



The Newsletter of the Delaware African Violet and Gesneriad Society

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Will We Be The Delaware Streptocarpus and Gesneriad Society?

Are you just getting used to changing your labels from *Chirita* to *Primulina*? Well brace yourself; the very foundation of the venerable family may be shaken further, when the status *Saintpaulia*, the historic genus for African Violets, is challenged.

There have been many posts about this on Gesneriphiles, but perhaps Dr. Jeffrey Smith summed up the situation best when he advised, don't change you labels (or the name of your Club!) just yet. He graciously consented to have his recent post reprinted here for those who haven't been following the controversy.

He noted that there is a "proposed submersion of *Saintpaulia* into *Streptocarpus* as was suggested by the publication in *Phytotaxa* by Maarten Christenhusz.



Streptocarpus 'Dogwood Buckeye Spring'?
– Nope, not yet!

He noted that he" contacted the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) about the Christenhusz publication. Their people are suggesting a "wait and see" position. They'd like to have more DNA studies on more genes, and see if the rest of the scientific community agrees with the publication's suggestions before accepting a submersion of *Saintpaulia* into *Streptocarpus*. For time being, The Gesneriad Society, Inc. and the African Violet Society of America will retain the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) status from the ISHS as they have in the

past. The AVSA will be responsible for cultivar registration for "African violets" and The Gesneriad Society; Inc. will be responsible for cultivar registration for all other plants in the Gesneriaceae.

Species naming for "African violets" can follow either the recent nomenclature by Darbyshire or the suggested nomenclature of Christenhusz as long as the authority for the system and name are given. Smith has recommended to the AVSA Board of Directors that they follow the ISHS "wait and see" stance and they will follow the "older" nomenclature system for the time being.

Dr. Smith has been invited to submit an in depth article on the proposed change in nomenclature in an upcoming issue of Gesneriads, the quarterly published by The Gesneriad Society. Be certain to look for it. If your not a member of The Gesneriad Society, a copy will be available from Anne Petrucci through the Chapter's Library.

Opportunity Knocks

The Delaware African Violet Society has an invitation to exhibit at the Spring Delaware Home Show North on Saturday, March 2 and Sunday March 3, 2013. The invitation for a complimentary table was forwarded to Mary Schaeffer via Scott Bradley, Claudia's husband, who has an association with the event. The Show will be held from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and 11:00a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday at The Chase Center on the Riverfront, in Wilmington, DE.

Quentin Schlieder has agreed to design the exhibit, but members will be needed to staff the table and to provide plants for the exhibit. The exhibit will promote the diversity of the Gesneriad family and promote this type of gardening as something which is rewarding year round and for all ages and abilities. Hopefully, we can show plants like *Episcia 'Cleopatra,' Primulina dryas (Chirita sinensis) 'Hisako'* and *Sinningia 'Little Georgie'* as well as the various classes of *Saintpaulia* which have attracted attention at our shows. The invitation and the exhibit will be discussed further at the January meeting.

This exposure will be a great way to promote membership in the Chapter, and also increase attendance at the Chapter's March 23, 2013 Flower Show and Sale.

Brazil Seed Club Updates

The Chapter's membership in the Brazil Seed Club is up for renewal shortly, and we wanted to bring you up to date on what has been happening. The Delaware African Violet and Gesneriad Society supports Mauro Peixoto's work with a \$250.00 annual membership which was included in the annual budget adopted by the membership last September.

Mary Schaeffer has ordered seed from the Club's seed list which offers an extensive listing of gesneriads, many of them quite choice. Mary has graciously agreed to sow the seed and share the seedlings with other members to grow on. Eventually many of these reach our sales table at monthly meetings and afford an incredible opportunity to acquire choice plants very inexpensively. It is worth noting that some of the prize winning plants at recent shows and even national conventions are plants introduced by Mauro through the Brazil Plant Seed Club.



Sinningia speciosa 'Carangola' offered in the Brazil Plant Seed Fund exhibited by Ben Paternoster at the 2009 Gesneriad Society Convention scored 95 points and took First Place. Another plant of *Sinningia speciosa* 'Carangola' exhibited by Eileen McGrath also took Best Other Gesneriad at the 2012 AVSA Show.

Mauro also sent along this annual report which we want to share with our members:

As 2012 is coming to the end, I'm looking back and realizing that it was a very good year.

