the
GLOXINIAN
The Journal for Gesneriad Growers
Vol. 50, No. 2 Second Quarter 2000

***Streptocarpus* hybrid**

American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

A non-profit membership corporation chartered by the State of Missouri

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Bylaws: Copies of AGGS Bylaws are available to all members by writing to Pat Richards, 15105 S. Seminole Dr., Olathe, KS 66062-3004.

Chapters: Report changes of chapter presidents to the Editor of THE GLOXINIAN.

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American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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Second Quarter ..... January 10
Third Quarter ..... April 10
Fourth Quarter ..... July 10

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Streptocarpus fasciatus
× 'Black Panther'
grown by Marlene Bean
(photo by Ruben Jiminez)

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

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Color photo on page 38 (bottom) sponsored by Marlene Beam
Color photo on page 38 (top) sponsored by Dale Martens in lieu of accepting flower show awards
Color photo on page 49 (top) sponsored by the Long Island Chapter
in lieu of speakers fees for Ray Coyle and Ed Bradford
Color photos on page 35 sponsored by the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter
in honor of Quentin Schlieder and with thanks to Ben Paternoster
Color photo on page 39 (bottom) sponsored by the Toronto Gesneriad Society
and the Lakeshore African Violet Society, in honor of Dale Martens
Color photo on page 52 sponsored by the Long Island Chapter

ADVERTISERS DIRECTORY

President's Message

Jon Dixon <president@aggs.org>
55 Tum Suden Way, Woodside, CA 94062

One of the many important services that AGGS provides our membership is the AGGS library. We provide slide and video programs complete with written scripts for use by chapters and members. These programs are carefully put together, with excellent photography combined with well-written expert commentary. In recent years we have retired many of our older programs and have begun an ambitious program to create new ones. This winter our Library and Education Chair, Marlene Beam, has reluctantly found it necessary to resign. She has ably presided over the rebuilding of our library as well as developed an excellent system for sending programs to chapters outside of the U S. Dee Stewart, from the New England Chapter, has become the new chair. She now oversees the assignment and mailing of programs as well as the creation of new slide shows. But, hers is not a job for one person alone. In order to restock our library with new programs, we need the help of all AGGS members. If you would like to help in this endeavor, please contact Dee—her mailing address is listed on the inside cover of THE GLOXINIAN, along with her email address. She, along with all members of the AGGS Board of Directors, can be contacted through the officers' page at the AGGS web site <www.aggs.org>.

Helen Freidberg, our Conventions Chair, reports that the Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter will host the 2002 convention. This chapter holds a large and popular annual show and sale, attracting visitors from throughout the East Coast. I'm sure we can look forward to another super convention in New Jersey. AGGS continues to need chapter hosts for future conventions, however. Hosting a convention is a great project, offering an opportunity for local members to meet AGGS members in their own back yard, raise funds through plant sales, and find new members through convention publicity. AGGS assists local hosts with expertise and a wealth of experienced members who will step in to help at all levels of convention planning and staffing. Interested chapters should contact Helen, by mail or email.

In November of last year, Laura Johnson assumed the job of Seed Fund Chair. Her job is to provide seed packets on request to AGGS members. Taking over from Maryjane Evans, she has a daunting responsibility as the Seed Fund has grown to over 700 varieties of gesneriads making it one of the most exhaustive listings of specialized seed of any organization in the world. In order to maintain the quality of the Fund, she needs the assistance of everyone in AGGS. We need donations of all varieties of gesneriads, either new or unlisted species and hybrids, as well as re-supply of varieties already listed.

These are just a few of many ways that members and chapters can work together to help our society. For more information on these and other projects, contact our committee chairmen. Looking forward to seeing you in Tampa,

Jon

Special Contributions

Paul F. Kroll, Corresponding Secretary <pfkroll@worldnet.att.net>
4325 Two Rod Road, East Aurora, NY 14052-9693

FRANCES BATCHELLER ENDOWMENT FUND — $260

New England Chapter

Frances Batcheller in memory of Dr. Robert E. Lee

Cornell University's Department of Floriculture & Ornamental Horticulture in memory of Dr. Robert E. Lee

Professor Thomas C. Weiler, Cornell University, in memory of Dr. Robert E. Lee

Frances Batcheller, in memory of Diantha Buell

Molly Schneider, in lieu of Awards of Appreciation Chair expenses

ELVIN MCDONALD RESEARCH FUND — $260

Corliss Engle, in memory of Anne Crowley

Puget Sound Gesneriad Society, in memory of Jeanne Dixon

Rita Sendic, in memory of Lyndon Lyon

Long Island Chapter, in lieu of speaker's fee to John Boggan

John G.Seeley, Professor Emeritus, Cornell Univeristy, in memory of Dr. Robert E. Lee

Michael Riley, in memory of Dr. Robert E. Lee

FUND FOR PROGRESS/COLOR PHOTO FUND — $1670

Carol Ann Bonner, in lieu of accepting flower show award

Dale Martens, in lieu of flower show awards

Nancy Cooper, in memory of George Elbert

Frelinghuysen Arboretum Chapter, with appreciation to Ben Paternoster for judging school

Gesneriasterna, with thanks to the first AGGS judging team to Sweden

Ingrid Lindskog, in gratitude for those who have worked so hard on THE GLOXINIAN

Lois Buschke, in honor of Maryjane Evans

Mrs. N. R. Henson

Long Island Chapter, in lieu of speaker's fee to Edward Bradford

Frelingheusen Arboretum Gesneriad Society, in honor of Quentin Schlieder

Rosalind Gold in appreciation of the Gesneriphiles email discussion group

Nancy A. Amelung

Long Island Chapter

Toronto Gesneriad Society and Lakeshore African Violet Society, in honor of Dale Martens

Dale Martens' plant offers to benefit the Color Fund, donations from:

Belisle's Violet House, William Crews, Carolyn Conlin-Lane, Donna Guiliano, Barbara Matthews, David Lloyd Nelson, Helen Officer, Patty Parker, Carol Schreck, Jane Selleck, Carol Smith, Fay Wagman

LIBRARY AND EDUCATION

Irwin Rosenblum — donation of slide collection

Seed Fund

Laura Johnson <seedster@netperson.net>
15832 Winter Park Drive, Macomb, MI 48044-3881

When you grow seed from a hybrid, most likely the seedlings won't be identical to the parent plant. They might be similar in many ways, but they will be different enough that they must not be labeled the same. Only a genetic duplicate should have the same name as a hybrid parent plant. This means only vegetatively grown plants, such as leaf or stem cuttings, can take that honor. Plants grown from hybrid seed must always be labeled as "plant name × self" in order to differentiate them from cutting-grown plants. The hybrid seed in the Fund is listed as "plant name × self" to stress the fact that it *will not* produce an identical copy of the parent. This is especially important if you sell or give away your seed-grown plants. Without the "× self" part of the name, other people might believe they are getting a cutting-grown plant. Growing hybrid seed is fun, however. The variations make it interesting.

For non-US members: Obtaining US postage for your SASE can be difficult. You can obtain an International Reply Coupon from the postal service in many countries which I can exchange for US postage. If your order is via credit card, I can bill the postage to your card along with your seed order. Just request this when you order. No matter where you live, please include the self-addressed envelope.

I would like to thank the kind folks who have contributed to our fund: D. & R. Arnold, Marlene Beam, Alain Chautems, Jon Dixon, Maryjane Evans, Robert Hall, R. David Harley, Richard Holzman, Alan LaVergne, Leopoldo Leon, Don Mahoney, Toshijiro Okuto, Mauro Peixoto and Linda Zillich.

ADDITIONS:

Aeschynanthus sp. (yellow) (Philippines) (B)
Chirita Malaysian hybrid mix (LM)
Nematanthus sp. GRF3555 (B)
Paliavana werdermannii AC2310 (S,T)
Sinningia cardinalis (dark calyx) (LM)
Sinningia incarnata (MT)
Sinningia piresiana (L)
Sinningia sceptrum AC2406 (T)

- *Sinningia* 'Beauty' × self (F, P)
- *Sinningia* 'Cheryl M.' × self (F, P)
- *Sinningia* 'Delta Fox' × self (F, P)
- *Sinningia* 'Maiden's Blush' × self (F, P)

Sinningia speciosa hybrid 'California Minis' (F, L)

- denotes LIMITED quantities

DELETIONS:

Mitraria coccinea
Napeanthus reitzii
Saintpaulia difficilis
Saintpaulia shumensis EE

Seed Packets — $1.50 each

Please

- Make checks payable to the AGGS Seed Fund in U.S. funds
- To pay by credit card, send your credit card number, expiration date, and signature, and indicate if the card is Mastercard or Visa ($6.00 minimum)
- Remember to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope
- List alternate choices
- Include your membership number (first number on your mailing label)

The Shopping Mall

JUST ENOUGH SINNINGIAS. Catalog $2 (with color photos $5). P.O. Box 560493, Orlando, FL 32856.

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WEISS' GESNERIADS, 'Plants Grown for Distinctive Foliage' — Episcias, Begonias, Sinningias, Chiritas, plants and cuttings. Free Catalog. 2293 So. Taylor Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

Proposed AGGS Bylaws Amendment

At the 1999 AGGS Convention Board Meeting in Nashville, the Board approved an amendment to the AGGS Bylaws. As it stands now, in the AGGS Bylaws, Article VII, Chapters & Affiliates, Section 3, reads as follows:

"Chapter Duties—Each chapter shall file with the AGGS Recording Secretary a copy of its Bylaws and all subsequent amendments, the names and addresses of all of its members, and of all new members, and the names and addresses of all officers immediately following their election."

This paragraph is not consistent with current practice. Your AGGS Board voted to amend the Bylaws such that the above text would read:

"Chapter Duties—Each Chapter shall file with AGGS a copy of its Bylaws and shall notify AGGS annually of the names and addresses of the officers and the total number of dues-paying members, and any amendments made in the past year to the Chapter Bylaws."

This amendment will be voted on at the AGGS Annual Meeting in Tampa on July 7, 2000.

Peter Shalit, Recording Secretary

American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

44th Annual Convention, 2000
July 4 to July 8, Tampa, Florida

Call for 2000 Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the members of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society will be held on Friday, July 7, at 12:00 noon for the purpose of transacting business which may properly come before the meeting.

