



# 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 12

December 2013

Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings**! This issue includes photos from the Mid Atlantic African Violet Society Show, The Gesneriad Society Annual Appeal, Paul Lee's tips on growing and transporting a large show plant, and Bob Stewart's description of streptocarpus abscission zones.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings**!

**Mel Grice**, Editor



Patrick Forgey from near Seattle, Washington, USA sent this photo of *Kohleria* 'An's Nagging Macaws' that originated from one of the tubes of kohleria clones distributed by Steven McCulloch at the conclusion of his lecture on tissue culture cloning during the 2012 Gesneriad Society Convention in Seattle. The story of growing these clones was printed in the 2nd Quarter, 2013 issue of *Gesneriads*.



# Photos from the Mid Atlantic AVS Show

Photos courtesy of Karyn Cichocki



*Gesneria* 'Yellow Bird'  
Best Other Gesneriad  
Karyn Cichocki



*Diastema comiferum*  
Ralph Robinson



*Primulina longgangensis*  
Sue Hoffman

# The Gesneriad Society 2013 Annual Appeal

Each year The Gesneriad Society undertakes an annual appeal to help support gesneriad research and education through its special funds. This year we are making a special effort to raise funds for the Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund.

[The Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund](#) (NDSSEF) supports the education of students interested in the Gesneriaceae. Our goal is to increase the Fund's principle in order to generate income sufficient to support two annual scholarships.

The Sleeth Scholars for 2013 were Melissa Johnson of California and Oscar Humberto Marin Gómez of Colombia.

Melissa Johnson writes:

Prior to receiving the Sleeth Scholarship from The Gesneriad Society, I was uncertain that continuation of my work regarding the role played by geographic isolation and time in the divergence of island *Cyrtandra* would be possible, given the existence of relatively few graduate-level research grants that award funds sufficient to allow field work in remote foreign areas. Information on Fijian *Cyrtandra* will provide an intriguing comparison with the existing data on Hawaiian species, shedding light on evolution of the genus across the Pacific Basin, while also providing baseline data on life history characteristics that can be used to inform conservation of these rare and beautiful plants.

Oscar Humberto Marin Gómez writes:

Being chosen as a Sleeth Scholar has been an important stimulus to my professional training, not only because it is recognition of me as a researcher but also because this economic support has allowed me to develop my project on pollination of *Columnea*. I am sure that the results that I am going to obtain will increase the knowledge about these plants. This financial assistance will allow me to continue studying them in the future and make additional contributions to the field of gesneriad research.

*Remember:*

- The funds are supported only by donations
- Your donation will ensure that the funds remain healthy and growing
- Your donation will help train the next generation of gesneriad researchers

Donate [online](#) now by credit card or PayPal (you can paste this link into your browser:

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/Donate/donatespecial.htm> ) or you can use the form on page six to send your donation to my attention at the address on the form.

On behalf of the members of the Board of Directors and all the other volunteers who help keep The Gesneriad Society vibrant, organized, and growing, I thank you for your support and wish you the very best for the year ahead.

**Paul Susi**

Development Chairperson  
The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

The photos on this page and the following were contributed by Oscar Humberto Marin Gómez of Colombia, one of the two Nellie D. Sleeth Scholars for 2013. Mr. Marin Gomez is using his scholarship funds to do extensive field work to study *columnnea* species in the Río Nambi Natural Reserve, Nariño, Colombia, and to collect data on the floral visitors, efficiency of pollinator species, and floral biology in the reserve. Read more about Marin Gómez's work, and that of Melissa Johnson, the other Sleeth Scholar, in the first quarter 2014 issue of *Gesneriads*.



*Columnea laciniata*



*Columnea filifera*



*Columnea longinervosa*



*Columnnea* sp. nov.





*Columnea gigantifolia*

## The Gesneriad Society, Inc. 2013 Annual Appeal

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# The Growing and Transportation of a Large Show Plant

Paul Lee [evelyn.lee2@yahoo.ca](mailto:evelyn.lee2@yahoo.ca)  
Fergus, Ontario, CANADA

At the Toronto Convention I was asked how I managed to get such a large plant to the show. This is an explanation of what I did to grow my *Sinningia* 'Flamenco Apricot Bouquet', and to transport it.

