



Petal Tones

The newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of
The Gesneriad Society

Volume 43 Number 8

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Andrew Norris's *Episcia* 'Showtime'

President's Message

1. First Congrats to all who exhibited at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Show last weekend. What a Show! **Andrew Norris** won Sweepstakes in Horticulture and Best *Episcia* (*Episcia* 'Show Time') and **Marie Burns** won Best *Streptocarpus* (*S.* 'White Gold'). **Donna Beverin** won Best Novice and Best *Petrocosmea* (*P.* 'Momo'). Several other NCAC members who are fairly (or completely) new to exhibiting at Gesneriad Shows won ribbons including **Ken Moore** (*Gloxinella lindeniana*), **Barry Woolf** (*Primulina dryas* 'Hisako') and **Corey Wickliffe** (an *Episcia* and a terrarium!). Please congratulate them. It was a fine showing by NCAC members and all 3 Chapters. I hope everyone will consider entering a plant or two (or ten) in the future!

There were many other interesting plants on display such as Nancy Kast's incredible *Gasteranthus* collection that won Best in Show. Nancy also entered a *Creosperma* species. She is truly an exquisite grower of unusual gesneriads! A lovely *Peracea hypocyrtiflora* was exhibited by Dee Stewart. Meanwhile, husband Bob Stewart showed *Drymonia punctulata*. One of my favorite seldom seen plants, *Gesneria* 'Lemon Drop,' was shown by Francisco Correa.

NCAC meetings are held at the National Arboretum. Doors open at 9:30am with the meeting starting at 10:00am on the second Saturday of the month.

October 13th: What Happened to Chirita, I Mean Primulina? (a pass through the former genus)
FONA Conference Room at the National Arboretum

November 10th: field trip to MAAVS

December 8th: Holiday party and elections

In the Arts and Artistic sections, Jill Fisher's beautiful straight edged terrarium, Karyn Cichocki's delightful underwater design (Bangkok) and Stephen Maciejewski's photos and educational exhibit were outstanding.

The talks were very interesting and well attended. The judging was excellent. Many of the judges brought an exhibit or two, which added a great deal of variety. I hope this event becomes a permanent fixture for the clubs involved.

2. Next Saturday meeting (Oct 13) we need to vote on the changes to our bylaws. Please read the bylaws and voting documents and be ready to discuss and vote. It's not that bad and will not take that long to read. These changes are our guidelines for the future, so please look them over. We have pretty much dealt with Article VI and VII, quorum for e-voting.

3. NCAC elections are coming at the end of the year. Of course this is also important to the future of our club. We need to form a Nominating Committee in October and we will select new officers from their nominees in December.

4. Our program is **What happened to Chirita-Primulina!** If possible, bring a *Primulina* with you so we can examine a variety of these plants. OR bring a *Liebigia* or *Microchirita* with you (HA!). Of course, anything of interest can be brought for Show & Tell. Brian



Stewart's *Primulina* 'Diane Marie'



Corey's Straight sided terrarium with beautiful *episcias*



Marie Burn's *Saintpaulia*



Barry Woolf's *Primulina* 'Hisako'



Andrew Norris's *Saintpaulia* 'Painted Silk'

Gasteranthus is still a poorly known genus, but many species are now in cultivation. They are generally difficult to grow and bloom, requiring low light and high humidity. One



species, *G. atratus*, has yellow flowers with a sweet lemony fragrance. Others will surely be found to be fragrant as well.

Gesneria has at least one species with fragrant flowers, *G. humilis*. Elisabeth Funkhouser described it in her 1984 article "Success with *Gesneria humilis*", *The Gloxinian* 34(6): 10-11, "It is a strange odor, not exactly unpleasant, but reminding me of a snuffed-out candle.... When I smell *G. humilis*, I think of the bayberry candles we used to burn on Christmas Eve, letting them burn down and go out by themselves." The pollinator of this odd little plant is still unknown. There are several other species of *Gesneria* which might have fragrant flowers as well, particularly those with white or greenish flowers, which are presumably pollinated by bats.

Gloxinia has at least two fragrant species.

