



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 11, Number 10

October 2020



This issue includes photos of gesneriads blooming now, Michael Riley's article about *Oreocharis pankaiyuae*, photos from the Gesneriad Society's First Virtual Flower Show, and The Annual Appeal.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**

Mel Grice, Editor



Karyn Cichocki from New Jersey, USA, sent the photo on the right of *Petrocosmea* 'Lexi'. She says, "I've had this plant for many years and this is the best head of bloom I have ever had. I love the dark blue flowers contrasted with the yellow in the throat."

Karyn Cichocki photo



Gesneriads Blooming Now



Achimenes 'Petite Fadette'
Julie Mavity-Hudson photo

"I grew this Serge Saliba hybrid outside in middle Tennessee, which is zone 7a. It has not been repotted in about two or three years and is stored completely dry in its pot at room temperature during the winter. It went outside in early May onto our deck, which, due to the loss of a couple of trees, got full sun for four or more hours a day. I added some osmocote fertilizer after it had started growing. I did pinch a few of the sprouts, but, because it had been so long since it had been repotted, there were a lot of sprouts, so I didn't worry about it much. In early July we added some 40% shade cloth. It began blooming the third week of July. As with all the achimenes I grow outdoors, it is potted in straight PRO-MIX BX, and is watered daily if there is no rain. Daytime temperatures have been in the 90°F range more often than not. Nighttime temperatures have been mostly in the upper 70°F to mid 80°F range. This is a very humid climate as well." — Julie Mavity-Hudson

Primulina linearicalyx



Karyn Cichocki photos



Seed pod close-up which also shows the thin long calyx.



Gloxinia perennis
Charles Huston



Charles Huston photos



"In bloom at the College of Biological Sciences greenhouse in St. Paul, Minnesota. Nice fragrance, kind of minty. The rhizome was photographed this spring. This year there are three stems, all flowering. The tallest stem started blooming the beginning of September. Last year it was one stem, the flowering continued until the end of November and the flower spike was about three feet tall. The original plant was grown from seed from BrazilPlants."
— Charles Huston — University of Minnesota

Nautilocalyx pemphidius
Julie Mavity-Hudson photo

"I was surprised to see this blooming since I hadn't noticed it was in bud. Grown under 2T8s on capillary matting with a plastic bag over it." — Julie Mavity-Hudson



Oreocharis pankaiyuae ... and friends!

Michael Riley

I have always been attracted to plants that did not necessarily seem to fit into an easily identifiable niche in horticulture. I used to lower or raise the temperature in my apartment (not always intentionally) in order to get bulbs and other plants to bloom “on time”, meaning for a specific date or flower show. I enjoyed the challenge!

Part of that horticultural challenge was being able to grow plants that were on the edge of winter hardiness in my Manhattan zone of 7a or 7b or, however it was defined by people who thought they could categorize the hardiness zones of weather then or now. That, plus an influx of new plant species from South America and Asia where the climate cycles were not well known, gave me lots of plants to investigate. When I wrote a program on Alpine Gesneriads for The Gesneriad Society many years ago, I came across a Chinese species called *Tremacron aurantiacum* with curious yellow flowers. The literature said that the Europeans had been cultivating it for decades, yet we seem to have never heard of it in the US or North America to my knowledge. Then my friend Ingrid Lindskog in Sweden sent me seed, which unfortunately did not germinate, but at least I knew it was in cultivation. When I saw it listed as a plant for sale by Far Reaches Farm on the west coast (<https://www.farreachesfarm.com>), I jumped for joy and ordered one immediately. The species had been renamed in a shift of all *Tremacron* to the genus *Oreocharis*. I optimistically planted it in a hypertufa (cement) trough as if it was going to stay outside all winter on my Manhattan rooftop. In the same trough were a *Vaccinium* (blueberry family) and another *Oreocharis* from the same area in China. The first year, I left them outdoors until the temperatures got down to freezing, then I felt sorry and brought them inside to about 70°F until the temperatures were above freezing again. No problems! Then the next year I left them outdoors, partially protected with the entire trough inside a styrofoam container and put the lid on the container at the freezing temperature – no problem. The next year, I left the entire trough outside subjected to a temperature of 28°F with a lid, below freezing, but no problem. That same year the other oreocharis species died in



midsummer from the heat as did the *Vaccinium*. New York summer heat can be brutal when it is over 90°F for an entire week. However, the *Oreocharis pankaiyuae* showed only a few brown edges and it blooms reliably every September with its fascinating yellow flowers. With the death of the other plants in the trough at the end of last summer, I planted the far end with *Raphiocarpus petelotii*, a species from Vietnam, and one which I had not successfully grown previously in pots under fluorescent lights. Like many plants, given some natural light and rainwater, it thrived all spring and summer with multiple new growths and beautiful foliage. It was only a few days ago that I noticed the buds in each terminal growth and then leaned over to discover a beautiful clump of open flowers; what a nice reward! *Raphiocarpus petelotii* has been reportedly hardy in Washington, D.C., with some heavy mulching in the ground. It was difficult to imagine that such beautiful soft foliage was actually hardy/half hardy in 7a/7b on a Manhattan rooftop. This is undoubtedly the best flowering ever for my *Oreocharis pankaiyuae* and I even see some seedpods developing. I can't imagine who is pollinating this yellow corolla, and I have unsuccessfully attempted to set seed with my trusty paint brush in the past. Fortunately, Karyn Cichocki has been able to set seed and we have it in the Seed Fund of The Gesneriad Society. I must say, however that the perfectly mature plants that are offered by Far Reaches Farm are unequaled in their excellence and well worth the price and instant gratification.

The moral to this story is research where your plants come from, and the climatic cycles they endure naturally – you might be surprised! Try to accommodate anything within, and beyond that to test their limits. The objective of this is not to “do or die” your specimens, but rather to see what conditions might trigger a new perspective to what you are growing, and its potential. There are always new horizons when growing gesneriads!

Michael Riley photos



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The Gesneriad Society's First Virtual Flower Show

Paul Susi

Where can you find 345 gorgeous gesneriads from 92 exhibitors representing six countries? The Gesneriad Society's Virtual Flower Show, viewable at <https://www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2020-convention-st-petersburg-fl/2020-virtual-flower-show/>, is a site for gesneriad-deprived eyes. Have fun viewing all the images.

Photos by the exhibitors



Sinningia 'Merry Christmas'
Jacquie Eisenhut, CA



Sinningia leucotricha
Brandon Huber, NC



Primulina obtusidentata
Sheng-Hu Tang, China



Sinningia 'Diva'
Jay Sespico, FL



Saintpaulia 'Precious Red'
Margery Anderson-Clive, Portugal



Primulina longicalyx
Sheng-Hu Tang, China



Saintpaulia hybrid
Rie Somlai, IN

Photos by the exhibitors

The Gesneriad Society Annual Appeal

The [Annual Appeal](#) helps support gesneriad research, education, and conservation by ensuring that grant money is available for eligible applicants. The target fund for 2020 is **The Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund**. This fund provides scholarship grants for students and gesneriad researchers. This fund gives financial support to students as they do their research on gesneriads. All gesneriad members will benefit from the technical research from these students. Donate now! You may make a donation on line by using the link above.

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Happy Holidays!

John Beaulieu created this holiday tree originally in black and white and Stan Sudol added the color a few years later.

Thanks to both for sharing!





From the editor —

Please continue to send me photos. Your articles would also be greatly appreciated. Hope that you enjoyed the [Virtual Flower Show!](#)

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

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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 received with each copy 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, programs and seed fund. Membership begins upon receipt of dues.

New Member Date _____

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