Call for 2000 Board of Directors Meetings

The Board of Directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 4, 2000, at 1:00 P.M., for the purpose of transacting business that may properly come before the meeting. A special Board meeting will be held on Friday, July 7, at 4:00 P.M. A meeting of the new Board will be held on Sunday, July 9 at 9:00 A.M.

Peter Shalit
Recording Secretary

Nominating Committee Report

The following members have agreed to have their names put in nomination as directors for a three-year term ending in 2003:

Susan Grose	Overland, Kansas
Paul Kroll	East Aurora, New York
Suzie Larouche	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Ingrid Lindskog	Umeå, Sweden
Julie Mavity-Hudson	Joelton, Tennessee
Dee Stewart	Stow, Massachusetts
Colleen Turley	Fredericksburg, Virginia

AGGS Nominating Committee: *Bob Connelly, Chair*
Paul Kroll
Marlene Beam

Think AGGS Auction ...

...when potting your gesneriads, cleaning up the attic, shopping and browsing, packing for Convention. Start looking for donations that are gesneriad and/or horticulturally related to send or bring to Convention, especially live plant material, to benefit the Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund.

Support AGGS — First Donate, Then Bid!

Mark These Dates on Your Calendar!

April 30 Deadline for early registration and concomitant early entry to plant sales.

June 1 Convention registration deadline. All registrations received after this date will be on a space-available basis and will be charged an additional late fee of $25.

June 10 Registration deadline for Judging School. Contact Ben Paternoster, 14 Coptor Court, Huntington, NY 11743-2335.

Registration deadline for artistic entry niches. Contact Diane Heras, 8633 Quail Hollow Blvd, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544 (Phone 813-973-8611).

Registration deadline for commercial and educational display spaces. Contact Fay Wagman, 52 Harper Dr., Pittsford, NY 14534 (Phone 716-381-6384); email <FayW@aol.com>.

June 19 Hotel registration deadline for special group rates.

"Y2K in Tampa Bay"—What a Great Idea!

Barbara Matthews <mathba@aol.com>
1206 Terra Mar Dr., Tampa, FL 33613

Choosing a vacation destination in Florida is like eating a Lay's Potato Chip—you can't stop at just one. And that is why this is such a Great Idea—Tampa is Florida's perfect starting place for any vacation destinations you may have in mind, either before or after the convention.

Getting here is half the fun. Tampa International Airport is the world's most acclaimed airport, having been cited as the Number One favorite in the country for passenger comfort and efficiency. Tampa is also Florida's largest Canadian gateway. Those who prefer to drive will find that the Interstate 275 exit at Westshore Boulevard drops them off nearly at the hotel's front door.

So now you have arrived, unpacked, checked out the pool and exercise room, and maybe sampled a DoubleTree chocolate chip cookie. Those who arrive in time for Wednesday's activities have a full slate of meetings or the judging school to occupy their time. If you have chosen an earlier arrival to do some sightseeing before getting down to serious convention business, there are plenty of day trips and other tourist activities available. But get back in time for the Gesneriad Hybridizers' Association meeting Wednesday night. It is open to everyone and is a fascinating preview of exciting new and upcoming hybrids. And everyone wants to win one of Dale Martens' door prizes.

Thursday morning the tour buses leave at 8:30 a.m. and head about one hour and fifteen minutes south to the first of four plant-related destinations. Expect to arrive back at the hotel about 4:30 p.m. Plan for a strenuous day by wearing light, comfortable clothing and good walking shoes. Sunscreen and a sun hat are must-haves for those going on this tour. A box lunch under the Banyan trees will be offered at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. Other stops are at the Gesneriad Research Foundation, a visit with Jerry Trowbridge and his columneas, and at Florida Native Orchids. Some conventioneers who are frequent Florida visitors may have already visited these sites. An interesting list of other gardens and nurseries will be included in the convention packet.

Flower Show entries will be accepted starting at 6:00 p.m. You will find all of the convention activities conveniently located in one area of the first floor just off the main lobby.

Thursday evening is the eagerly anticipated opening of the sales room. Save your pennies for this one! EARLY admission (10:00 p.m.) is determined by the postmark on your registration which MUST be no later than April 30, 2000 in order to qualify. Those who miss this deadline will be admitted to the sales room at 10:30 p.m. The Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society has been preparing for a year for this event and we have some often-requested, hard-to-find plants to offer. We'll do our best to keep the sales room stocked, but some items may be in limited supply.

Just as exciting are the silent and live auction items on display. Bid early and often. The "Y2K in Tampa Bay" shirts modeled in Nashville (see the photo on page 36 of the 1Q00 issue of TG) will be available or may be ordered before the convention. Information will be included with your registration confirmation.

Early Friday morning, the judges and clerks will be hard at work in the flower show room. Then everyone will turn their attention to Dale Martens' impressive display of speakers. A rare treat is in store when Paul Cummiskey, well-known sinningia hybridizer from Small's Nursery in Florida, starts things off with his talk on creating hybrids. Paul's Rainbow Series is coveted by sinningia fanciers.

The afternoon seminar features John Boggan of Smithsonian Institution fame, speaking on *Chirita* which he has dubbed the "Gesneriad of the New Millennium". John's reputation as a hybridizer of chiritas goes before him.

For the first Saturday morning lecture, Dale has scooped up John Clark, intrepid explorer, from the Smithsonian Institution. John will intrigue everyone with his talk on gesneriad conservation and botanical exploration in northwestern Ecuador. Wrapping up the lecture series on Saturday will be Dr. Hans Wiehler from the Gesneriad Research Foundation. Dr. Wiehler leads gesneriad enthusiasts on annual field trips to exotic regions in search of new or elusive genera. With these credentials, his talk on pouched flowers promises to enhance our knowledge of some of our favorite plants.

Saturday evening's grand finale will be a dinner cruise, with music and dancing, aboard the "Starlight Princess". The cruise boat will remain within Clearwater Harbor. The buses leave the hotel at 5:30 p.m. and will return about 11:30 p.m. Attire for this occasion is dressy-casual.

If you have energy left over, and are looking for extra things to do, visiting the University of South Florida's Botanical Gardens Tropical Plant Fair can be a rewarding adventure. It is being held on Saturday and Sunday, July 8 and 9. About twenty-five vendors will be selling a wide variety of plants, plus an interesting selection is always available in the plant shop. You'll find more information in your registration packet.

Here are some Great Ideas for day trips and sightseeing. Consider the natural wonders of the Bok Singing Tower in Lake Wales, Cypress Gardens or Florida's original attraction, Silver Springs, all in central Florida, about a 90-minute drive east on Interstate 4. Here also, in the Orlando area, are several of the most-visited theme parks: DisneyWorld and Epcot Center, Sea World, and Universal Studios. Each park is a full day of fun for everyone. To do it all, plan to stay more than one day.

For a complete change of pace, go a short distance north of Tampa and visit Homosassa Springs and the famous sponge docks at Tarpon Springs. Or head south to Sarasota's magnificent Ringling Museum. Don't overlook The Pier, the Salvadore Dali Museum, and Haslam's Bookstore in St. Peterberg. No visit to Florida is complete without a stroll on one of the many Gulf beaches. Take a trip to St. Pete Beach and indulge yourself with lunch at the Don CeSar Hotel. Naturalists can check out the local flora and fauna with an early morning visit to Lettuce Lake Park or Hillsborough State Park, both in the Tampa area on the Hillsborough River. You can even rent a canoe and get up close and personal with a 'gator. Continue exploring the "real Florida" with a trip to the home of author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings ("The Yearling") in Cross Creek.

Is shopping for antiques, collectibles and unusual gifts on your agenda? Head north on I-275 to historic Dade City's 50+ shops and a dining experience at "Lunch on Limoge" so unique it was featured in "Southern Living Magazine". Finish the day at Roger's Christmas House in Brooksville. Enjoy five charming houses filled with treasures for all ages.

Now a word for first-timers about the logistics of getting all your new plants home on the plane. Two words, "plan ahead", are the key to solving this dilemma. Pack an empty tote bag, duffle bag or shopping bag(s) with handles and some pieces of cardboard that you've cut to fit inside to create a "box" that will stabilize your plants. Roll the plants individually in newspaper and pack them closely together. Many folks remove plants from pots to save space when packing them. Bring plastic bags for cuttings. Keep the airline's carry-on rules in mind as some are fussier than others about the size of carry-on items.

There is one more Great Idea to add to the list, and this one's just for you. Cuddle up to your computer and register online <www.aggs.org> or hustle out to your mailbox and get that registration headed our way. Today! Okay? Now, let's hear it for "Y-2-K in Tam-pa Bay"!!! Hoo-ray!! (Don't you just love it when a plan comes together?)

Gesneriad Register

Judy Becker, Registrar <jbecker@mohawk.net>
432 Undermountain Rd., Salisbury, CT 06068

The following registrations should be added to the Registered Gesneriads List found in Appendix C of the 1990 Gesneriad Register:

99711	*Sinningia* 'Pink Tiger'	*S.* 'California Gold' × (*eumorpha* × *striata*)	D. Martens
99712	*Smithiantha* 'Golden Leopard'	*S. zebrina* hybrid × *S. aurantiaca*	D. Martens
99713	*Smithiantha* 'Sassy Redhead'	*S.zebrina* hybrid × unnamed Kartuz hybrid	D. Martens
99714	*Streptocarpus* 'Transatlantic Sunset'	*S.* 'Ruby Anniversary' × (*S. primulifolius* × *S.* 'Elsi')	D. Martens/ C. Rose
99715	*Smithiantha* 'Hot Pink Lady'	*S.zebrina* hybrid × unnamed Kartuz kybrid	D. Martens
99716	*Sinningia* 'Mauro'	(*S. aggregata* 'Pendulina' × *S.* 'Cupid's Bouquet') × *S. tubiflora*	I. Montgomery
99717	*Streptocarpus* 'Pudgen'	(parentage unknown)	MJ Tyler/ J. Dixon
99718	*Chirita* 'Vera'	*C. eburnea* (yellow) × *C. eburnea* (blue)	I. Lindskog
99719	*Streptocarpus* 'Victorian Lace'	*S.* 'Holiday White' × self	P. Lee

Descriptions are as follows:

***Sinningia* 'Pink Tiger',** 1999, IR99711, Dale Martens, TX, (*S.* 'California Gold' × [*S. eumorpha* × *S. striata*]). Cross made 11/96, planted 12/96 and first bloomed 4/97. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Upright basal rosette. Leaves smooth, dark green, 10 cm long x 12 cm wide with 6 cm petiole, orbicular with serrate margin, acute tip and cordate base. Calyx green, split, 3 cm long. Up to 3 flowers per axil on 4.5 cm pedicel. Corolla salverform, tube 4 cm long, limb 3 cm across, light pink outside, bright pink (RHS 66D) inside with dark *striata* stripes on yellow and white throat.

