



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 7, Number 1

January 2016

Welcome to the 7th year of **Gleanings**! This issue includes photos of what is blooming at Karyn Cichocki's house, a reprint from *CrossWords* celebrating 40 years of hybridizing, information about the second webinar, Coming Events, and a new cultivar. Hope you enjoy **Gleanings**!

Mel Grice, Editor

Alan LaVergne from Palo Alto, California sent these photos of *Sinningia hatschbachii*. He says that it has survived some overnight lows of 28°F (-2°C) this year with its blooms intact.



What's Blooming Now

Karyn Cichocki kdc05@ptd.net
Lafayette, New Jersey, USA

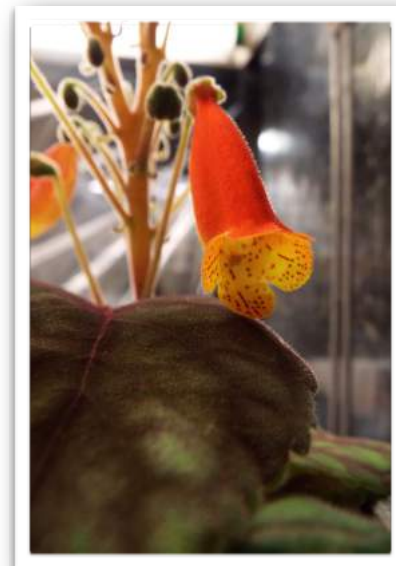


Sphaerorrhiza burchellii 'Rio Belchior'

Sphaerorrhiza burchellii 'Rio Belchior' only grows about 3" high and is a cute plant with flowers that last for several days.

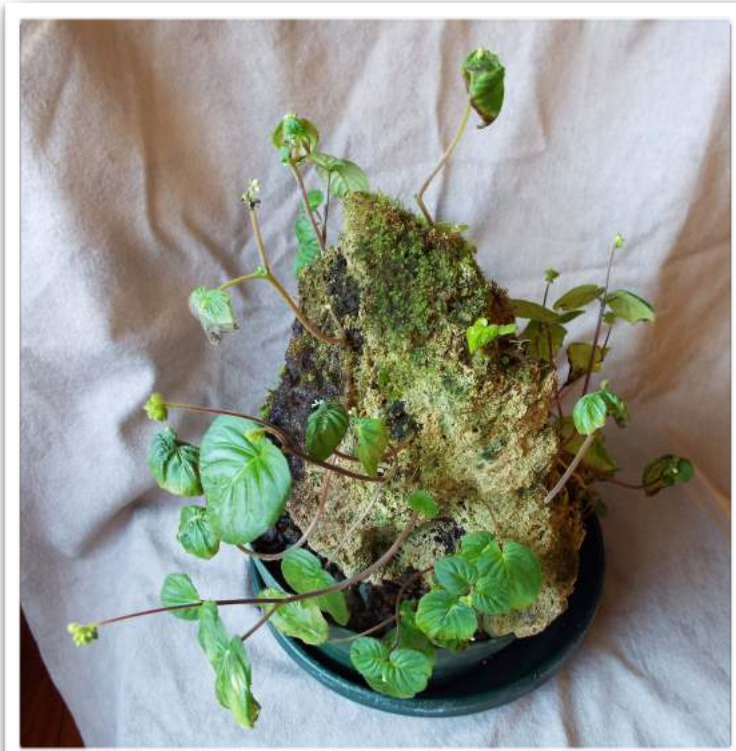


When I found the string-like rhizomes, I immediately knew how it got its name. From the Greek σφαίρ-, *sphaer-* = of round, globose form (from σφαίρα, *sphaira* = ball, sphere), and ρίζα, *rhiza* = root, rhizome.