Gloxinia perennis is one of the familiar fragrant gesneriads. I find the frequent



comparisons of its pleasant minty scent to toothpaste to be unfair. Unfortunately, this species is too tall for most of us to grow under lights. If you have room in a greenhouse, sun porch, or patio, the plant is most impressive. The selection 'Insignis' is a little more compact, and I have bloomed it under lights. One compact *G. perennis* hybrid, *G. 'Arion'*, is also reported to carry the minty fragrance. The other fragrant species, *G. lindeniana*, is quite unlike *G. perennis*. The silver-veined dark velvety leaves make it look



more like a kohleria, and indeed it was formerly classified as *Kohleria lindeniana*. David Turley describes the scent as minty, but to me it has a distinct rose scent, sweet but with a slight undertone of decay, like a flower

that's past its prime. Other species of *Gloxinia* are to be expected to be fragrant, including *G. racemosa* and *G. sarmentiana*. These species lack a nectary disk, and without nectar, must use another enticement to attract pollinators. However, they may

produce compounds that are fragrant to their pollinators but not to us!

Koellikeria erinoides is one of my favorite gesneriads. It is easy to grow, small enough



for lights, a dependable bloomer, and has an unusual scent: a delicious spicy smell of coconut, which I discovered on my plant of *K. erinoides* 'Red Satin' quite by accident several years ago. The fragrance is intermittent, but at times is quite strong on a heavily blooming plant. The pollinator is



presumed to be a small bee. *Koellikeria erinoides* has entered into intergeneric hybrids with *Kohleria* to produce *xKoellikohleria rosea* and *xKoellikohleria 'Goblin'*. Neither of these is known to be fragrant. However, a cross with *Gloxinia perennis* by Jim Roberts has produced a



fragrant intergeneric hybrid: *xGlokeria 'Dragonsong'* is reported by David and Colleen Turley to have a spicy scent unlike that of either parent.

Lietzia has recently been synonymized under *Sinningia*, and *Lietzia brasiliensis* is now *Sinningia brasiliensis*. However, for convenience I will discuss this species separately. One collection has been distributed with the unpublished (and therefore invalid) name "*Lietzia glandulosa*." However, this intriguing plant is well worth growing if you are interested in unusual gesneriads. This collection is distinguished by its narrow, deeply serrate, and extremely sticky leaves which are strongly and unpleasantly fragrant. The flowers, on the other hand, have a sweet honey-like fragrance. They are a pale yellow-green with tiny purple speckles on opening, and fade to a creamy white. They make me think of a

yawning dragon. Other collections of *S. brasiliensis* have larger flowers, often more heavily marked with purple, but the scent is less pleasant. The individual flowers last only two or three days, but the bloom period is long, and the plant produces many side shoots which will continue to bloom. All collections of *Sinningia brasiliensis* are tall growers that require high light levels, and even then they may need staking. Their cultural requirements are similar to those of *S. tubiflora*, except that they tolerate underpotting quite well. They are easily grown from seed, but may not bloom until their second or third year. A form with pure white, unspckled flowers has arisen in cultivation, and may prove useful to hybridizers. For more information on *Sinningia brasiliensis*, see Dave Zaitlin's article "Experiences with a New Species of *Lietzia*," 1990, *The Gloxinian* 40(4): 9-12.

Napeanthus is a little-known genus. The plants are small growing, require terrarium conditions, and the small white flowers open early in the morning and drop off by early afternoon. Patrick Worley notes that *N. costaricensis* has fragrant flowers. *Napeanthus jelskyi* may also be fragrant, but the flowers are so tiny it's hard to tell!

Nautilocalyx has had one species previously reported as fragrant, *N. pemphidius*.



However, I have never noted any fragrance on this species' small white flowers. *Nautilocalyx punctatus*, a much larger species, has purple-speckled pale yellow flowers with a faint sweet scent. I would not be surprised to discover that other species in the genus are fragrant.

Nematanthus 'Santa Teresa' is a still-undescribed species completely unlike any other member of the genus, and its large orange-speckled white flower is more reminiscent of a *Codonanthe* on steroids! This is probably the most powerfully fragrant gesneriad, with a single flower perfuming a good-sized greenhouse. The scent has been



described as a combination of fine olive oil and oranges, as drying paint, as rotting tangerines, and as more unmentionable things! The fragrance is obviously not for everybody, and a plant in full bloom in an enclosed space can be a bit overwhelming. The flowers seem to open all at once, with a plant producing several flushes of bloom each growing season. 'Santa Teresa' is an epiphyte with lax stems and velvety leaves. It makes an attractive hanging basket and requires the same culture as *Codonanthe* and *Nematanthus*: bright light and a well-drained soil that is allowed to dry out slightly between waterings. It has a semi-

dormant period in the winter, when it can be kept cooler and drier. The flowers are produced in the axils of last year's growth, so any pruning should be done immediately after flowering. There is another collection of the same species in cultivation, with even larger flowers. I have attempted to cross 'Santa Teresa' with *Codonanthe carnososa*, without luck; however, other crosses between *Codonanthe* and *Nematanthus* have resulted in the hybrid genus *xCodonatanthus*, and if a cross with 'Santa Teresa' is ever successful, the fragrance may be dominant! (Next month this article will continue with fragrant gesneriads that begin with the letter 'N'.)