***Smithiantha* 'Golden Leopard',** 1999, IR99712, Dale Martens, TX, (*S. zebrina* hybrid × *S. aurantiaca*). Cross made 11/97, planted 3/98 and first bloomed 12/98. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Upright rosette. Leaves green with red hairs, 8 cm long x 9.5 cm wide, orbicular with serrate margin and acute tip. 23 flowers per inflorescence. Corolla infundibuliform, tube 2.5 cm long, limb 1.5 cm wide, yellow orange (RHS 23A) with (RHS 32D) throat, orange dots (25A) on throat.

***Smithiantha* 'Sassy Redhead',** 1999, IR99713, Dale Martens, TX, (*S. zebrina* hybrid × *S.* Kartuz hybrid). Cross made 11/97, planted 2/98 and first flowered 1/99. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Upright rosette to 23 cm tall. Leaves maroon-green with reddish hairs, 11 cm long x 9 cm wide with 6 cm petiole, ovate with serrate margin, acute tip and cordate base. Flower infundibuliform, tube 3.75 cm long, limb 2 cm wide, very bright red (RHS 53A) with egg-shell throat edged in red, with red dots and dashes in throat.

***Streptocarpus* 'Transatlantic Sunset',** 1999, IR99714, Dale Martens, TX, (Chris Rose, England, hybridizer) [1998]. (*S.* 'Ruby Anniversary' × [*S. primulifolius* × *S.* 'Elsi']). Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Rosette. Leaves bullate, green, 20 cm long x 6 cm wide, linear with serrate margin and acute tip. 3 flowers per peduncle. Calyx split, green, 0.75 cm long.

Streptocarpus 'Victorian Lace'

Streptocarpus 'Pudgen'

Chirita 'Vera'

Sinningia 'Pink Tiger'

Streptocarpus 'Transatlantic Sunset'

Smithiantha 'Golden Leopard'

Smithiantha 'Sassy Redhead'

Sinningia 'Mauro'

Smithiantha 'Hot Pink Lady'

Corolla salverform, tube 7.5 cm long, limb 6.5 cm across, bright pink (RHS 62C) with yellow throat extending onto the bottom three lobes, deep maroon dots in the throat. Distinguished by eye-catching demarcation between the pink and yellow and very large blossom.

***Smithiantha* 'Hot Pink Lady',** 1999, IR99715, Dale Martens, TX, (*S. zebrina* hybrid × *S.* Kartuz hybrid). Cross made Nov. 1997, planted Feb. 1998 and first bloomed Jan. 1999. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Upright rosette, reaching 20 cm tall. Leaves hairy, dark green with maroon red hairs, 7.5 cm long x 9 cm wide, 4 cm petiole, ovate with acute tip and cordate base. Calyx split, green, tipped red. 13 flowers on 15 cm tall pedicel. Corolla infundibuliform, 3.75 cm long x 2.75 cm wide, hot pink (RHS 54A) edged in a darker pink (RHS 58A) with dark pink polka dots on a white throat.

***Sinningia* 'Mauro',** 1999, IR99716, Isla Montgomery, KS, ([*S. aggregata* 'Pendulina' × *S.* 'Cupid's Bouquet'] × *S. tubiflora*). Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Tall growing, stems may reach 3 ft. Leaves smooth, light green, linear with serrate margin, acute tip and cuneate base. Two flowers per leaf axil. Corolla infundibuliform, 2 inches long, white, resembling pollen parent, but lacking fragrance.

***Streptocarpus* 'Pudgen',** 1999, IR99717, MJ Tyler, WA (Originator Jon Dixon, CA), (parentage unknown). Reproducible only vegetatively. Compact rosette. Leaves green, 8" long x 3" wide, elliptic, with crenate margin and acute tip. Calyx green, split. Corolla salverform, 1-1/2" long x 1" wide, white with yellow and red in throat and a narrow red edge on the corolla.

***Chirita* 'Vera',** 1999, IR99718, Ingrid Lindskog, Sweden, (*C. eburnea* [yellow] × *C. eburnea* [blue]). Cross made July 1995, planted Mar. 1996 and first bloomed June 1997. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Basal rosette. Leaves smooth, green, 17 cm long x 3-4 cm wide, elliptic with entire margin, acute tip and cuneate base. Calyx split, 20 mm long. Corolla salverform, 4 cm long x 1-1.5 cm wide, yellow with brown markings. Large yellow to white bracts and intense yellow flowers like seed parent, size of flowers and the brown markings from the pollen parent. Bracts may be rimmed and flushed with rose. First described and illustrated 1997, *Gesneriastnytt*, 4(3).

***Streptocarpus* 'Victorian Lace',** 1999, IR99719, Paul Lee, Canada, (*S.* 'Holiday White' × self'). Cross made and planted in 1994, first bloomed 1995. Fertile but reproducible only vegetatively. Medium sized rosette. Leaves green, linear. Calyx green, split, 8 mm long. 3 flowers per peduncle. Corolla salverform, lobes outward facing, tube 4 cm long x 5 cm wide, white with tip lobes having marginal netting of magenta, three lower lobes mainly carmine outer margins, netted with white. First published 1999, *Gesneriad News* 1(1).

Introducing *Sinningia nordestina*:
An Unusual Annual New Species from Northeastern Brazil

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Mother nature always surprises us with the unexpected. To any Gesneriaceae grower, *Sinningia* means plants with nice flowers going dormant after flowering and resprouting from a perennial tuber. The story presented here describes the discovery of an annual species with vestigial tubers, a new example of the diversity found among the ca.60 *Sinningia* species.

In 1984, before concentrating on a detailed study of the genus, I observed some herbarium sheets kept in Recife in the northeastern part of Brazil. The material was identified by Hoehne as *Naegelia zebrina*, according to annotations made in 1958. An illustration made by him, based on a collection from the state of Paraiba (Moraes s.n.) appeared later in the posthumously published "Iconografia das Gesneriaceae do Brasil" (1970: plate 185) under the same identification. The currently used name for this plant is *Smithiantha zebrina* (Paxt.) Kuntze. The genus *Smithiantha* Kuntze includes about six species restricted to southern Mexico and belonging to tribe Gloxinieae; the presence of scaly rhizomes is the key character for this tribe. The above mentioned material from Brazil is strikingly reminiscent of the red and yellow corolla of the Mexican genus, but leaf shape, flower size, and opposite instead of alternate disposition of the flowers along the inflorescence axis differ from *Smithiantha*.

In the absence of information on subterrestrial organs, it was difficult to assign the Brazilian specimens to genus. In the following years, similar material from several locations in northeastern Brazil was encountered in different herbaria in Brazil, but none bore complete subterrestrial organs or observations of this important character. All collections, because of their habit and red tubular corolla, pointed to *Sinningia*, a genus well diversified in southeastern and southern Brazil but of limited distribution in the northeastern region. I asked my Brazilian colleagues on several occasions to look for this strange plant and check the root structure. In 1996, George Baracho and José Alves Siqueira Fillho (Zé), two young botanists from Recife located a population growing in the municipality of Maraial in the state of Pernambuco. Detailed examination of the subterrestrial organs was done and small tubers were found hidden in the organic litter, among fibrous roots. They sent me pictures and a dry specimen for the Geneva herbarium.

In July 1998, I visited the same locality under their guidance and we gathered new morphological and ecological observations. Back in Geneva, DNA was extracted from dried leaves and included in an ongoing molecular phylogenetic study of the genus *Sinningia*. Based on such data, *Sinningia nordestina* emerges clearly nested among other congeneric species and within the tribe Sinningieae Fritsch. Although its relative position among the neighbouring species is not yet clearly established, there is enough evidence that this species belongs to genus *Sinningia*. I decided to publish the new species, associating my two Brazilian colleagues, under the name *Sinningia*

nordestina Chautems, Baracho & Siqueira Filho. George prepared a plate illustrating the habit and flower features, and Zé provided some ecological and pollination biology observations. A formal description was prepared, and it is reproduced here from the New York Botanical Garden journal *Brittonia*:

> "Terrestrial herb, arising from fibrous roots and occasionally forming small tubers, 0.5-1.5 cm wide, stem 40-70 cm, cylindric-angular, simple or rarely branched, green to purplish-red, glandular-puberulous, glutinous and aromatic, internodes 5-7 cm; leaves decussate, subequal, often bearing shoots in the axils, petioles 3-6 cm, purplish-red, pubescent, blades 6-9(-12) x 4-7.5 cm, ovate, cordate at base, acute at apex, margin irregularly toothed, teeth 3-6 x 3-9 mm, abaxial face green, puberulous, adaxial face pale green, glabrescent, 4-7 lateral veins; 1-2 flowers borne in the upper axils and in bracts along an axis 12-25 cm long, pending from ascending pedicels, the pedicels 2-3(-4) cm, glandular-pubescent, calyx subcampanulate, glandular-pubescent, fused for 2 mm, lobes lanceolate, 4 x 2 mm, puberulous, margin entire. Corolla tubular, 2-2.8 cm long, with a 3 mm wide annular swelling at base, abruptly narrowed to 2 mm above, gradually widened to 7-8 mm in throat, slightly grooved laterally towards base, yellow-orange in bud, at maturity scarlet-orange above, yellow with small red dots below, puberulent, throat yellow with dark red dots and glabrous, the lobes erect to slightly spreading, subequal, 5 x 4 mm, the ventral one slightly larger, red outside, yellow with red dots inside; stamens 4, included, filaments white, glabrous, anthers 2 x 1.5 mm, nectary a bilobed dorsal gland, ovary conic, style and stigma slightly exserted. Fruit a capsule, conic, ca. 1 cm, seeds ellipsoid, striate."