Smithiantha zebrina

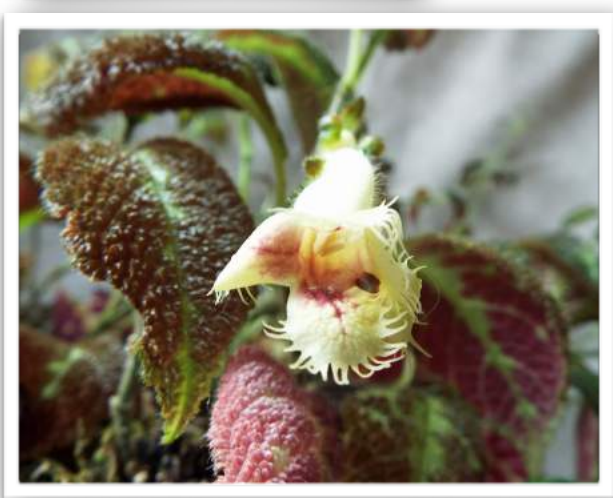
Karyn Cichocki
photos



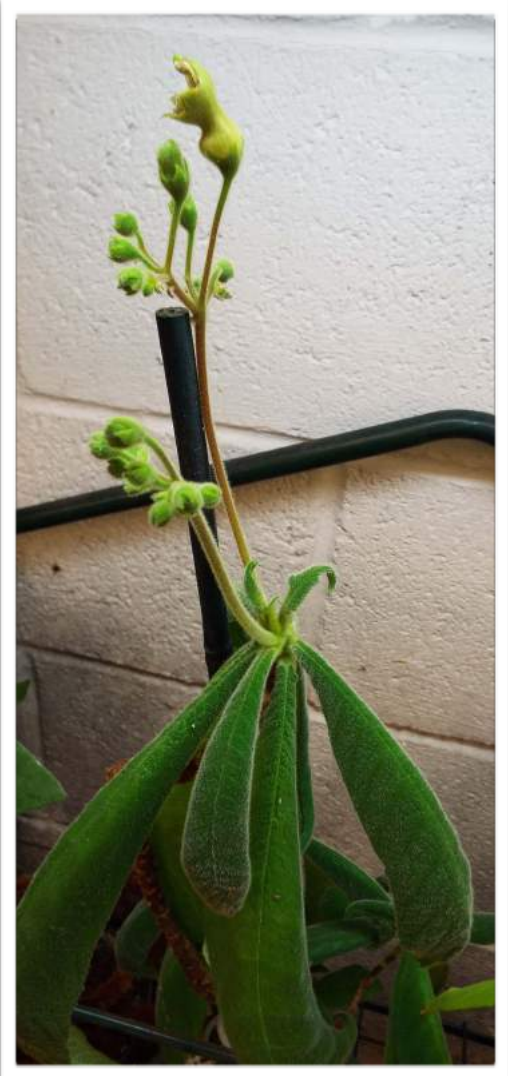
Epithema saxatile

I was finally able to get seed to germinate and have been growing the plants on a large piece of Tufa rock for 2 years. I exhibited the “rock” with the plants at the NE Regional this past October in the lesser known class. About two weeks after the show, I noticed what I thought might be buds forming and I’ve been keeping an eye on the plants to see an open flower.

Above left is a picture of the “rock” and plants. Above right are seeds (splash cup?) that have formed. They are very sticky and I’ve dispersed some of them back onto the rock.



Drymonia variegata



Here is a close-up of the flower, which is thought to be bat pollinated. There is no scent.

Karyn Cichocki photos

Rhytidophyllum exsertum 'Cuba'

I received this *Petrocosmea* sp. from Jim Roberts in October 2011 and it is blooming for me for the first time. I have it growing in hydroponic rocks.