The living collection increased, as well the seed list that has now 1071 items.



Greenhouse: Last February I covered 80 square meters with Polycarbonate and now I am just finishing more 70 square meters (roughly 754 square feet) and also replacing the old and rusted iron pipes that hold the hanging pots for galvanized chains. I hope to have all completely ready by the end of January.

Plants: Dr. Julie Dutilh (Amaryllidaceae expert) and I are working on the genus *Griffinia* and endangered species from Atlantic Forest to try to solve the classification problems and of course we are traveling to several places to find them. The side effect of these trips is that a lot of new plants beside Griffinias are being added to the collection.

New plants: Last May, Dr. Alain Chautems, a group of scientists and I went to the field and collected one new *Sinningia* from Catoles, in Bahia State, but we also brought back two plants from North of Rio de Janeiro State. Both looked like *Sinningia speciosa* seedlings. They survived the winter without going dormant, but the leaves were badly damaged from cold water and cold temperature. After 6 months they decided to bloom and the result was two *Sinningia speciosa* with flowers of same size as *Sinningia speciosa* 'Buzios', but on a miniature plant. If they keep the compact size on next flowering season, they will open a whole new field to produce compact *Sinningia* hybrids. Their pictures are on 2012 Plants album and I hope to have seeds from them on the next seed list.

Club: The club has 43 active members that contributed with US\$4,504.00. That amount was enough to pay 9 months of Renato's salary. The ideal would be to have an annual income of US\$ 6,000.00 to cover his full yearly salary. 25 more members would do it, but if the club gets zero drop-out on next year, I will be VERY happy.

Videos of the 2012 Seattle Gesneriad Convention Posted

Peter Shalit, Past President of the Gesneriad Society recently advised that he finally got around to editing some of the videos he took at the show at 2012 Gesneriad Society Convention in Seattle last July. He apologized for the lighting in the showroom which he thought was not optimal for video, but the videos are a great survey of both the *Kohleria* and *Primulina* Classes in the Show and Shalit's commentary is great. If you would like to view them on "YouTube," these are the links:

Kohleria section

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSdfk4oINeE&feature=youtu.be>

Primulina (Chirita) section

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvUBOginTMO&feature=youtu.be>

Schedule for Growing Prize-Winning African Violets

Spring Show March 23, 2013 - Based on How to Grow Prize Winning African Violets by Pauline Bartholomew

Below is the continuation from last month of the schedule to grow award winning African Violets for the March 23rd Show:

10 weeks: (January 12, 2013)

Completely disbud all plants except perhaps miniatures and trailers. Put one new tube in each fixture. Start "bloom booster" fertilizer formula.

9 weeks: (January 19, 2013)

Increase light time by one hour. Disbud heavily variegated varieties and double varieties, such as Rhapsodies, etc., for the last time. Continue to disbud all other varieties. Continue "bloom booster" fertilizer.

8 weeks: (January 26, 2013)

Increase light time by one hour. Disbud doubles and lightly variegated varieties for the last time. Continue to disbud semi double stars and singles. Check for suckers. Continue "bloom booster" fertilizer. Foliar feed once more.

7 weeks: (February 2, 2013)

Increase light time by one hour. Disbud semi double stars for the last time. Change to 12-36-14 or 15-30-15, etc., fertilizer formula for the remaining weeks.

6 weeks: (February 9, 2013)

Disbud singles for the last time. Check for suckers. Wash foliage.

Holiday Dinner and Auction a Great Success

The Annual Holiday Dinner and Auction at Rockland Manor was a great Success in a very festive atmosphere. The Auction raised \$627.00 for the club-sponsored horticulture therapy program at the Richardson Park Learning Center. Thank you for contributing items for the lively bidding.

The dinner, as usual was delicious and plentiful. As has become a tradition, here is one of popular offerings, courtesy of Diana Metzger:

Sweet-sour Meatballs

Meatballs

- ♥ 1 ½ lb ground beef or other ground meat mixture
- ♥ ¾ cup rolled oats (instant or regular work fine)
- ♥ 1 can water chestnuts drained and chopped (discard liquid)
- ♥ ½ cup milk
- ♥ 1 egg slightly beaten
- ♥ 1 tbsp soy sauce (I used the light salt type)
- ♥ 1 tsp Accent (I never use this)
- ♥ ½ tsp garlic powder or garlic salt
- ♥ ¼ tsp table salt
- ♥ Dash of Tabasco

Mix together well and form into balls. Brown the meatballs in pan with oil (or in oven at 375 degrees F) and drain, if needed. If you brown in the oven, parchment paper might be helpful to make clean up easier. I think that letting the meat mixture sit in the refrigerator for a while before making the balls might make the balls hold their shape in cooking.