A Sinningia That Loves To Grow!



Barb's tuber tower for *Sinningia* 'Pink Tiger' x *S. bullata*

While getting ready for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Gesneriad show, I noticed *Sinningia* Pink Tiger x *S. bullata*) warping its pot, so with some difficulty I managed to pull it out of the pot that it was stuck in. It turned out to be a stack of 5 tubers instead of 1. They were split apart and several were sold at the show. If you bought one, this plant blooms frequently with a pale pink/salmon blossom (which is very hard to photograph because of the way it hangs down.) I grow it on my top shelf where I can see the blossoms as the stem rambles all over and hangs off the shelf. Perhaps someone could give me advice on how to grow this plant well. It tolerates quite a bit of neglect.

Barb Stewart

Announcement

Propagation Committee of the National Capital Area Chapter of the Gesneriad Society **Committee Design and Purpose**

The purpose of the Propagation Committee shall be to supply new, rare, and otherwise desirable species and hybrids of the Gesneriaceae to the local chapter members and to do the same in large volumes for periodic shows and sales.

The Propagation Committee shall be self-sustaining financially.

The Propagation Committee shall provide plants to both the raffle table so that all members have an equal chance at new plant material, and to a sales table that will allow new plant to be purchased on a first come basis.

The Propagation Committee shall consist of a Chair, who will provide instructions and supplies to other committee members, and a team of at least two or three growers who will provide growing space to keep propagated material growing and make it ready for distribution.

Procedures

Members who obtain new plant material that would be of value to the other members of the Chapter are strongly encouraged to provide a cutting, rhizome, tuber or seed (in the case of species) to a member of the Propagation Committee. The Committee will also seek out new hybrids and species to pro-actively provide material to the Chapter.

The Propagation Committee will obtain seed from the Brazil Seed Fund, The Gesneriad Society seed fund, and other seed sources (Chilterns, Thompson and Morgan, etc.) and provide established seedlings to the Chapter.

All materials propagated by the Propagation Committee will be divided into two distribution channels at the meetings. The first will be a sales table where all plant material will be available at a very affordable rate to members of the Chapter only. The sales table will open immediately after the end of the monthly program, when a break is called. The second method of distribution will be the Chapter's Raffle Table, where the plants can be won by either Chapter members or members of the public who have purchased raffle tickets. All plant material will be evenly divided between these two channels. In the case of uneven numbers, the extra material will go to the sales table. Pricing of the plants brought in by the Propagation Committee shall be well below fair

market value, with the maximum price for any plant being set at \$5.00 maximum.

All proceeds from the Propagation Sales Table shall be kept in a separate ledger account by the Treasurer of the Chapter, and used to supply necessary items to the Committee such as growing mix, pots, labels, plastic bags and other necessary items to grow the materials. These funds shall also be used to purchase plants and or seed that would be desirable to the Chapter. The Chair of the Propagation Committee shall have the sole responsibility of determining where funds shall be spent. The original supplies, to get the Committee started, have been donated to the Committee.

The Propagation Committee shall provide a list of all materials currently being grown and a list of plants being sought for propagation and publish this in Petal Tones monthly.

NCAC Elections in December 2012

No officer, other than the treasurer, shall be eligible for more than two consecutive terms in the same office. ie: based on this rule, Brian Connor cannot be re-elected as Vice President or as Program Chair; and Lee Linett cannot be re-elected as Hospitality chair.

Elected Officer Positions:

1. President. The President shall act as general executive officer of the Chapter and shall preside at all meetings of the membership and the Board of Directors; shall appoint the chairmen of all committees; shall be ex-officio a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; and shall keep informed of all work of the Chapter and report thereon to the membership.