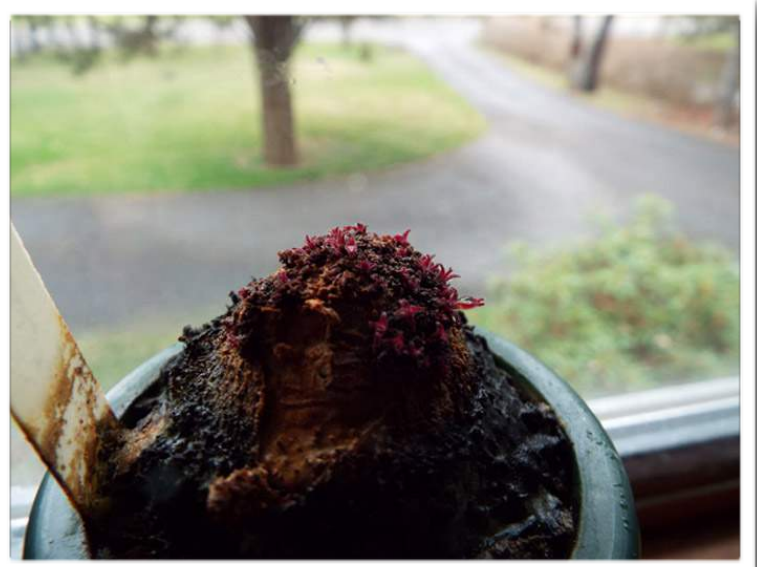
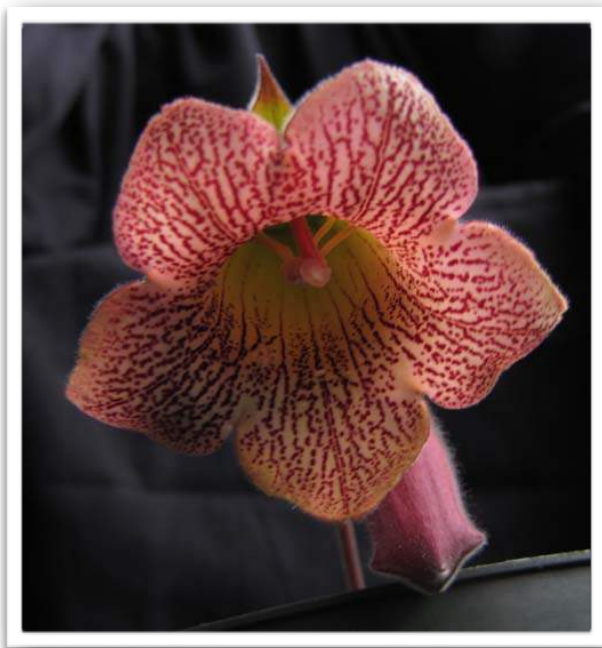
Ever since Alan LaVergne mentioned that he found that *Sinningia* sp. "Pancas" needed the natural length of daylight to blossom, I moved two of my tubers to my kitchen window. Every year one of the tubers shows little red nubs on the top of the tuber and nothing ever happens. Now that I moved them to the window they appeared to be getting larger. I have both tubers planted in hydroponic rocks in a 2" Oyama pot. The past couple of days I have been lightly spraying the tubers with water from a spray bottle and it appears that this has encouraged the flower buds to start growing.

The attached pictures show that you can at least tell that they are buds, but it reminds me of watching the buds forming on a primulina that will just sit there and do nothing for ages. This is the largest that the buds have gotten for me so I'm hoping that I will actually get a least one to reach blooming size.

I do take the pots down from the window sill when the evening temps are going to drop below 40°F, which lately hasn't been too often.

Here is another photo. I'm really happy about the progression since this is the farthest that the buds have come along. Putting it in the window to get natural light has done the trick. Now I just have to be patient.

Karyn



Alan LaVergne sent the photo on the left of *Sinningia* sp. "Pancas" so you can enjoy the flower that Karyn is hoping to see. He says that it is a shy bloomer, but worth the wait for its carefully rationed blooms. The flower hangs almost vertically, so he had to put the pot up on the middle rung of a ladder to show you a view of the throat.

Thanks Alan!

The Gesneriad Hybridizer's Association (GHA) is celebrating 40 years of publishing the newsletter, *CrossWords*. The 40th anniversary issue should be out by the end of January. There is still time to join GHA if you are not currently a member and receive this special issue. <http://gesneriadsociety.org/the-gesneriad-hybridizers-association/>

To celebrate this milestone, here is a reprint from *CrossWords*, Vol. 22, Issue 3, 1998, Dale Martens, editor.

*Editor's note – The genus *Chirita* was reclassified in 2011 and most of the plants mentioned in the reprint below are now reclassified as *Primulina*.

Hybridizing *Chirita**

Toshijiro Okuto, Japan

When the flowers open, the pistil is ready to accept pollen. Pollination a few days after the flowers start to open will be desirable. I remove the pollen sacs before the flowers open at the latest. Even for the hybrids, said to be of sterile pollen, I do that. If the pollen sacs don't appear to have split, you may use the flower for the seed parent just after the opening. I cut the side of the corolla tube and take off the sacs with tweezers confirming the sacs haven't split.

To pollinate the pistil, I hold the pollen sacs with tweezers and rub the pollen directly on the stigma. When the crossings are successfully done, the seed pods start to develop. When you see the pods develop longer than the flower tubes, you can expect the crossings were successfully done. If the seed isn't formed, the seed pods stay short. The seed pods of *chirita* are linear. The upper side of the seed pods of *chirita*, if not all, split before maturing. The seed is still whitish or light brown then, so you may want to wait until the seed turns brown or black. The seed doesn't fall off when it hasn't matured. It'll take about two months or more to mature well, but then the seed pods might die before that (sometimes a month and a half or some more after crossings), you might expect to get a few viable seed. The seed pods of *Chirita briggsioides* and *C. speciosa* didn't split in three months, but I got many viable seed.

