

Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 13, Number 12

December 2022



This issue includes photos of plants blooming now and Pam Braun's article on growing gesneriads for holiday decoration.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!** Happy Holidays to all!

Mel Grice, Editor

Pam Braun from Tennessee, USA, sent this photo of *Seemannia sylvatica* along with other photos to accompany her article that appears beginning on page 6.

She photographed it growing in the wild while on a trip to the Caribbean Islands.

Pam Braun photo



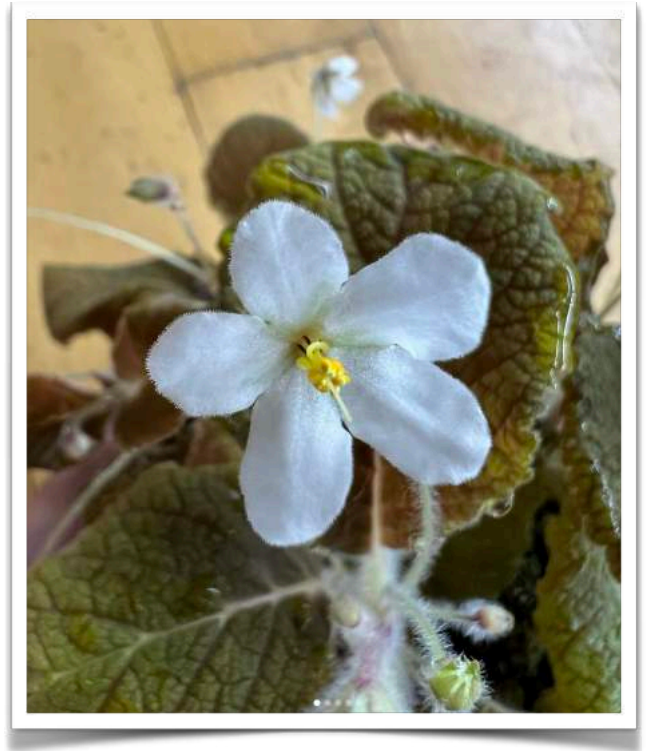
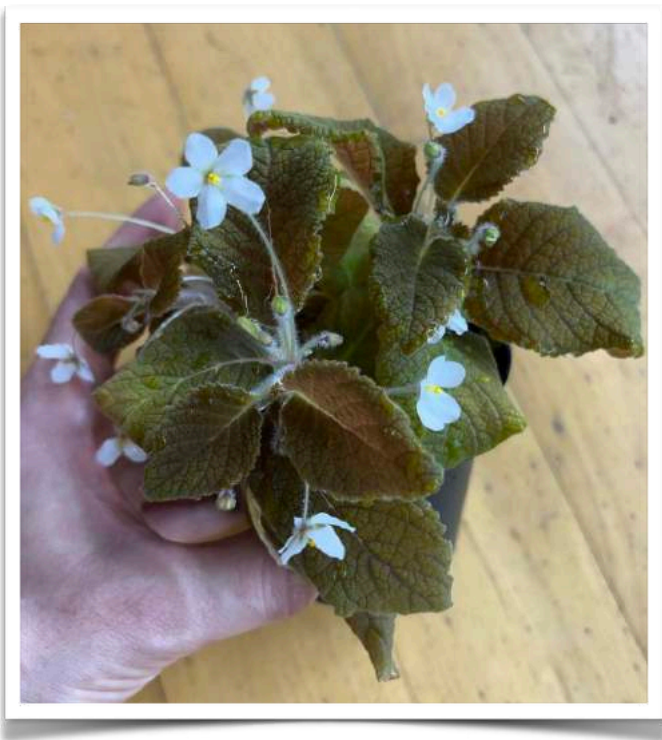
Blooming now...



Sinningia speciosa 'Carangola'
Joel Egan



Sinningia conspicua
Joel Egan



Amalophyllon rupestre - Joel Egan



Sinningia macropoda (above) is blooming again. This is a 32 year old tuber grown from seed.
Peter Shalit



Sinningia warmingii
(below)
Peter Shalit



Peter Shalit photos

Sinningia species 'Coromandel'
A recently collected gesneriad from Brazil that is not yet identified or given an official botanical name. The leaves are thin and easily damaged.
Peter Shalit



Streptocarpus 'SYB-Neon Joy'
Terri Vicenzi



Smithiantha 'Sunset'
Terri Vicenzi



Sinningia 'Freya's Dark
Shadow'
Terri Vicenzi

Terri Vicenzi photos

Petrocosmea chiwui
(previously
distributed as
Petrocosmea
iodiodes)
Terri Vicenzi



Terri Vicenzi photos

Growing Gesneriads for Holiday Decoration

Pam Braun

In the last two years I have noticed that some of my gesneriads have bloomed best starting in November and continuing on into the New Year. What is really nice is that they have mostly red flowers and I can use them as decoration when celebrating the holidays. My theory is that they are blooming at this time of year because the hummingbirds, which were here in Tennessee for the summer and then left for Central America and the Caribbean islands around October 15th, are now ready to pollinate the plants in those countries. After traveling such a long way, they are looking for mostly red flowers to visit to get nectar and recover their energy. Until about October 15th, when we have our average first frost of the season, they have been busy at our feeders gulping down vast quantities of sugar water and getting plump enough to survive the trip south.

I have previously visited Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico and collected seed and photographed gesneriads which happened to be blooming when I was there in early December. Many of them were bright red or associated colors of yellow and orange. The following are some of the plants I saw there and I now grow. They are all blooming now, when it is cooler.

Chrysothemis was blooming in December, as well as *Columnea*. This chrysothemis comes in either a bronze-leaved or green-leaved form.





Columnnea

Pam Braun photos

In Costa Rica there was *Kohleria spicata* along the sides of the road.



Kohleria spicata, *Seemannia sylvatica* and



a columnea with pale yellow/pink blooms. These were photographed in Costa Rica.

In Jamaica there were thousands of *Gesneria* along the road cuts. Most of the gesneriads were where it was cooler up in the mountains or high hills. At the top of the Blue Mountain in Jamaica there was a whole bank full of *Achimenes erecta* and *Seemannia sylvatica* in full bloom.

I have found that *Achimenes erecta*, with its red blooms, goes dormant in the summer and then starts to grow again in the fall, and then blooms in winter under my lights in the basement.



Achimenes erecta

All these plants seem to do better when it is cooler, and they often require this coolness in order to bloom. Right now I have these plants blooming under my lights in the basement. Together with some hybrids such as *Kohleria* 'Peridots Kitlope,' I have a wonderful cool weather display.



This gesneria likes to grow where there is no competition in a road cut, as seen here on the side of the road in Jamaica.

Reprinted from *Gesneri-Eds*, the newsletter of the Tennessee chapter of the Gesneriad Society, Volume 50, issue 12, December 2022, Julie Mavity-Hudson, editor.





From the editor —

Thanks to everyone who contributed articles and photos this year! Keep them coming.

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

Mel

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

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