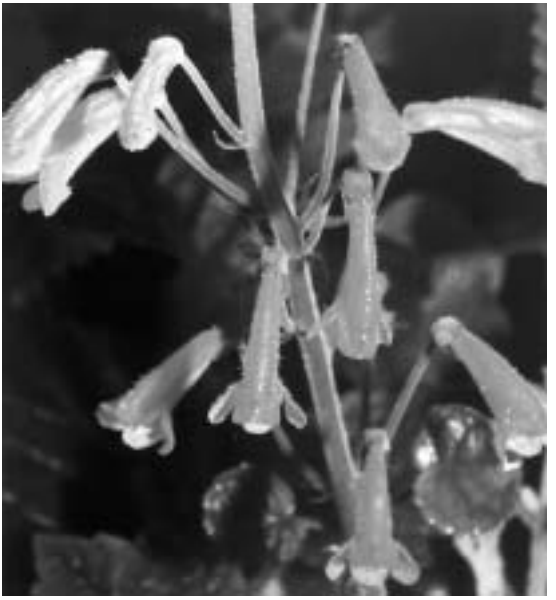
Sinningia nordestina
(photo by José Alves Siqueira Filho)

Sinningia nordestina occurs in northeastern Brazil, between and including the states of Ceará and Bahia, covering a range of some 1000 km. The species has been found within "caatinga" or "campos rupestre" vegetation type as well as in forested areas, on rocky outcrops or arenitic soil, in semi-shady and humid locations, at elevations between 250 and 1050 meters. It is frequently associated with remnants of forest on hills or mountain tops, locally known in northeastern Brazil as "brejos de altitude".

The specific epithet refers to its peculiar distribution in the northeastern region of Brazil, in contrast to the majority of species in the genus *Sinningia* that occur in the southeastern and southern region of Brazil.

Sinningia nordestina occurs as a rupicolous herb growing in thin pockets of organic litter. The size and habit reminds one of mint plants forming dense patches in temperate gardens. Numerous seedlings were observed suggesting that its survival during the dry season essentially relies on heavy seed production. Preliminary experiments on cultivated material revealed that, unlike all the other known *Sinningia* species, the tubers were unable to resprout after a dry period. Mauro Peixoto, to whom I had airmailed some stems with roots and tiny pea size tubers, did not manage to keep it in his greenhouse. I thought that the temperature difference was the cause. July is the coldest month in São Paulo, with occasional light frosts at night in constrast with the warm and rainy days common at this time in northeastern Brazil, situated 2-3000 km to the North. Mauro repeated the experience with some seed received from a seaside locality in Bahia state. The participants of the GRF study trip to Brazil last April saw this material in flower in Mauro's greenhouse, but in October, no new sprouts were produced after this first growing period.

Sinningia nordestina growing in
Mauro Peixoto's greenhouse



Sinningia nordestina

Sinningia nordestina behaves then as an annual. This is likely an adaptation in response to the climate in northeastern Brazil where the rainy season takes place between May and October, followed by a severe dry period between November and April. In this case, tiny seeds hidden in organic matter seem to be more resistant to dry seasons than tuberous structures.

Sinningia nordestina differs from all related species by having vestigial tubers, long ascending pedicels combined with pendent flowers and rather short scarlet and yellow corollas. It shares some characters with *S. aggregata* (Ker Gawl.) Wiehler, such as the glutinous and aromatic indument, red and tubular corollas; but the latter differs by having larger tubers (5-10 cm), horizontally held flowers arranged in denser inflorescences (usually 2-10 per axil), longer corollas (2.5-4 cm) and distribution from southeastern Brazil to Paraguay.

Cultivation of this interesting new species should follow the general rules for most plants in the genus *Sinningia*. The big difference is that the grower will need to self some flowers to ensure seed production for the next growing season. It is hoped that enough seed will soon be produced so that all growers may try this unique "annual" sinningia!

The Lesser-Known Sinningias:
Sinningia calcaria, a Rare Jewel

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The genus *Sinningia*, as presently defined by botanists, consists of between 65 and 75 valid species. The genus swelled noticeably in the last decade as the result of new discoveries, rediscoveries and taxonomic transfers to *Sinningia* from several other genera (*Lietzia* and *Vanhouttea* for example). I remember from a poll a few years back that, after *Saintpaulia* (the African violets), *Sinningia* is the most popular genus among those who grow gesneriads (and those who care to vote). The seasonal availability of millions of potted gloxinias (those glorious oversized mutants) in florists and grocery stores makes *S. speciosa* the single most-cultivated species, mostly grown by people who don't care that it isn't a gloxinia nor that it's a gesneriad for that matter. And most of these plants are discarded after their flowers are gone, their owners unaware of next season's hidden tuberous potential.

Since the late 1980s, the great expansion within *Sinningia* has resulted in a host of heretofore unknown species coming into cultivation. Much of this windfall is due to the activities of two men—Swiss botanist Alain Chautems and Brazilian plant aficionado Mauro Peixoto. While I don't intend this article to be a catalogue of recent introductions, some of the species that have come to us from Mauro and Alain are: *S. iarae*, the dwarf *S. kautskyi, S. brasiliensis, S. carangolensis, S. conspicua* (a personal favorite), the recently named *S. hatschbachii, S. tuberosa*, and *S. calcaria*, which is the subject of this article.

Sinningia calcaria grown and photographed by Dave Zaitlin

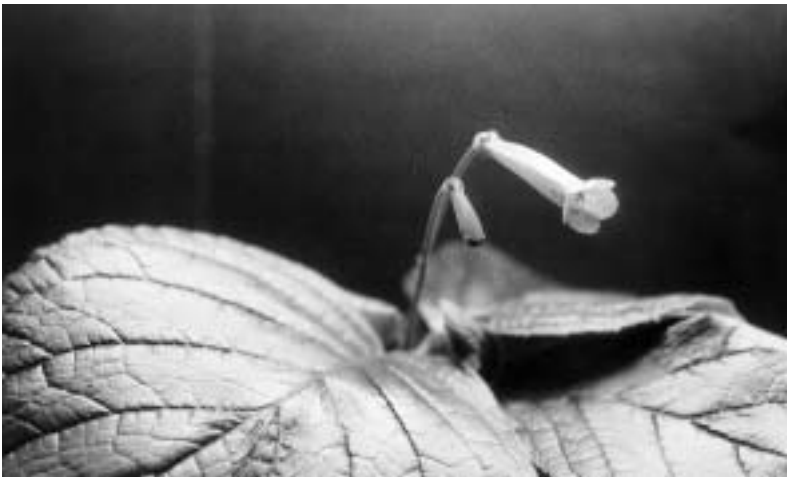
A close-up of the flowers of *Sinningia calcaria* MP891
(grown by Maryjane Evans; photo by John Evans)

S. calcaria was first described (as *Corytholoma calcareum*) in 1937, but was apparently not introduced into cultivation at that time. The species is of very limited distribution in the border area between the states of São Paulo and Parana in southeastern Brazil. Alain wrote me that he and Mauro collected plants in 1993 near *Caverna do Diablo* (Devil's Cave) in a preserved area growing on vertical rock faces in a forested area near a stream. The specific name is derived from the fact that the habitat consists of calcareous rather than granitic rocks, a geologic feature uncommon in Brazil. Seed was first made available through the AGGS Seed Fund in late 1994. My scant records (written on the reverse of the label in the pot) indicate that I planted the seeds in October of that year. The plants that I grew from this seed, which was certainly derived directly from wild-collected parents, flowered in 1995 and were crossed at that time with *S. macropoda*.

The species: *Sinningia calcaria* is classified in subgenus *Rechsteinaria*, and is affiliated with a group of *Sinningia* species that produce two pairs of leaves with the first internode being much longer than the second. This habit is seen prominently in *S. leucotricha*, a species that has been long in cultivation and is familiar to many gesneriad enthusiasts. The plants that I grew from seed have flowered every year and begin the vegetative cycle in our late winter or early spring. I have observed that several shoots generally appear on the upper surface of the tuber, but only one seems to persist. Growth of the chosen shoot is fairly rapid, and floral buds can be seen well before the two pairs of leaves have fully expanded. The leaves reach a length of around 10 cm, with most of this being due to the leaf blade itself (the petiole is very short). The color is olive green, which contrasts nicely with the flowers. As

can be seen from the photograph, the corollas are tubular and bright orange with some red-purple markings within. The flowers measure approximately 5.5 cm in length, and about 2 cm across the face. The plant pictured produces four flowers per leaf axil, for a total of 16. As the corollas do not drop readily, a plant in flower can remain quite attractive for several weeks.

The hybrid: I was able to successfully cross one plant of *S. calcaria* with a plant of *S. macropoda* (GHA 90-04) that was flowering at the same time. I originally had no intention of making this genetic combination, but since they were both there, and the flowers are quite similar—I did it! Everything went according to schedule, and about five weeks after pollination I had a capsule full of plump seed that germinated quite well. I have grown a few of the resulting seedlings to maturity, and they display a kind of botanical confusion in their growth habit. Whereas for me *S. calcaria* never makes more than two leaf pairs, and *S. macropoda* only one leaf pair, the F_1 eventually gets three. It starts by producing flowers from the axils of the first and second leaf pair, and when this attempt at reproduction is all finished it grows another pair of leaves. In all other ways, the hybrid is intermediate between the parents. It is larger than *S. calcaria* but smaller than *S. macropoda* and retains its foliage for many months past flowering. It also makes a substantial tuber. The leaves can be up to 15 cm in length with deeply serrated margins, and the flowers are about the same size as those of *S. macropoda*. The corollas are orange with crimson markings inside the tube, and are proportioned more like those of *S. calcaria*. As in both parental species, the inflorescences are branched, and I have counted up to seven flowers and/or buds per axil in the hybrid. After observing this hybrid for several seasons, I can say that it takes two years for it to produce more than a few flowers, and I can recommend it when mature as an attractive horticultural subject. The possibility exists for many more hybrids with *S. calcaria*, however. I believe that this small species could contribute valuable characters to some hybrids, most importantly a generalized reduction in size.



Sinningia hybrid (*S. calcaria* × *S. macropoda*)

Publications

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Greetings to all AGGS members. This article is intended to provide you with information regarding AGGS publications, how to order them, and other little nuances regarding them.

When I took over the position of AGGS Publications Chair two years ago, I was told by my predecessor, Isla Montgomery, that the position would involve the mailing of AGGS publications perhaps several times a week. Immediately carton after carton of publications were delivered to me, and I began sorting them out and becoming familiar with all aspects the position entails. As a result of an inventory of publications, observing common practice, and member commentary, several changes have been made regarding AGGS publications. This article is intended to bring members up to date on certain changes.