Sauce

- ♥ 1 8 ½ can crushed pineapple
- ♥ 1 cup brown sugar
- ♥ 2 tbsp cornstarch
- ♥ 1 cup beef broth or bullion
- ♥ ½ cup red wine vinegar or lemon juice (I use the vinegar)
- ♥ 2 tbsp soy sauce
- ♥ 1/3 cup green pepper (I used red and green and more than 1/3 cup)

Drain the pineapple, mix the pineapple juice and the beef broth and cornstarch and heat, stirring, to thicken. Add the rest of the liquids, and the pineapple and pepper.

Simmer the meatballs in the sauce for 30 minutes. Can make a day ahead, and the meatballs freeze well. Since the recipe contains a lot of sugar, you could use Splenda, but my impression from making pies is that you would need to cut down on the cornstarch.

The meatballs can be served with rice for a meal, or without for an appetizer.

Upcoming DAVS Meetings...

Tuesday, January 8, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

**Rockland Place, 1519 Rockland Rd, Wilmington,
DE 19803**

Hosts: Snacks - Diane Abramson
Beverages – Elizabeth Varley

Program: “Advice from DAVS Own Best-in-Show African Violet Growers” - Libby Behnke, Nancy Murray and Bobbie LaFashia, some of the Chapter’s very best growers will discuss how they get their plants in tip top shape. Members are encouraged to bring violet leaves for a leaf exchange.

Tuesday, February 12, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

**Rockland Place, 1519 Rockland Rd, Wilmington,
DE 19803**

Hosts: Snacks - Terry Celano
Beverages – Carol Callaghan

Program: “A Gesneriad for Every Growing Condition” - Do you have less than ideal growing conditions in part of your growing area – too hot, too cold, too much light, not enough light, and not enough humidity? Our resident expert, Quentin Schlieder will suggest plants to grow successfully for each situation. The sales table will have some plants available discussed during the lecture.

Tuesday, March 12, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

**Rockland Place, 1519 Rockland Rd, Wilmington,
DE 19803**

Hosts: Snacks - Geno Iubatti
Beverages – Kathe Worrell

Program: “Design Tips from One of Our Winning Members”. Our own Terry Celano will review of the basics of design and offer suggestions for current year’s show. Each member is encouraged to bring one plant for a plant exchange. We’ll draw names to see who selects first.

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Upcoming Shows and Sales...

Friday, March 22 & Saturday, March 23, 2013

The DAVS 2013 Annual Show and Sale with the theme “Golden Jubilee – DAVS Celebrates 50 Years” will be held at Boscov’s Christiana Town Center, Delaware Route 273 in Christiana, Delaware. The Plant Sale will be open on Friday from 1-5 p.m. and on Saturday from 10a.m. – 4 p.m. The Show will be open on Saturday from 10a.m. – 4 p.m.

April 12, 13 & 14, 2013

The Richmond African Violet Society Show and Sale Will be held at The Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, 1800 Lakeside Avenue, Richmond, VA 23228. The Show is open on Saturday April 13, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday April 14, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. The Sale is open on Friday April 12, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.; Saturday April 13, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday April 14, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information contact Sandra Moses at mosessandra@gmail.com.

April 13th-14th, 2013

The Long Island Gesneriad Society judged show and plant sale, “Going Green”, in conjunction with the Saintpaulia Society of Long Island, at Planting Fields Arboretum, Conference Center, Oyster Bay. Saturday, April 13, 1:00 to 4:00 pm; Sunday, April 14, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, contact Ben Paternoster at ben9@optonline.net.

Hold these dates! More information to follow!

April 19-21, 2013 - African Violet Society of Springfield (Delaware County) Show and Sale

May 10 and 11, 2013 – Baltimore African Violet Society Show and Sale

May 18, 2013 - African Violet Club of Burlington County Show and Sale

First Class Mail

Time Value/ Please Expedite!