The dormant tuber was stored for the winter in the basement, under a table, as it was the coolest location I could find. In March I noticed 4 cm of growth coming from the tuber. I left it in the same position, still in low light.

In the beginning of April I heated a small area of a greenhouse to grow a few annuals and vegetable plants for transplanting outside later. Having a heated sunny area, I then moved my sinningia out into the greenhouse, where I placed it in a shady place so it could acclimatize to the brighter conditions. The only fertilization I had done to this point was a generous helping of compost applied in March. Now that it was in the brighter light, I used fish emulsion and a little liquid seaweed as fertilizer. I also sprayed it with potassium silicate several times. This is to prevent powdery mildew, and it is an essential



Paul Lee photo



mineral to strengthen the cell walls of all plants. This makes the plant stronger and more robust, allowing it to be transported with less damage. The spraying of this material does not leave any marks on the leaves as far as I could see, and spraying the silicon is the most effective application method.

By May the plant was still in an oval pot which was becoming round because of the large tuber. I moved it to a 30cm pot using a Pro-mix soilless mix plus compost and ground stone dust in the proportion of 3:1:1/8. I continued feeding two or three times with fish emulsion.

Transporting a large plant can be a

logistical nightmare, especially in a small car. I started by finding a cardboard box big enough to hold the pot. but not too large to allow it to slide around. I then lined the box with a large plastic bag as shown in the picture. I put the plant pot in the box and pulled the plastic bag up around the plant part way, which allowed the plant to be supported around the lower area. I then put the plant in the front seat using a towel at the back of the box to keep the box as level as possible. The car was already totally filled with boxes of "goody bags" for the Convention. This did not allow me to adjust the seat to accommodate the plant and box. The plastic bag prevented the leaves from rubbing on the seat material and damaging them, but the tips of the stems were so long that they touched the windshield. They actually bent, but once I got the plant to our hotel room, the stems straightened up, as every one could see at the show. Coming home the plant did not get the same pampering. I had a lot more room in the car.



Paul Lee photo



Paul Lee photo



Julie Mavity-Hudson photo

Reprinted from the newsletter of the Toronto Gesneriad Society, Volume 37, number 8, October 2013, Stan Sudol, editor.



# Streptocarpus Abscission Zones

Bob Stewart [aeschynanthus@verizon.net](mailto:aeschynanthus@verizon.net)  
Stow, Massachusetts, USA

If some of the leaves on your streptocarpus plants are starting to look like the picture below, with a light green end divided from the rest of the leaf by a sharp boundary, don't worry. You are not killing your plant.

The home territory of these species has a winter dry season. The plants need to reduce their leaf area to compensate for the reduction in water available to them.

They do this by dropping the end of the leaf rather than by dropping the entire leaf, like an oak tree for example. The plant forms a waterproof boundary layer part way out the length of the leaf. The end of the leaf is cut off from the rest of the plant, and will gradually die and fall off.

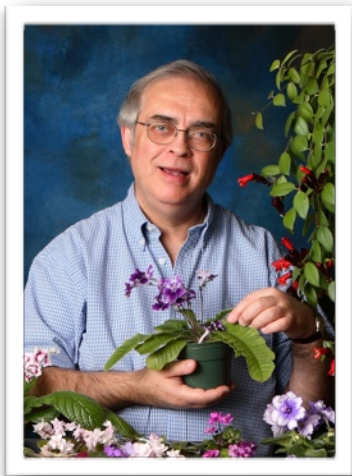
Most species of *Streptocarpus* are programmed to do this. The trigger is probably some combination of day length and dryness. Many hybrids will do this too.

Simply reduce watering slightly to meet the plant's expectations. In the spring the plant will resume growing the leaf from the base.



Bob Stewart photo

Reprinted from *Bells and Slippers*, the newsletter of the New England chapter of the Gesneriad Society, November 2013, Bob and Dee Stewart, editors.



**From the editor —**

My van is in the garage for the winter. Now I have to spend a half hour per day setting up and tearing down my potting area. I am looking forward to spring!

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)

Happy Holidays!

Mel

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Paul Susi, Development Chairperson  
2 Rushmore Street, South Huntington, NY 11746  
For additional information, contact: <development@gesneriadsociety.org>.

**Membership and Changes of Address**

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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