First, while the initial cost of publications does not change, costs of shipping continually go up. For this reason, the price of mailing outside the United States has been raised to 20% for surface post (taking as long as 6-8 weeks to arrive) and 40% for air mail (6-8 days). Using this price structure, in most cases, postage costs are now recovered. PLEASE NOTE: with respect to credit card orders, if no rate is specified I will opt for the lower rate. To avoid delay in arrival, PLEASE specify in your order the rate you desire.

Second, the inventory of THE GLOXINIAN showed surprising results with many issues prior to 1990 being in very short supply. Hence, the Publications Committee revamped the pricing structure for back issues to reflect the rarity and availability of these issues.

- Those issues that have one or no issues in inventory are termed "rare or extinct". These will not be sold under any condition.
- Issues with two to five copies are considered "endangered" and will be sold for $25/issue. If this price seems a little steep, you're right. However, to make the information in them available to the members, I am offering to photocopy any "rare" or "endangered" issues I have in stock for $10/issue. They will be mailed to you flat, unstapled, so you can store them as you wish. They will be in black and white; no color.
- Issues of which I have six to ten in stock ("threatened") will be sold for $10/issue.
- Any issues I have more than 10 of will be sold for $5/issue.

To determine availability, please write for a complete inventory list, or check the AGGS website <www.aggs.org>. Before ordering Endangered issues, it would be wise to consult with me to confirm availability. Furthermore, knowing that certain issues are rare, please consider donating these older issues back to the Publications inventory.

Third, online ordering through the AGGS website has now been instituted. Only major credit card orders are accepted. Once the transaction is approved, your order will be mailed.

Finally, if you order a slide program from AGGS, consider ordering several of the accompanying Registers and/or appropriate issues of THE GLOXINIAN. A good example of this is the wonderful *Chirita* slide program in which many of the photographs and more in-depth information may be obtained in THE GLOXINIAN's *Chirita* issue (2nd quarter, 1998). Having the issue there to accompany the program is a blessing!

A Mailing Label "Decoder" for AGGS Members

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The top line of your mailing label accompanying each issue of THE GLOXINIAN contains: a) your Membership Number; b) the nominal expiration date and (if you are not a Life Member, or a complementary recipient) c) the code for the last issue in that subscription term that you are scheduled to receive. For example:

10702 9/1/01 S 3Q01
Jane A. Doe
1234 Main-Maple Street,
Anylocale, Somestate Postcode Country

Here "10702" is the Membership Number. The date "9/1/01" is the nominal expiration date; that means that on 1 Sep 2001 she would no longer be a member. And "S 3Q01" indicates that the last issue, in that term, would be the Third Quarter in 2001 AD.

So in effect, every mailing label, for each issue, contains *two renewal notices*. In addition, a member's last issue contains a highlighted warning: "Last Issue — Renewal Time" at the end of the code line. Further, the exact same label is used on our final highlighted "Renewal Notice" postcards sent to members about a month later.

You may notice a letter precedes each last issue code: "T" means a three-year term; "S" a single-year term; and an "F" means a family membership.

Please use **both** your membership number and nominal expiration date whenever ordering seeds or other AGGS services. Thank you.

Moving?

As soon as you know when are where, do notify MJ & DB Tyler, AGGS Membership Secretariat, P.O. Box 1598, Port Angeles, WA 98362-0194, and please include your address label.

THE GLOXINIAN

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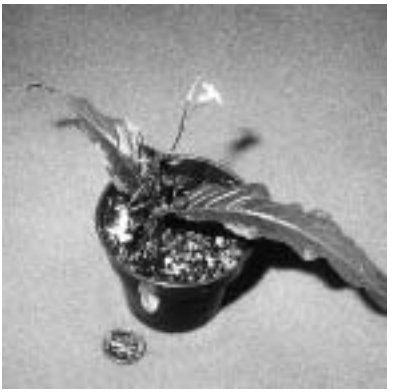
Compiled by Judy Becker

Issue is indicated first, followed by a colon, and then page number(s).
Plant illustrations are indicated by an asterisk (*)

Streptocarpus 'Maassen's White'



Streptocarpus rimicola

Streptocarpus polyanthus
ssp. *polyanthus*

Streptocarpus 'Essue'

Our Favorite Streps

As editor, I asked our AGGS Board members to write and let our readers know what their favorite streps were. Here are some of their responses. jk

Ben Paternoster — No Favorite

I can't say that I like one particular strep. I have grown many over the years, both hybrids and species, that I liked and enjoyed. Among these are 'Maassen's White', 'Blue Lace', 'Captain Blood', 'Strawberry Crush', 'Essue', 'Moonbeam', 'Black Panther', 'Purple Nymph', 'Mighty Mouse', *baudertii*, *dunnii*, *cyanandrus*, etc. What I would like to point to is the one strep in recent years which had qualities that caused me to want to acquire and grow it. It was compact and had a yellow throat surrounded by unusual vibrant color. I would describe it as 'perky'.

I did eventually acquire this plant, as have many of you. It has become very popular, and deservedly so. The hybridizers are using it to produce new plants, but I have not yet seen one that I prefer to the original. The hybrids that I have seen have lost some of the personality that this plant has. Have you figured out to which strep I am referring? It is *Streptocarpus* 'Joker'.

Helen Freidberg — What Not To Do!

I have always liked *Streptocarpus* 'Maassen's White' best, despite the fancy newer cultivars. I really haven't mastered techniques for long-term survival. I lose some in summer when they collapse from the heat, and others in winter when it is so dry that I tend to belatedly overwater. SO DON'T QUOTE ME....

I did learn something from Mary Bozoian who teaches a gesneriad propagation workshop every winter for the New England Chapter: when propagating strep leaves or leaf sections, it is really important not to bury the edge or it will rot. She supports the leaf piece on the medium with hairpins so that it just barely touches. I brought home the two we did "in class" and put down a few more at home, and lo and behold, every one had plantlets four weeks later, and there isn't a sign of rot!

Susan Grose — *Streptocarpus pumilus*

I fell for *Streptocarpus pumilus* the moment I saw it on the sales table at the 1996 AGGS Convention in New York City. It seems to me to be the "*Sinningia pusilla*" of the genus *Streptocarpus*. I love growing this plant as it remains very small and yet seems to spread readily without being invasive in an enclosed container. I only grow it enclosed. It is an ideal terrarium plant as it stays small, flowers almost continuously if fed well, and does not "take over". It is easy to keep under control to whatever size clump you want by separating pieces of the plant from the main growth. Don't forget to share these separated pieces with your friends. The growth habit it exhibits for me is sort of a "clumpy rosette" form. The largest clump I have at the moment is planted in a two inch plastic solo cup and has a span of seven inches if the two longest leaves are stretched out. The width of this particular specimen is about 4.5 inches.

I have the most success growing this plant in loosely-packed long-fibered sphagnum moss. It does not do as well for me in soilless growing mix

with perlite, vermiculite and peat moss. However in this sphagnum moss environment, one must fertilize with a dilute solution frequently or use a slow release fertilizer such as Osmocote. The plant will turn yellow and cease to bloom if underfed. I grow *S. pumilus* about 9-11 inches from two fluorescent lights (13-hour daylength) in my basement growing area which ranges from 58º to 79ºF.

The leaves are the traditional "strap-leaf" configuration and range in size from 0.5 inches in length to no more than 3.5 inches in length in my growing conditions. The width of the leaves is from 0.25 to 1 inch. The blossoms which form at the base of the leaves are also quite small — about the size of a *Sinningia pusilla*. The corolla tube is about 0.5 inches long and about 0.0625 inches (1/16th inch) in diameter where it opens into a 5-lobed blossom which is 0.25 inches in diameter. The interior of the blossom is white or a very pale lavender with small purple dots coming out of the tube and dividing to form five single lines into the center of each of the lobes of the corolla. In some of the lobes the dots fuse and in other lobes the dots remain distinct. It's possible the slight lavender color of the blossom is due to (I am not sure what the technical term is) some diffusion of the purple pigment from the purple dots into the rest of the corolla. Because of the heavy concentration of the dots in the corolla tube, it appears lavender from the outside. The individual blossoms last for several days.

In addition to its diminutive size, free-flowering habit, and suitability for terrarium culture, *S. pumilus* is my favorite strep because it is the one I have been able to keep alive continuously for the longest time — almost three years! As if all these weren't enough good reasons to grow it, it also sets seed and makes very small twisted capsules just like the larger species of *Streptocarpus*.

Laura Johnson—Fond of Three Miniature Streps

S. rimicola — Leaves are dark olive with a red reverse. Their smooth texture has a slight sheen. At their largest, leaves get about 3.5" long, 1" wide (9 x 2.5cm). The flowers are a half-inch (1.25cm) long and creamy white. It produces a lot of flowers, and sets seed with almost no help. I find this one the easiest to grow and bloom of the three.

S. cyanandrus — Light green foliage, size is similar to *S. rimicola*. The light pink blossoms are large in relation to the overall plant size, about three-quarters to one inch long (20-25mm). This one also produces a lot of flowers.

S. pumilus — The light green leaves can grow up to 3" long, half an inch wide (8 x 1.25cm), but generally they stay smaller. The tiny, pale pink flowers are about a quarter inch (6-7mm) long. This species is a bit more challenging to grow, especially when younger. I find it very susceptible to powdery mildew.

All three have a semi-bunchy growth pattern, with individual leaves coming up at random from the base. In my experience, a plant in its prime has several stages of leaves on it all at once: Mature leaves carrying blossoms and seed pods, older leaves that are starting to wither, and new, young leaves still growing. These plants have a limited life span, and after several months, they start going downhill. The foliage begins to die, and flower production drops off.

I grow them in a very light blend of half ProMix, half perlite. A 2.5 inch (6cm) pot is usually the largest they need. For watering, each pot gets a single strand of acrylic yarn as a wick, then is placed on a matting of 4-6 layers

Streptocarpus pumilus
(grown by Maryjane Evans; photo by John Evans)

Streptocarpus cyanandrus
(grown and photographed by Michael Riley)

of acrylic-fiber felt. For fertilizer, a balanced, all-purpose brand works fine, used at one-quarter strength. These plants do very well under fluorescent lights; 12 hours a day is plenty. They prefer cooler temperatures, and seem to be more sensitive to heat than larger streps. Mine are grown in a southeastern Michigan basement, which ranges from 60°F (16°C) during cold winters, to 72°F (22°C) during the hottest summer weather.