I sow few seed (maybe thirty or some more) as soon as possible after the harvest, and store the rest in a refrigerator in sealed plastic bags. *Chirita* seed looks to be short lived and loose the viability in a few years, in comparison with *streptocarpus* seeds which survive more than ten years under the same conditions. I use fine vermiculite for sowing medium because transplanting is easy, and I give dilute nutrients once or twice after the germination. It'll take two or three weeks for sprouting. I don't use bottom heat for germination. I sow at greenhouse or room at the temperature of 20-25°C. I grow few plants to maturity for one crossing, ten plants at most, because the space is limited.

Chirita starts to bloom in about a year at the shortest. But it depends on the growing conditions and the sowing time of the year, e.g. when you sow the hybrids of spring flowering species in autumn-winter, you have to wait until spring of the second year for the first blooming. Leaf types of hybrids are intermediate of parents in my experience. I haven't done the crossings with *Chirita sinensis* with silver veins, so I cannot tell you whether the clear veins are inherited from either of the parents or not. *Chirita* 'Hisako' with silver veins of Mr. Nakayama is the result from the crossing of two different variants of *C. sinensis* which have silver veins each.

It looks as though the yellow color of *Chirita eburnea* is dominant over the purple color of other species. As far as I know, all of the hybrids of yellow *C. eburnea* with blue *eburnea* produced yellow color, except for my crossing. As for my hybrid of yellow *eburnea* x blue *eburnea*, I had a curious experience that it produced blue flowers at first, but all the progeny from tip cuttings and leaf cuttings of the original plant bloomed yellow.

I'm trying to cross *Chirita briggsioides* or *Chirita speciosa* with others. The results so far haven't been successful. Pollinations of *C. briggsioides* on *C. eburnea* or *C. sinensis* produced the long seed pods, but the peduncles died out in August, a month or a little more after the pollination. It seemed for me that the crossings were done well, but they couldn't survive the heat in the mid-summer, up to 35°C every day, in the greenhouse. I crossed *C. briggsioides* with others in this fall again and am watching the results.

Editor's note: See more of Mr. Okuto's hybrids on Ron Myhr's Gesneriad Reference Web site: <http://www.gesneriads.ca>

Also see Mr. Okuto's Chirita hybrids and photos in THE GLOXINIAN, Second Quarter, 1998.

Gesneriad Webinars

Gesneriad Society Webinar Information

Each webinar (live or anytime) will cost \$9.95 and may be ordered at <http://shop.gesneriadsociety.org/>

Information for live webinars

All live webinars will begin at 9 p.m. EST (or, 8 p.m. CST, 7 p.m. MST and 6 p.m. PST). Orders received within 24 hours of the event may not be able to be accommodated and the person will be advised as to options. The viewing link will be sent within 24 hours of presentation time, and a reminder email will be sent one hour before the presentation. Please note that, while you can have as many people as you want in the room listening, you cannot share your link with others. You will be able to ask questions.

Information for anytime webinars

Anytime webinars will be available the day after the live webinar. The viewing link will be sent within 48 hours of placement of the order. Please note that while you can have as many people as you want in the room listening, you cannot share your link with others. You will not be able to ask questions. The anytime webinar will be available for up to three months following the live webinar.

January 26, 2016

Growing and Showing Episcias: Listen to a Pro from the Comfort of Your Home

Have you always admired the foliage of a well-grown episcia? Would you love to grow those delicate pink ones? Would you like to know how to grow them but don't know where to start? The Gesneriad Society is now offering you a unique opportunity to listen to one of its own members, Thad Scaggs, as he shares his considerable expertise on this subject. The "any time" viewing



Thad Scaggs

period will be January 27- April 27. Thad Scaggs has won many prizes and hybridizes episcias, African violets, smithianthas, and gesneriad intergenerics. Now, you'll have the opportunity to listen to him discuss how he grows his mouth-watering episcias.