2. Vice-President. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President.

3. Secretary. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings; prepare official correspondence; and compile, maintain, and have custody of the Chapter's historical records. The Secretary shall file with the Recording Secretary of the parent organization a copy of the Chapter's bylaws and all subsequent amendments; the names and addresses of all Chapter members, and of all new members; and the names and addresses of all Chapter officers immediately following their election.

4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipts and deposits of all monies of the Chapter and shall make authorized disbursements to cover the expenses of the Chapter. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all monies that are received or disbursed and shall render financial reports when required.

5-7. Two or Three Directors. The Directors shall serve in an advisory capacity, shall serve as committee chairmen, and shall perform other duties requested by the President.

8. Hospitality Committee Chair. This committee shall make arrangements for refreshments at the membership meetings.

9. Membership Committee Chair. This committee shall handle membership applications, collect dues, introduce new members and guests, provide name tags, and compile an annual roster of officers and members.

10. Publications Committee Chair. The chairman of this committee shall be the Editor of the Chapter's newsletter, Petal Tones, and shall be responsible for editing and publishing Petal Tones in accordance with the policies of the President.

11. Program Committee Chair. This committee shall schedule and prepare interesting and stimulating programs for the regular membership meetings.

12. Propagation Committee Chair. This committee shall propagate gesneriads and have them available for distribution to the members.

13. Ways and Means Committee Chair. This committee shall be responsible for fund-raising, including the sale of plants and supplies at Chapter meetings.

Upcoming Show to Attend and Enjoy Gesneriads

Mid Atlantic African Violet Society presents

South Sea Violets 22nd Annual Convention Show

Sheraton Richmond Park South Hotel

9901 Midlothian Turnpike

Richmond, Virginia 23235

Friday and Saturday, November 9-10, 2012

Friday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

See what 100 years of selective hybridization have done with this import from the equatorial mountains of eastern Africa. The show will also include other interesting gesneriads.

Learn how to grow these plants yourself. Vendors from up and down the east coast will have new and unusual plants for sale. Show and sales room open free to the public. For more information and convention registration:

www.MAAVS.ORG

(This event will be the site of our November 10th meeting)

Chapter Desperately Seeking

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| <i>Amalophyllon clarkii</i> | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Chirita</i> 'Veracunda' | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Columnea glicensteinii</i> | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Columnea linearis</i> 'Purple Robe' | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Henckelia</i> Any variety | Brian Connor |
| <i>Henckelia malayana</i> | Brian Connor |
| <i>Koelikeria erinoides</i> 'Judy' | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Koelikeria</i> 'Strawberry Fields' | Andrew Norris |
| <i>Kohleria warszewiczii</i> | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Nautilocalyx lynchii</i> | Corey Wickliffe |
| <i>Niphimenes</i> 'Lemonade' | Brian Connor |
| <i>Pearcea hypocyrtifolia</i> | Corey Wickliffe |
| <i>Primulina</i> 'Diane Marie' | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Primulina tobacum</i> | Andrew Norris |
| <i>Primulina</i> 'Cynthia' | Andrew Norris |
| <i>Saintpaulia</i> 'Optimara Colorado' | Mike Cagley |
| <i>Sinningia</i> 'Li'l Georgie' | Lee Stradley |
| <i>Sinningia concinna</i> | Ken Moore |
| <i>Sinningia</i> 'Orange Raindrops' | Mike Cagley |
| <i>Smithiantha cinnabarina</i> | Barry Woolf |
| <i>Smithiantha aurantica</i> | Andrew Norris |
| <i>Streptocarpus</i> 'Shenandoah Sugar Plum' | Brian Connor |
| <i>Streptocarpus</i> 'Cape Essence' | Mike Cagley |
| <i>Tricantha tricantha dodsonii</i> | Barry Woolf |

National Capital Area Chapter (NCAC)

A Chapter of the Gesneriad Society, Inc.

"The purpose of the chapter shall be to afford a convenient and beneficial association of persons interested in Gesneriads; to stimulate a widespread interest in the identification, correct nomenclature, culture, and propagation of Gesneriads; and to encourage the origination and introduction of new cultivars."

(NCAC bylaws, revised April 1981.)

NCAC meets on the second Saturday of the month in the Administration Building of the U.S. National Arboretum. For details, please refer to the latest issue of *Petal Tones*, the website, or contact one of the people below. from the raffle table.

The Gesneriad Society website: www.gesneriadsociety.org

NCAC website: www.nationalcapitalgesneriads.org

NCAC Blog: <http://petaltones.blogspot.com/>

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