Peter Shalit — *Streptocarpus rimicola*

I thought a lot about this, because I'm just growing a few strep hybrids now. And they're OK, but none is my favorite. Then I realized... my favorite strep is *S. rimicola*. It was the very first streptocarpus I grew, when I was a kid. Someone gave me seed and it was very easy to grow. I was fascinated to see the tiny cotyledons develop into leaves. In this species, one or both cotyledons gradually enlarges and makes a whole plant. Each leaf is small, no more than three inches long and no wider than 1 inch at the most. The leaves are a nice shiny dark green, with a red back. The tip usually browns and needs to be trimmed if the plant is to be shown. It does fine in a 2-1/2 inch pot, or several plants can be grown together in a larger pot.

It doesn't take long, maybe 4-5 months, for this species to bloom from seed. The flowers are little pure white tubes with a flared limb. They arise in a tangled mass from stalks that grow from the base of the leaf. This was just fascinating for me, the first time I grew it. The flowers pollinate spontaneously and produce very interesting little twisted seed pods. The plant is an annual and does not live more than about a year, but more are easily grown from seed. As far as I know there are no successful crosses using this species.

I have grown *S. rimicola* many times over the years, and it is always a fun and cheerful plant to grow. It's a great plant for the beginning grower. It does well under a 2-tube fluorescent fixture, in commercial African Violet soil, watered with a weak solution of soluble fertilizer. I have not found it to require extra humidity beyond the 40-60% that is the norm in my growing area. But it does do well in a terrarium and adds an unusual "look" to an enclosed planting.

Bob Nicholson — *Streptocarpus polyanthus* subsp. *polyanthus*

The only strep that I grow (other than the hybrids from the sales table that are in full flower, but promptly expire) is *Streptocarpus polyanthus* subsp. *polyanthus*. I like it because it will take a lot of abuse. Its main attraction, however, is that it seems to take off in the winter, just about the time the others have begun to sulk or go down. I like its larger flowers, though they don't seem to last very long. At times the foliage is rather vertical; most of the time it is more horizontal. But it is always ratty looking with brown ragged tips, gnarled, curly—every cliché of strep leaves.

I grow it under two tubes about 16 hours during the summer, and 18 hours in the winter. I try to keep the humidity up by growing in a sweater box with a height extension with the lid askew, but I'm really none too sure just what its requirements are supposed to be.

Helen Bortvedt — Wahroonga Hybrid

My favorite strep after six years remains one of Martin's Wahroonga Hybrids. The color is a rich wine with darker stripes, white upper throat, with white flushed reverse. Bloom period is long (winter to summer), resuming

after the cooler weather arrives. I grow it in a sunroom/greenhouse with the lowest temperature around 56ºF in winter. My mix is two parts peat, two parts vermiculite with small granules for weight and the promise of holding of some moisture! I gave up on perlite as it floats and turns green. Regarding pest problems, I have Maryjane Evans to thank for putting me onto 'Marathon' for soil mealies, as it was the only real problem I had. I also alternate Sun Oil (1 week) with Neem (3 weeks) which has really made the difference. For fertilizer I have converted big time to Dyna-Gro, with a couple of shots of 10/50/10 Peters in the spring to speed blooming. My greenhouse is now bulging with 500-600 streps (over 60 varieties), and thankfully I have two different buyers in widely separated towns wanting plants again.

M.J. Tyler — *Streptocarpus* 'Pudgen'

'Pudgen' may seem like an improbable name for a dignified streptocarpus, but not quite so unlikely when you know that it was named for Jon Dixon's cat. The cat lived long and was well loved but used up its nine lives some time ago. The good thing about plants is that they are not limited to nine lives if they are loved enough for someone to keep on growing them. And this one is cherished by some good growers, maintaining the connection to Jon, his cat, and other good friends from the past, and making a bridge to new friends and reaching into the future.

I have been after Jon for years to register this plant (and I may succeed yet). When queried, he was not able to supply parentage for the hybrid, but he did know where he got it. It was among the hardier plants which Tom Polka grew on his fog-cooled fire escape in San Francisco. Tom also used up his nine lives a while back, but he is remembered as an excellent grower. If you attended the 1984 Convention in California (my first) you may recall his *Sinningia cardinalis* the size of a parlor palm!

'Pudgen' is a medium-sized standard strep with rich green leaves. It flowers quite heavily if well grown, and like most streps, holds its blossoms a long time, dancing on several wiry stalks. Blossom color is a creamy white with a very narrow red edge and a distinctive maroon marking (something like a sharp cat's tongue?) in the throat surrounded by a bright yellow highlight.

I have grown it in natural light on a windowsill and in a light garden. It seems to do better, for me, in natural light. Fortunately, when I have lost this plant (for the usual reasons like mealies, aphids, soggy soil, general neglect, vacation, moving ...), I have been able to get a fresh start. Both Katherine Henwood in San Francisco and Helen Bortvedt here in Washington are great strep growers and have kindly replaced my favorite for me. I love this cheerful plant. It brightens my collection by its presence and with the friendships in symbolizes.

Marlene Beam — A Favorite Streptocarpus???

Streptocarpus inhabit my plant areas as though it was their native habitat. I comb the sales tables with insatiable greed and studiously peruse each AGGS Seed Fund list yet I never seem to let go. To select only one from a sizable collection (about 100) is a formidable task. And, I purchased eight new streptocarpus seed packets last January!

Streptocarpus 'Mighty Mouse'
(grown by Katherine Henwood; photo by Dale Martens)

Streptocarpus 'Blue Mars'
(grown by Marlene Beam; photo by Ruben Jiminez)

Streptocarpus 'Captain Blood'
(grown by Maryjane Evans; photo by Jeanne Katzenstein)

Streptocarpus 'Kim'
(grown by Marlene Beam; photo by Dale Martens)

Streptocarpus 'Kim' is highly favorable. It is a compact and floriferous Dibley hybrid purchased at the 1992 Convention live auction. The multiflowers are a rich, deep-velvet blue which makes the white throat very noticeable.

Yet, last year I was groundlessly fretful when I thought that *S.* 'Mighty Mouse' was forever lost. It was one of my first gesneriads, it took little space to grow this little vigorous plant, it is easy to tote to shows, and I simply could not live without it. I later discovered my only loss was the name tag.

A favorable show streptocarpus other than 'Black Panther' (Ford) and 'Blue Mars' (Lyon) is Martin Kunhardt's *Streptocarpus fasciatus* × 'Black Panther'. Although it is a large grower, the light lavender flowers with dark lavender veining make it worth the space. In full bloom it is magnificent!

My favorite species is *Streptocarpus rimicola*. The tiny white flowers are like stars that signal spring. This petite unifoliate grows outside of a terrarium and is so plain and simple that it is strikingly noticeable (everyone asks about it). And, it sets enough seed for the next generation of plants with some left for the AGGS Seed Fund.

Growing Tip: Propagating or germinating new plants each year not only produces nice show plants; but younger plants, mixed with plenty of air circulation (I have three ceiling fans that run continually), reduce the chance of mealy bug.

Streptocarpus for Apartment Dwellers

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Addiction to gesneriads and life in a small urban apartment can at times be a challenge. I find myself drawn like a magnet to those lush, beautiful trichanthas, pentadenias, columneas and aeschynanthus. Not for me, those micro-mini sinningias and tiny phinaeas! But very limited space means that I can only accommodate smaller-sized specimens of my favourite genera. Enter, streptocarpus! I have grown many rosulate strep hybrids in my light garden and been rewarded with compact, well blooming plants. My main interest, however has always been the unifoliate species. Sadly for me, many of my favourite unifoliates have phyllomorphs that can reach a length of three feet with no effort at all. Not the ideal light garden candidates, unless you enjoy tripping over your plants at every turn!

I mentioned my interest and accompanying dilemma to Martin Kunhardt in a letter a few years ago. With his reply, he enclosed a packet of seed from *Streptocarpus pentherianus* that he had just harvested, and strongly suggested I try it. Within 7 to 10 days, I had excellent germination and about 7 months after that, fully developed plants that were quite at home in 3" pots.

I soon learned that *S. pentherianus* was not a true unifoliate, but rather a plurifoliate. As one "leaf" or phyllomorph matured and bloomed, two or three others would begin to grow and take the place of the one that had finished blooming. The result was a perennial, heavy-blooming strep that looked like one of my beloved unifoliates, in a size that I could comfortably

Streptocarpus pentherianus
(grown and photographed by Martin Kunhardt)

handle. The primary "leaf" never got any longer than 3 to 5 inches, and each "leaf" produced bloom stalks that carried many pairs of delicate white flowers, faintly flushed lavender. Seed pods developed without any help from me, and had a curious habit of turning after they had twisted, so that their tops pointed downward toward the ground. It was a thrill to harvest seed from a plant that I, myself, had grown from seed and send it off to the AGGS Seed Fund.

While *S. pentherianus* may not be as dramatic or flashy looking as other gesneriads out there, it does help to satisfy my interest in growing species material and unifoliates within the confines of my space. Thanks, Martin for suggesting it to me. And to all of you with a small growing area, why not contact Laura at the Seed Fund and give *S. pentherianus* a try?

Wahroonga

Martin Kunhardt, Wahroonga
Box 144, Merrivale 3291, Natal, Republic of South Africa

Imagine a spring where the temperatures are in the 90's and the humidity levels are down around 20%, with no clouds in the sky. That's how it was at Wahroonga last week and on and off since May when conditions have been extreme for streptocarpus and most other plants. At least today the temperatures have plummeted and it's bitterly cold with drizzle ...once again, unpleasant for the *Streptocarpus* species that enjoy milder conditions in their natural habitats.

As I've said before, the world's weather is changing and everything has to adapt or face a very uncertain future. With technology we are able to adapt the environment to our advantage and see plants at their best by offering them optimum conditions. Here in the natural habitat of *Streptocarpus*, the conditions are becoming very hostile as the available water is sucked up by exotic forests of eucalyptus and pines that are crowding out the indigenous vegetation and creating habitats for noxious weeds such as *Sesbania*, American bramble, *Solanum mauretanum, Cromelina infestans* and the Australian black wattle trees. It's sad to see how the streams that run through plantations are now annual instead of perennial, and all the plants that clung to the banks and enjoyed the damp atmosphere are disappearing.