February 23, 2016

Growing and Showing Miniature Sinningias: Listen to a Pro from the Comfort of Your Home

Miniature sinningias are not nearly as difficult to grow as you might imagine. These delicate looking plants can be quite accommodating. Would you like to know how to grow them better? Are you not quite certain where to start? The "any time" viewing period will be February 24 - May 24. Dale Martens, 2014 winner of Best Streptocarpus and Best in Show at The Gesneriad Society's annual convention, discusses growing and showing miniature sinningias. Perhaps you've seen Dale Martens postings on several discussion groups or read her articles in **Gesneriads** journal. Now, you'll have the opportunity to listen to her discuss how she grows show-stopping specimens of this genus.

Coming Events

February 20 — Phoenix, AZ

Desert Sun African Violet & Gesneriad Society Show and Plant Sale

Valley Garden Center, 1809 North 15th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85007

February 20 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Contact: annicie@cox.net 623-398-8133

March 17-18 — Christiana, DE

Delaware African Violet & Gesneriad Society Exhibit, Demonstrations and Sale

Boscov's, West Main Street, Christiana, DE 19702 (second floor)

March 17 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

March 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

More Information: <http://gesneriadsociety.org/chapters/DAVS>

March 19 — Seattle, WA

The Puget Sound Gesneriad Society Annual Show and Sale

Swanson's Nursery, 9701 15th Ave. NW, Seattle, WA 98117

March 19 - Plant sale from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Show from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Bob Clark bobclark98122@gmail.com 206-819-6239

April 2 — Ann Arbor, MI

Michigan State AVS Display and Sale

Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105

From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A large selection of hard to find European and Russian African violets and Streptocarpus will be available.

Contact: Lynn Allen lynnallen0413@comcast.net

April 3 – Toronto, ON, Canada
Toronto Gesneriad Society Annual Show and Sale

Toronto Botanical Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, Toronto, ON M3C 1P2

April 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Admission \$2.00

Contact: Doris Brownlie jtbrownlie@idirect.com 905-270-6776 or

<http://torontogesneriadsociety.org>

April 30 - May 1 – Minneapolis, MN
Twin Cities Gesneriad Society Display and Sale

Bachman's Heritage Center, 6019 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55419

Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Contact: violetsrusmn@gmail.com or <http://twincitiesgesneriads.blogspot.com>

July 5 - 9 – Wilmington, DE,
60th Annual Gesneriad Society Convention

Hosted by the Delaware African Violet and Gesneriad Society

DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Wilmington - Legal District, 700 N. King Street, Wilmington, DE 19801

Register online: <http://gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2016-convention-wilmington-delaware/>

Contact: gesneriadregistrar@gmail.com for further inquiries.

New Cultivar

Primulina eburnea 'SCBG Red Butterfly', 2015, IR151291, Ning Zu-Lin, Li Dong-Mei, Liu Juan, Kang Ming, Guangdong, China (natural variation of *Primulina eburnea* found in Jianghua county, Hunan province.). Fertile, but reproducible only vegetatively. Rosette. Leaves deep green, 8.5-15 cm long x 4.2-8.5 cm wide with 1.5-4 cm petiole, ovate with entire margin, cuneate base and acute tip, hairy. Calyx split, red-purple, 8-10 mm long. Pedicel 1-1.5 cm with 4-5 flowers. Corolla salverform, 3.8-4.5 cm long corolla, 2.2 - 2.5 cm long tube x 2.8-3.2 cm wide with 1.2 cm orifice, violet, bracts broadly ovate, bright red, 3.5 x 2-3.8 cm. Corolla outside densely glandular villous, calyx linear-lanceolate reddish.



See more new introductions in *GESNERIADS* Vol. 66, No. 1, First Quarter 2016, Peter Shalit, editor. Read interesting articles about gesneriads by becoming a member of The Gesneriad Society and receiving our quarterly 64-page journal.



From the editor —

Ohio finally had its first snowfall this week. It is such a pleasure to go into the plant room and see green plants in bloom while there is snow outside! I just registered for the Gesneriad Society Convention in Wilmington, Delaware this July. See registration information on the previous page.

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

Mel

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Paul Susi, Development Chairperson
2 Rushmore Street, South Huntington, NY 11746
For additional information, contact: gesneriaddevelopment@gmail.com

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.

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I wish to make a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

Elvin McDonald Research Endowment Fund Nellie D. Sleeth Scholarship Endowment Fund

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Or, charge my VISA, or MasterCard

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Signature _____ Amount _____

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For application online: www.gesneriadsociety.org