Peridots Sand Pebbles'  
Best in Show  
Jim Roberts



*Sinningia* 'Amizade'  
Jim Roberts



*Sinningia pusilla* 'White Sprite'  
Mary Bozoian



*Chrysothemis pulchella* (dark form)  
Andrew Norris



*Achimenes* 'Santa Claus'  
Judy Becker



*Petrocosmea barbata*  
Lilya Veneziano

All show photos by Jim Roberts



*Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Cora'  
Judy Becker



*Columnnea calotricha*  
Bob Stewart



*Aeschynanthus* 'Fireworks'  
Judy Becker



*Primulina* 'Diane Marie'  
Stuart Hammer



*Saintpaulia* 'Optimara Everglory'  
Andrew Norris



"Grandfather Frog's Common Sense"  
arrangement by Marcia Kilpatrick



*Lysionotus pauciflorus* var. *ikedae*  
Bob Stewart



*Streptocarpus* 'Himera'  
Jim Roberts



*Primulina wentsaii*  
Andrew Norris



*Primulina* 'Naine Argente'  
Ann Tanona

# *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión'

Mel Grice [melsgrice@earthlink.net](mailto:melsgrice@earthlink.net)  
Englewood, Ohio, USA

*Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión', a New World member of the Gesneriad family comes to us from Central and Southern Mexico. This plant is a small rhizomatous herb with woolly stems and leaves. By woolly, I mean that it has a heavy coating of red hairs on the stems and the underside of the fuzzy, olive-green leaves. *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión' has tiny lavender and white flowers arising from the leaf axils on slender, wiry stems. I recommend growing this plant for the striking foliage and not for the flowers.



I have always wondered who was responsible for distributing this selection of *Eucodonia andrieuxii* and after consulting with several friends traced it back to the original source. Dr. Miriam Denham and her husband Dale received rhizomes in 1963 from Thomas MacDougall who collected it in Mexico: Estado Oaxaca; Distrito Juchitan, north of Zanatepec. The Denhams distributed the plant as #540. Dr. Denham says, "I believe it was Claire Roberts who phoned me and asked for a fancy name for #540. I told her 'Woolly Morrión'. Morrión I had chosen for the shape of the corolla. A morrión (pronunciation with the "ó" is More-ee-own) was a metal Spanish open helmet, 16th and 17th century, without a visor – somewhat resembling a hat with a brim. And the woolly is obvious for the hairs."

*Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión' produces scaly rhizomes under the soil and above the soil coming from leaf axils when conditions are favorable. Scaly rhizomes often

resemble pine cones and help the plants remain alive during the dry season in the wild. They perform the same function as a tuber or bulb so DO NOT discard the pot if the plant looks dead – it is only resting or dormant.

To propagate Eucodonias, I begin by placing a wick in the bottom of the pot, since eventually I will wick water the plants once roots are well established. I plant the rhizomes in a four inch pot (for three rhizomes), laying them on their sides approximately one inch deep in a loose, well-drained medium. Some rhizomes are several inches long, so I break them into about one half inch sections and use a larger pot depending upon how many sections I have. Once planted, I place the pot under a clear plastic dome on a polyester felt mat that is wicked to the tray below it.

Eucodonias seem to require warmth to start, so I place the pot on a top shelf of the light stand just two or three inches from a T-8 or T-5 light bulb. The pots are gradually lowered away from the lights as the plants grow. Once the plants reach about three inches tall, I PINCH, PINCH, PINCH like you would an African violet trailer. Leave one or two leaf nodes and pinch off the growing tip to encourage branching. The more branches you have, the more floriferous the plants will be. The tip cuttings that you pinch off may be rooted individually in a Solo cup or, if you have numerous cuttings, they may be placed in a larger pot placed under a dome for a few weeks to root. All these cuttings should eventually produce a scaly rhizome. WARNING – Before you know it, your three rhizomes that you began with could increase exponentially into more rhizomes than you have room to grow.

A crucial factor in rhizome production is keeping the plants consistently well fed and watered. If excess drying occurs too early in the growth cycle, the plants may go dormant

prematurely without producing any rhizomes for next year. That is why I wick water and also try to have two or more pots of a variety growing so that I won't lose the variety if I occasionally forget to fill a tray with water.



Reprinted from *African Violet Magazine*, Volume 65, No. 2, March 2012, Ruth Rumsey, editor.

# Sinningia conspicua at Last!

Quentin Schlieder [gcsjr@comcast.net](mailto:gcsjr@comcast.net)  
Smyrna, Delaware, USA

I have made several (mostly unsuccessful!) attempts over the years to grow *Sinningia conspicua*, a tuberous gesneriad native to Santa Catarina and Paraná States in Brazil where it grows in humus and among rocks in semi shady places. Unfortunately, it seems to get neglected and goes dormant (on occasion permanently!) and has never flowered before. Therefore, I was thrilled as I was culling plants decimated by the heat in my basement this summer to discover that it was budded and ready to flower. Perhaps my success this year can be attributed to growing it in an Oyama pot so that the plant never dried out to the point of wilting.