Here at Wahroonga the small streps are growing fast and enjoying the increasing day-length and warmer weather. The winter has been very dry since early May together with abnormally high temperatures that has confused many plants and even made some abort their spring flowers. Until the small plants can survive on the shadehouse tables, I keep them in the greenhouse where at least I can control the humidity levels by hosing down the floor when temperatures are very high. During winter when we normally experience temperatures that drop to freezing, the small plants at least can grow in the protected environment and will be ready to move onto the tables in spring. This past winter has been warm with almost no cold temperatures, and certainly none that have dipped anywhere near freezing. Remembering the snow and freezing weather that changed my life back in '96, I am very aware of the weather!

Because the plants I grow are housed under plastic and shadecloth-covered shadehouses, I have no way to moderate the temperatures either in summer or winter so I can see just how the plants have managed to adapt and alter their flowering times accordingly. It is difficult to gauge how much and how often I need to water the potted streps during the winter when they are normally dormant, so all the plants are watered equally. Nearly all the plants survive although the water retention of the potting media has to be altered for the xerophytic species. Plants of the water-loving species *S. fanniniae* dry away during the short days of winter but put on rapid growth when the days lengthen. These plants need copious amounts of water because in the wild, they will be regularly submerged in the streams where they grow; also the shade cover over the plants will increase as the canopy trees put out new leaves. Of the xerophytic species, *S. polyanthus* and *S. kentaniensis* have been flowering although the plants of *S. kentaniensis* have sufferd a bit because of the mild weather this year. I just hope that

the summer temperatures are not too high this year, but that's something we'll have to wait and see. Another disturbing thing to look forward to is the insect population that wasn't affected by the warm winter weather. Pests such as thrips and the noctuid moth caterpillars destroy the flowers and also create the same damage as leafminers on the foliage. Normally the cold winters will see a decline in insect populations, but I believe that this year we'll see insect numbers far above what we see after a normal winter.

Within a month the first of the new hybrids that I made last year will be flowering, and many of the species will shake off the last of the winter dormancy blues to begin flowering again. I have a couple of new plants that were collected last summer that will be interesting to compare against the species from different areas that I have in the collection already. Having such a large gene pool where *Streptocarpus* species occur is a wonderful advantage, especially when the largest number of different species are found in Kwazulu Natal. Getting inspiration to write about the crowded tables in the shadehouses at this time of the year isn't easy when almost all of them are without flowers and some even have dry flower stalks and yellow leaves as a reminder of the winter months. The wild colonies that I have seen are unrecognisable because there are no leaves visible, and the miracle of regrowth hasn't yet taken effect. The plants in the garden also are gray and limp, but these will show a remarkable transformation when the summer rains finally arrive, which I hope is not too long from now.

The Basics: Acquiring New Plants Safely

Monte Watler <monte.watler@sympatico.ca>
Peter Shalit <ps83@cornell.edu>

It is common for a new grower to become very enthusiastic about gesneriads and acquire a large number of plants in a short period of time. Unfortunately, often one or more of these new acquisitions brings some unwelcome guests—plant pests—into the growing area. Pest infestations, like social diseases, are often the unintended consequences of an innocent, pleasurable transaction.

Pests can come from any source. We all try to keep our plants pest-free, but even if your plants only come from your best friend, local Chapter sales, or the most reputable commercial growers, they may have pests on them. It is very important to inspect any plants before you take them home, and reject them if they appear to have bugs. Any plant material except for seeds can carry pests. If you grow only from seed, then you will never introduce critters into your plant collection. But this is not a realistic solution for most growers. We all enjoy adding cuttings or established plants to our collections. And most hybrids do not grow reproducibly from seed.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is an old adage, but one that is well applied in the plant room. Many a collection of indoor plants has been dispatched to the garbage bin because an infested plant was placed among healthy ones. Consequently, the answer to this problem is: isolation.

Whenever and from whomever you receive a new plant, make certain that it is placed in an area away from your healthy plants and keep it in this locality until you are certain that it is completely free of any insects or disease. Eight to ten weeks should be the minimum time to keep it in isolation. A spare windowsill is a good place. Growing conditions need not be optimal, as the plant will not be there permanently but can be moved to your growing area once it passes quarantine. If you have absolutely no separate area for isolation, then at least keep new acquisitions in a plastic bag for a period of time.

While in isolation, you may want to treat your plant with your insecticide or biological control of choice, to help get rid of any critters that may not be visible to you.

Once you are satisfied that your new plant is clean, then it is time for repotting. It should be unpotted and as much of the soil as possible removed from its roots. The roots should then be washed clean under a gentle flow of warm water while examining them for any abnormal swelling of the root structures. If this is present it could be a sign of root nematodes. Similarly, white fluff in the soil (not perlite, which is gritty rather than fluffy) is a sign of soil mealybugs. If you discover such root infestations, the plant should be discarded. You may attempt to salvage the plant by taking cuttings from it and discarding the base of the plant and its roots.

If the roots do appear clean, then repot the plant in fresh soil and a clean pot. The whole operation should take place in an area away from the plant room. Once repotted, the plant may again be treated with an insecticide or biological control that you normally use. It is now ready to be placed on the plant stand. It is advisable to let the plant become established before fertilizing, although if the root structure is frail, a weak solution of root-stimulating fertilizer may be applied.

Basic Tips for the Beginning Gesneriad Grower:

- Keep it simple when you start out.
- Avoid the tendency to get lots and lots of different plants. There's plenty of time for that later. Begin with a few plants and see how well you can grow them. Learn what their needs are. If one plant struggles or dies, concentrate on growing others that do well for you, then later move on to more difficult ones.
- Try gesneriads in different conditions, whatever is available to you: various windowsill exposures, under lights if you have them, at home or at work, outdoors if it is warm enough. Learn about the microclimates in your living area.
- Read about gesneriads and learn about them. Purchase some back issues of THE GLOXINIAN. If you have Internet access, explore the AGGS web site <www.aggs.org>. This site will lead you to other internet resources such as Ron Myhr's web site and the email correspondence club Gesneriphiles.

The Basics: Growing Choices for Beginners

Ray Coyle
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We have all been beginners at growing gesneriads and have asked the same questions at chapter meetings: How is the best way to grow? What soil mix is best? What types of fertilizer should I use? Natural light or artificial? The whole gamut of questions has been asked about growing conditions. But how many newcomers to gesneriads have asked, "which varieties are best for a beginner to grow?"

Described here are five plants that through my own experience are the most satisfying plants for a grower new to the world of gesneriads.

Diastema vexans is a small herb with medium green leaves and white blossoms that have purple dots on each lobe and a purple throat. It grows no taller than 4 inches, and individual plants will grow in a 2-1/2 to 3 inch (6-8 cm) pot. This is a rhizomatous plant, so one plant will yield a potful of rhizomes in short order. In a 5-inch (13-cm) pot, several rhizomes will put out a pleasant display.

The wonderful thing about *D. vexans* is that its rhizomes sprout almost immediately, so although the individual plant may go into a short dormancy, new plants will form to offer year-round growth.

Sinningia calcaria is a care-free-growing tuberous plant that offers a big bang for the buck as sinningias go. Four medium green, slightly crinkled leaves arise from the tuber about 6 inches (15 cm). As the growth emerges, flower buds form and in about six weeks from start, eight to sixteen orange blossoms with dark spots in the throat open. It is a simple but attractive species. The best part about *S. calcaria* is its ability to have two or three growth periods per year after a short dormancy. The plant is also very receptive to pollen and can be used for hybridizing or for replenishing the Seed Fund!

***Gesneria* 'Lemon Drop'** is not difficult to grow, contrary to what some growers may say. It is, however, difficult to propagate. *G.* 'Lemon Drop' has dark green, slightly puckered, elongated leaves, with 1 inch (2-1/2 cm) pure yellow blooms. It is quite floriferous and makes for a stunning specimen. It will grow to a height of 8 inches (20 cm) and will do well in a 3 to 4 inch (8-10 cm) pot. One concession that *G.* 'Lemon Drop' needs: water. It should remain wet (not damp). Also, an extra helping of dolomitic lime to the soil will help growth.

***Streptocarpus* (subgenus *Streptocarpella*) 'Concord Blue'** is a basket plant that grows best in natural light. The light green foliage and light blue blossoms make a pretty display. A small cutting can be rooted in two weeks, and further cuttings taken will produce a full blooming cascade in four months. This plant will tolerate slightly cooler growing conditions than some other gesneriads.

***Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Sticky Wicket'** is an easy growing African violet trailer. It is a semi-miniature in size (this is the leaf size, not plant size), with medium-green heart-shaped foliage and mounds of pink semi-double blossoms. This variety does not require pinching to send off crowns and will trail naturally and symmetrically without constant turning of the plant. Depending on space limitations, it can be grown in a 3 or 4-inch (8 or 10 cm) pot.

Gesneria 'Lemon Drop', *Streptocarpus* 'Concord Blue', and *Saintpaulia* 'Rob's Sticky Wicket' can be found at gesneriad sales tables or through the commercial advertisers in THE GLOXINIAN. *Diastema vexans* and *Sinningia calcaria* are both listed in the AGGS Seed Fund, as well as commercial catalogs.

I hope this article is helpful to new growers and encourages them to try more than one genus of our beautiful plant family. Other members are encouraged to write about their personal favorite gesneriads for beginners. Please send your thoughts to Peter Shalit, 1312 East Denny Way, Seattle, WA 98122, <ps83@cornell.edu>.

Diastema vexans
(photo from the Cornell collection by M. H. Stone)

Gesneria 'Lemon Drop'
(grown by Maryjane Evans; photo by John Evans)

American Gloxinia & Gesneriad Society, Inc.

