



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 10, Number 2

February 2019



Welcome to the latest issue of **Gleanings!** This issue includes Michael Riley's article on alpine gesneriads, streptocarpus photos from Karen Allen, information about a new T-shirt, and 2019 convention information.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**

Mel Grice, Editor



Terri Vicenzi from Bloomington, Indiana, USA, sent these photos of what appears to be a form of *Kohleria spicata* found in Costa Rica while she was on vacation there. She discovered this plant growing in the "cloud forest" region in the mountain highlands of central Costa Rica at about a 3,000 feet elevation.



Cultivating Alpine Gesneriads

Michael Riley

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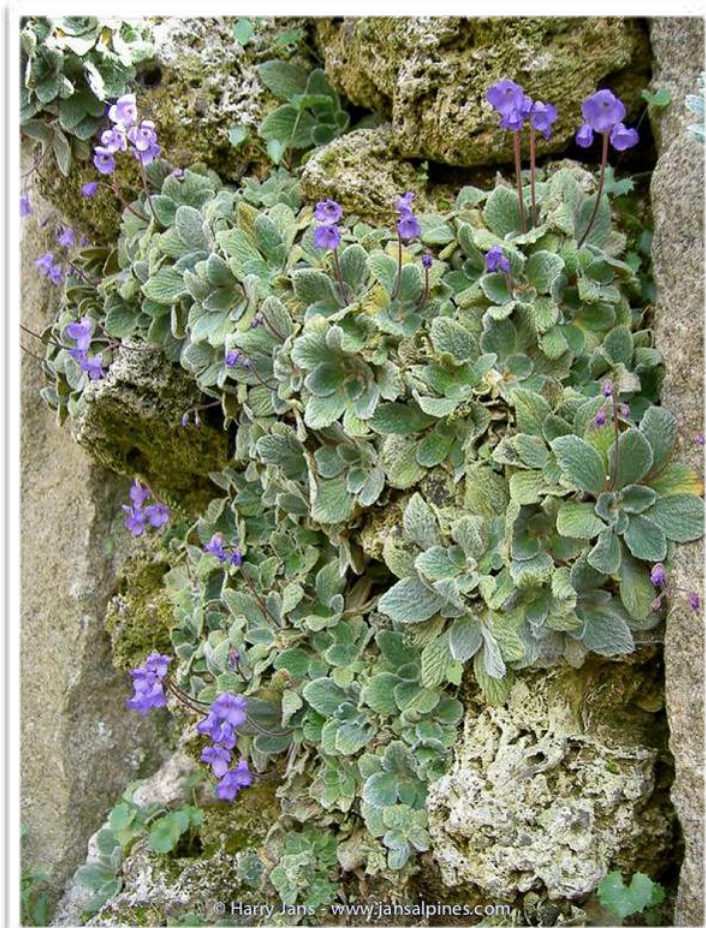
New York, New York, USA

The three European genera of alpine gesneriads have been in cultivation for many years, primarily in European rock gardens and glasshouses. Among them, the “jewel in the crown” of many rock gardens is the challenging *Jancaea heldreichii*, endemic to the pinnacle of Mount Olympus in Greece. The species of *Haberlea* and *Ramonda* are more adaptable in cultivation, as they are native to more diverse habitats throughout the Mediterranean region.

Unless one has access to excellent nurseries of alpine plants, such as those found in Europe and a few in North America, getting started with these plants is a slow process from seed or from leaf cuttings. Treasured seed, although never abundant in quantity, is often available from the Gesneriad Society Seed Fund, as well as the North American Rock Garden Society, the Alpine Garden Society, and the Scottish Rock Garden Club. Germination may be facilitated by, but seems to not be dependent on, stratification of the seed. Be careful that moss does not overtake the tiny seedlings in the first year or two, and by the third year one should have little rosettes about the size of a US quarter that are ready for the garden, a trough or other container. Patience is required but the larger these plants grow, the faster they flower.



Haberlea rhodopensis in a lush cultivated setting with many companion plants such as ramonda, rhododendron, pleione, assorted mosses and ferns, photographed in his garden by Ger van den Beuken, Horst, The Netherlands.



A colony of *Jancaea heldreichii* grows embedded in the tufa rock wall constructed, and photographed by Harry Jans in The Netherlands, where it self-seeds prolifically.

Although alpinists enjoy a certain amount of humidity in the air, the essential element seems to be keeping the root zone moist at all seasons of the year, even when the top growth seems semi-dormant. In nature these plants send their roots deep into rock crevices with the crowns in bright light and minimal, if any, direct sun. This consistent moisture to the roots can be achieved in cultivation by planting between rock “sandwiches” as devised by the late Harvey Wrightman. Mr. Wrightman planted between slices of tufa or sometimes drilled holes into the soft limestone tufa in order to plant very young seedlings into the small but deep holes. The limestone tufa is particularly porous and acts as a wick to draw up water from below or behind in just the right measure to moisten and consistently cool the roots. Harry Jans, an ingenious grower in the Netherlands, has constructed walls and columns of tufa with more moisture-retentive substrate behind for consistent moisture. Even *Jancaea heldreichii* has formed colonies on the north side of one of his walls.