The species was initially named *Biglandularia conspicua* by Berthold Carl Seemann (1825-1871) but was transferred by Nichols to the genus *Sinningia* in 1887. The species name, *conspicua* ("conspicuous"), is derived from the Latin word for "see". It is sometimes referred to as Brazilian Foxglove.

This wonderful Brazilian gesneriad usually grows into a small clump to eight inches tall by one foot wide. The fuzzy, green, hand-sized leaves form a rosette that is topped from early summer until fall with large, pale yellow flowers, highlighted by cinnamon runway-like streaks to guide pollinators into the base of the flower. The flowers have a light, lemony fragrance. According to Michael Kartuz, the fragrance is reminiscent of Lily of the Valley. *Sinningia conspicua* has been overwintered successfully at Plant Delights Nursery in Raleigh, North Carolina in well-drained soil in semi shade.



*Sinningia conspicua*  
grown by Ben  
Paternoster.

Paul Susi photo

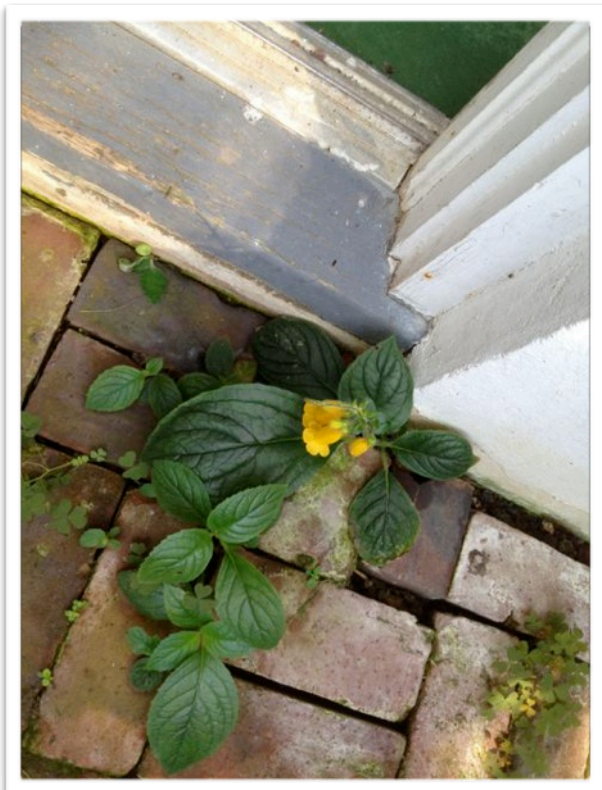


*Sinningia conspicua* is unhappy when the soil dries out. As with some other species, most notably *Sinningia warmingii*, the first symptom is leaf curl. If caught in time, after being watered, the plant recovers in a day or so. It is one of the first *Sinningias* to go dormant in autumn and its dormancy appears to be required prior to a new growth cycle.

*Sinningia conspicua* had been used by the late John Lindstrom in his plant breeding program. One of the more popular hybrids is x*Sinvana* 'Mount Magazine' (*Sinningia conspicua* x *Paliavana tenuiflora*). Another hybridizer, Jim Steuerlein, successfully crossed a micro species (*Sinningia muscicola*, formerly *Sinningia* "Rio das Pedras") and *Sinningia conspicua* creating the hybrid *Sinningia* 'Toad Hall'. Others, including Ruth Coulson, Peter Shalit, and Dan Tomso, have also used this species for hybridizing. It provides its progeny many of the good qualities that *Sinningia eumorpha* imparts, with the additional possibility of fragrance.

I have discovered that many of the species of *Sinningia* have performed well outdoors in summer and then overwintered on my sun porch in an area that often gets down to 40° F. Based on the experience of Plant Delights Nursery with this species, after my plant finishes blooming, I plan to relegate it to this regimen.

Reprinted from *The Newsletter of the Delaware African Violet and Gesneriad Society*, Volume XV, No. 1, September 2012, Quentin Schlieder, Editor.



Ben Paternoster sent these photos of *Titanotrichum oldhamii* growing on the floor of the greenhouse (above) and in the garden (right). The plants survived the winter cold of Long Island, New York, USA.





**From the editor —**

It will soon be time to get my plant rooms ready for the coming winter. For me, this means taking cuttings of all of the "extra" plants that have been summering on tables in my garage work room (the place where my van needs to be kept this winter).

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

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