



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 2, Number 11

November 2011



Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings**! This issue includes photos from the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Gesneriad Society and National Capital Area Gesneriad Society flower shows, and Charlene Marietti tells us how she grew her award-winning *Nematanthus corticola* for the convention flower show.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings**!

Mel Grice, Editor

Vincent Woo from Toronto, Ontario, Canada sent these photos of the new genus, *Chautemsia calcicola*, named for Swiss botanist, Dr. Alain Chautems. Three plants grew from seeds Vincent planted in June 2011. "They are only about two inches tall with white tubular flowers and a yellow throat — absolutely adorable." Vincent grows them in a plastic bag to provide high humidity. The coin is a Canadian "toonie" put there to show scale.



The Frelinghuysen Arboretum Gesneriad Society 2011 Flower Show photos



Best in Show –
Columnea 'Broget
Stavanger'
– Jill Fischer



Drymonia cuyabensis
– Jill Fischer

Photos courtesy of
Karyn Cichocki



Kohleria tubiflora 'Trinidad' –
Karyn Cichocki



Runner-up to Best in Show –
Chirita sinensis 'Hisako' – Gail Gray



Above — Best Artistic — Natural Garden — Jill Fischer



Right — Best Arrangement — Runner-up to Best Artistic — "Rhapsody in Blue" — Karyn Cichocki



More Frelinghuysen Arboretum Gesneriad Society Flower Show photos

Best Education – "Care of Gesneriads"
– Mary Lou Robbins



Best Photography — Best in Arts —
Columnea eburnea – Karyn Cichocki

Photos courtesy of
Karyn Cichocki



How I Grow *Nematanthus corticola*

Charlene Marietti <cwmarietti@comcast.net>
Medford, New Jersey, USA

The flowers seduced me. The plant itself wasn't exciting. It was little more than shiny green leaves, but its pendulous orange flowers were unique and sensuous.

Still, I was hesitant to bid on the donated plant when it came up for auction at the Liberty Bell Chapter's annual auction in October 2009. For one, I did not intend to buy even one plant. Two days after the auction I was leaving on a two-week trip and would be unable to deal with newcomer plants. And two, *Nematanthus* plants get big, and I felt as if I couldn't invest in another large grower. But I did.

At home, I hung it at the top of a small, attached greenhouse that faces north and is shaded by the house most of the day. The location allows it to get morning sun, cool night temperatures, and higher humidity than the house. Maximum temperatures in the summer reflect outside temperature, but rarely exceed 98°F (37°C) due to the shade and a humidifier. In winter, temperatures range from 55°F (13°C) minimum to 67°F (19°C) maximum.

Over the next months, the plant grew and flowered, with little to commend it but the lure of those beautiful flowers. By the following summer, the plant was sorely in need of repotting, especially as it was still growing in the original pot with commercial potting mix. As an epiphyte, this *Nematanthus* was slated for potting in a loose mix that could more nearly replicate its native environment. I have experimented with a variety of substrates, including several commercial orchid brands and lava rock, but currently use a mix that Maurice makes for his orchids that consists of diatomaceous earth, coconut husk chunks, perlite, and charcoal. (See recipe below.)

Maurice's Orchid Mix

2 parts coconut husk cubes, small-cut (1/2 inch), rinsed thoroughly several times to remove any salt
1 part diatomaceous earth chunks, medium-cut ("Aussie Gold" brand)
1 part perlite, large-size 1/4 part charcoal, medium-size

After repotting and some pruning, all other care elements remained the same. The *Nematanthus corticola* went back to the top outside corner of the greenhouse and was watered about twice a week with dilute Cal-Mag





fertilizer. The plant flourished. It set heavy bud in late spring and started blooming heavily in May. Although it seemed unrealistic to expect it to still be in bloom for the July show, it was.

Growing the plant was one thing. Getting it to the show was another – and Maurice gets full credit for it being there. The plant is difficult to transport on two counts: One, its branches snap like asparagus and, two is its long, dangling flowers. Packing it with other entries wasn't an option so Maurice devised an apparatus to transport the plant separately. Even with so much coddling, the truck's motion and road bumps caused the long pedicels to sway and the flowers to twist and wrap themselves much like a braid. Thanks go to Bill Price who wisely counseled single-minded focus and patience in untangling them.

Untwisting the long pedicels of *Nematanthus corticola* during Entries



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.

National Capital Area Gesneriad Society 2011 Flower Show photos



Achimenes misera exhibited by Kyoko Imai



Sinningia 'Li'l Georgie' exhibited by
Kyoko Imai

Photos courtesy of Kyoko Imai

Sinningia micans exhibited
by Jim Roberts





x*Smithicodonia* 'Heartland's Joy' exhibited by Nell Reese
Photo by Kenneth Moore



Underwater arrangement — "South Pacific" exhibited by Neale Stuart-Merriman



Chirita collection exhibited by Jim Roberts — Clockwise from back left corner — *C.* 'Aiko', *C.* 'Gotham', *C.* *wentsaii*, *C.* *gemella*, *C.* 'Nimbus'
Photo by Kenneth Moore

Alsobia sp. "Chiapas" exhibited by
Johanna Zinn
Photo by Kenneth Moore



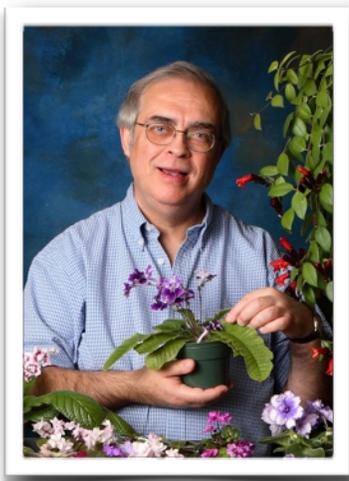
Streptocarpus (*polyanthus* ssp. *polyanthus*
x *prolixus*) exhibited by Al Pickrel



This is a hybrid between two South African *Streptocarpus* species, *S. polyanthus* ssp. *polyanthus* and *S. prolixus*. It was grown from seed obtained from the Gesneriad Hybridizers Association (JT 04-1101). Seed was sown on July 12, 2005. According to The Gesneriad Reference Web (<http://gesneriads.ca>), *S. prolixus* is generally unifoliate, and grows well on rock faces with high moisture levels. *Streptocarpus polyanthus* grows on moist well-drained locations such as rocky outcrops, slopes, and soil banks, at relatively low altitudes, and forms clusters of monocarpic leaves. This hybrid forms a mass of blooms about once a year, and seems to require cool nights to bloom well. During periods of drought, the leaf tips will die back but will continue to grow from the base, a growth habit inherited from its parents.

Underwater arrangement —
"South Pacific", exhibited by
Barbara Stewart





From the editor —

I had a great time visiting with the newly formed Northern Ohio Chapter in Cleveland this month. I am looking forward to their first show.

Thanks to those who sent me photos of some of the fall shows!

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.

Mel

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