Hardiness does not seem to be a deterrent to growing these plants even in the far north, but snow cover is an important advantage in such locations. Six inches of snow keeps everything underneath at a consistent temperature of 32°F/0°C and

retains humidity for the duration of the winter, even though the air above can be much colder and drier.

These delightful though challenging plants will reward your horticultural efforts. Get growing!

Right - Ramonda species buffered against the summer heat of a New York City rooftop in a concrete trough inside a styrofoam container with frequent watering. Photo by the author



This article appeared originally in GESNERIADS Vol. 68, No. 3, Third Quarter 2018, Peter Shalit, editor. Read other interesting articles like this about gesneriads by becoming a member of The Gesneriad Society and receiving our quarterly 64-page journal.

A longer article about alpine gesneriads, "The Wild Gesneriad Species of Greece", appears in GESNERIADS Vol. 68, No. 3, Third Quarter 2018, Peter Shalit, editor. Once you become a member of the Gesneriad Society you can download a PDF of this and other interesting issues.

New short-sleeve unisex T-shirt with *Saintpaulia ionantha* is now available from The Gesneriad Society Shop for \$20.00.

Available in eight different colors.

This t-shirt is everything you've dreamed of and more. It feels soft and lightweight, with the right amount of stretch. It's comfortable and flattering for both men and women.

- * 100% combed and ring-spun cotton (heather colors contain polyester)
- *Fabric weight: 4.2 oz (142 g/m²)
- *Shoulder-to-shoulder taping
- *Side-seamed

<https://shop.gesneriads.org/collections/frontpage/products/short-sleeve-unisex-t-shirt-with-saintpaulia-ionantha>



Streptocarpus

Karen Allen
karenjallen@hotmail.com
Fredericksburg, Virginia, USA



Streptocarpus 'Red Dawn'
Karen Allen photo



Streptocarpus 'Bukiet'
Karen Allen photo

Streptocarpus '3S-After The Rain'
A Karen Allen hybrid
Karen Allen photo



Streptocarpus 'Daybreak'
Karen Allen photo



Streptocarpus 'DS-Horus'
Karen Allen photo



Streptocarpus 'Spin Art'
Karen Allen photo





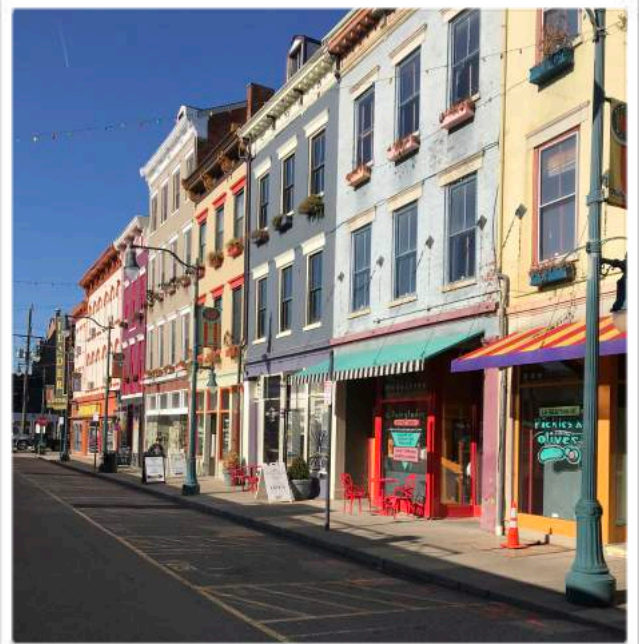
Streptocarpus '3S-Witching Hour'
A Karen Allen hybrid
Karen Allen photo

The 63rd Annual Convention of The Gesneriad Society July 1 to July 6, 2019

Online Registration Now Open

On Monday afternoon, July 1, we will board our air-conditioned bus to travel to Cincinnati's northern edge, the historic Over-the-Rhine (OTR) neighborhood. We will make a brief photo stop at Washington Park and view the newly renovated Music Hall. We will stop for lunch at Taft's Ale House where we will have lunch on our own. Taft's Ale House is a micro-brew pub constructed in 1850 where 25,000 historic Rookwood architectural tiles are installed.

After lunch, we will have a guided tour of the historic Rookwood Pottery Company founded 130 years ago by pioneering artist Maria Longworth-Nichols. The company today continues to create the highest quality Art Pottery and Architectural Tile. Our trip back to the hotel will be a brief bus tour of the Riverfront area including The Banks, Smale Riverfront Park, and the sports stadiums. We might even stop at Graeter's Ice Cream if there is time!



OTR neighborhood



Rookwood Pottery factory



This is only the afternoon part of the Monday tour. See [convention trips](#) for more information about other tours offered.

Mel Grice photos



From the editor —

Looking forward to seeing you all in July 2019 at the 63rd Annual Gesneriad Society Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio! It is going to be quite a celebration!

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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Betsy Gottshall, Development Chairperson
108 Godshall Road, Collegeville, PA 19426
For additional information, contact: gottshb@verizon.net

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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Or, charge my VISA, or MasterCard

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For application online: www.gesneriadsociety.org