Financial Statement — January 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999

GENERAL FUND (Combined Receipts, Checking and Savings)		
Membership		23,265.00
Ads in THE GLOXINIAN		1,941.00
Education & Slide Programs		740.00
Publicity Promotions		652.00
Sales of Literature & Supplies		1,660.00
Seed Fund Sales		8,864.00
Judging Publications & Income		1,492.00
Donations		
Fund for Progress		7,567.00
Color Photo Sponsorships		2,434.00
Miscellaneous Receipts		12,066.00
TOTAL — Combined Balances (Checking $44,693.00 / Savings $15,985.00)		**$60,681.00**
GENERAL FUND		
Checking Account (Beginning Balance: January 1, 1999		15,889.00
Add from Combined Balances above		44,693.00
Other Income		
Dividends from MF/Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund		720.00
Dividends from MF/General Fund		273.00
Chapter's Insurance Remittances		710.00
Miscellaneous - Convention, for Remittances		37,955.00
Total Receipts - Checking		**$100,240.00**
DISBURSEMENTS		
Publication of THE GLOXINIAN		(28,593.00)
Other Publications		(412.00)
Judges Newsletter		(588.00)
Membership Processing		(1,974.00)
Publicity Promotions		(836.00)
Internet		(658.00)
Seed Fund Expenses		(585.00)
Operating Expenses		(5,768.00)
Stipends	(3,200.00)	
Liability Insurance	(1,632.00)	
Convention Advances	(936.00)	
Miscellaneous		(40,027.00)
Convention Remittances	(37,711.00)	
Miscellaneous	(2,316.00)	
TOTAL Disbursements - to Date		(79,441.00)
TOTAL ON HAND, Checking (December 31, 1999		**$20,798.00**
GENERAL FUND — Savings		
Beginning Balance - January 1, 1999		24,229.00
Interest		1,212.00
From Combined Balances		15,983.00
Less Credit Card Fees, Supplies, & Refund (10.00)	(1,112.00)	
Miscellaneous		(42,851.00)
To GF, Convention Expenses & Transfers	(40,350.00)	
Convention Advances	(936.00)	
Savings Balance — December 31, 1999		**$30,736.00**

GENERAL FUND

Checking Account		20,799.00
Savings Account		30,736.00
Mutual Fund		13,817.00
TOTAL — GENERAL FUND — December 31, 1999		**$65,352.00**

ELVIN MC DONALD RESEARCH FUND

Balance — January 1, 1999		883.37
Donations		485.00
Interest - Savings		52.19
Ending Balance — December 31, 1999		**$1,420.56**

INTERNATIONAL GESNERIAD REGISTER FUND

Balance — January 1, 1999		11,184.03
Sale of Registers		1,818.40
Savings Interest		151.73
Less Transfer to CD	(3,000.00)	
Less Registrar Publishing Expense	(1,374.37)	
Balance — Savings, December 31, 1999	2,790.99	
Interest on Certificate of Deposit		391.49
Balance Add to CD		3,000.00
Balance, Certificate of Deposit	9,380.29	
Combined Savings and Certificate Balance — December 31, 1999		**$12,171.28**

FRANCES BATCHELLER ENDOWMENT FUND

Balances Combined — December 31, 1998		113,666.71
Change in Value — Mutual Funds as of December 31, 1999		
Fidelity — Asset Manager		5,654.76
Safeco (Dividends to General Fund – 720.18)		(233.03)
Life Memberships		-0-
Donations		380.00
Convention Auction		7,088.61
Internet Auction		976.00
Miscellaneous Adjustment		(75.24)
Interest Earned to December 31, 1999		
Key Bank NA (Wa Fed) CD #1		1,819.54
Wa Fed Certificate of Deposit #2		203.11
Wa Fed Certificate of Deposit #3		9.59
Savings Account		338.11
Balances, December 31, 1999		
Savings	2,017.94	
Certificate #1	35,885.56	
Certificate #2	3,917.96	
Fidelity MP	15,009.59	
Fidelity MF	47,266.98	
Safeco MF	25,730.13	
Combined Balances, Frances Batcheller Endowment Fund		**$129,828.16**

My Favorite Strep(s)

Ray Annabel <Rannabel14@cs.com>
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At our last Long Island Chapter meeting, I gave a short talk on the genus *Streptocarpus*. When I had finished, I was asked if I had a favorite strep. I said "yes, *Streptocarpus* 'Kings Cloak' would have to be my favorite". Then I thought about it and said to myself, I don't think I have a favorite strep. The deep purple color of the lower lobes of 'Kings Cloak' first came to mind, with the upper lobes being almost a pure white. This high contrast of colors is very striking. Every time I would show it, the plant would get a blue ribbon.

Another favorite of mine would be 'Pegasus'. What I like about 'Pegasus' is that its pure white smaller flowers are very abundant. It would not be unusual for 'Pegasus' to have 12 to 15 flowers open at a time.

I have used 'Irish Rose', a double pink flower with a ruffled edge, as the female parent (because very often a double flower will not produce any pollen) with 'Bright Eyes', a dark velvet blue with a yellow throat because I wanted to develop a blue flower with a ruffled edge. The ruffled edge came through to the new hybrid which I named 'Irish Ruffles'.

Another favorite of mine is 'Thalia', which is a pure white flower with a ruffled edge.

My all-time species favorite is *Streptocarpus formosus* which has a light lavender flower with darker veining and a yellow throat.

So if I'm asked again if I have a favorite strep, I will have to say No!

Streptocarpus 'King's Cloak' grown by Ray Annabel

Steps to Show Streptocarpus

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Four streptocarpus hidden in a mystery box opened a fruitful beginning toward a prolific ten years of growing this genus. Knowledge about care, cultivation and showing grew as cascades of bright, multi-colored flowers graced a north windowsill. Hybrid by hybrid, streptocarpus plants were packed into this crowded area. Soon a succession of light stands permeated my basement as species and unifoliates joined the promenade. Bit by bit a curtain of rosettes and ribbons decorated a drab concrete wall. My secrets are no mystery because I offer the following steps to show streptocarpus:

1) Restart new plants each fall either by seed or leaf. Periodic renewal cultivates healthy show plants, and fresh foliage bears blooms.

2) Cut a healthy leaf horizontally and remove the entire rib tissue. The overnight immersion of a limp leaf in very warm water restores crispness. The subsequent removal of the rib and placement in a medium is easier. Although the horizontal whole-leaf method of propagation is described, a leaf or any portion of a leaf may be propagated since babies form on the exposed veins.

3) Place the cut leaves in a container with two to three inches of dry vermiculite. Add very warm water until the vermiculite floats. Rising leaves are typical and natural, but their placement until practically submerged in this soupy medium retards heaving and anchors. Let dry naturally and dampen only after the vermiculite dries. The chance of a hopelessly rotten mother leaf is lessened if the container is left uncovered. Additionally, babies grown in the open will strongly harden with development. If a mother leaf wilts from dryness, simply add very warm water and cover for a few hours. If water evaporation is too rapid, the container may be partially covered. Streptocarpus leaves rebound if they become wilted.

4) Plant baby plants that are unweaned (still attached to a small portion of the mother leaf) when they are about 1/2 to 1 inch. The survival of an unweaned baby plant is greater than one that is immediately detached from the mother. The motherly section ultimately dies as the new plant matures. Make a vertical cut through the mother and roots to plant this segment. One-inch Solo cups are excellent for the first planting. Transplantation may be vital if the baby yellows before maturity. Carefully transplant the entire leaf with its offspring attached into a shallow container of regular soil. Styrofoam meat trays are highly suitable and can be wicked. Transplantation also quickens transition for life in soil. Streptocarpus will propagate in Styrofoam meat trays with potting soil, but mold is a by-product. Time required for growth, mature development and showing depends on the hybrid, conditions and season.

5) Grow in a cool room with high humidity. From early spring to late fall, streptocarpus thrive with temperatures of 65-70 degrees and high humidity (65-70%). These conditions yield showy, shiny

foliage with smooth veining. Warm, dry conditions encourage the development of thick, distended veins that contribute to knobby, puckered and wrinkled foliage that may overpower the prolific bloom.

6) Provide a consistent watering schedule. Although streptocarpus plants rebound, the habit of drought-to-drown promotes plant collapse. Absorbing knowledge about a plant's native habitat may answer questions about the potential saturation point. Does it grow tucked in a barren rock crevice or does it decorate a stream bed? Does heavy misting sprinkle needed moisture? Most larger hybrids will thrive on a wick/mat watering system; however, when mats are used, any available props (Styrofoam plates, cups or inverted flower pots) are needed to curb the disintegration of leaf tips.

7) Re-pot the babies as they grow, mature or outgrow a pot. Over-potting physically and cruelly overpowers and may lead to a speedy demise. Multiple and successive soil changes strengthen growth. Pleas for soil change range from yellowing and over-crowding to developmental delays.

8) Use bright light. A north window provides cooler temperatures with good light particularly in the summer. Fluorescent tubes (one cool-white and one wide-spectrum tube) on twelve-hour cycles yield winning results; and if rotated, the plant will show many-sided aspects of beauty. Blooming is not timed by disbudding.

9) Feed lightly. Light is of greater importance than food for a prized performance. A weak solution of constant feed (12-36-14) is adequate for a shower of blossoms. Superthrive and winter fertilization are scarcely necessary.

10) Manipulate the foliage for desirable direction. Drifting leaves can be disciplined by skillfully staking with large name tags or any other readily available pieces of hardware to channel direction. Pinch out center leaves that bunched.

11) Groom with room-temperature water. A damp artist sponge is instrumental for removing debris. Forego the use of soapy shampoos and leaf shine that may produce a waxy resemblance of an artificial plastic plant. Shiny foliage is created with optimal culture. Remove spent blooms, and if only one bloom survives on a multi-bloomed stalk, remove the entire stalk. Exercise forethought in a decision to cut off an older leaf for the entire plant may become an unbalanced or lopsided casualty. Trim browned leaf edges before entry with the careful use of pinking shears. Sharply pointed and square-cut trims disfigure and do not mirror nature.

Coming Events

April 29 — Washington — Puget Sound Gesneriad Society & Seattle African Violet Society combined show at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 2501 NE 41st St., Seattle. Contact MJ Tyler <tyler2@olypen.com>.

April 30 — Massachusetts — Annual Plant Societies sale and demonstrations (New England AGGS Chapter participating), University of Massachusetts Eastern Extension Center, 240 Beaver St., Waltham. Sunday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Free parking and admission; wheelchair accessible. Contact Dee Stewart (978-897-6822) <deestewart@alum.mit.edu>.

May 20 — New York — Long Island Chapter of AGGS exhibit and plant sale at Clark Botanical Gardens, Albertson, Long Island. Saturday from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm. Admission to show and gardens free. Contact Ben Paternoster (516-549-6788 or <BenPaternoster@worldnet.att.net>).

June 10-11 — California — American Gesneriad Society of San Francisco display and sale of gesneriads at the Library, County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park. Saturday and Sunday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Contact Katherine Henwood (phone 650-359-1719) <Oakenhead @ worldnet.att.net>.

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