



Gleanings

a monthly newsletter from The Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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

Volume 11, Number 9

September 2020



This issue includes photos of gesneriads blooming now, Dale Martens' article about pot sizes and transplanting, and photos from the Gesneriad Society's First Virtual Flower Show.

Hope you enjoy **Gleanings!**

Mel Grice, Editor

Karyn Cichocki from New Jersey, USA, sent the photos on the right of *Sinningia brasiliensis*. She grew this tall growing plant outside. She says, "The flower bud makes me think of some kind of alien from outer space. I think this plant has possibilities for hybridizing."



Karyn Cichocki photos

Gesneriads Blooming Now



Smithiantha cinnabarina
Maureen Pratt
Maureen Pratt photo



Kohleria 'Bud's
Strawberry
Shortcake'
Karyn Cichocki
Karyn Cichocki photo



Achimenes 'Jubilee Gem'
Rosalind Gold
Rosalind Gold photo



Achimenes 'Boehme'
Karyn Cichocki
Karyn Cichocki photo



Mandirola ichthyostoma 'Chapada dos
Guimarães'
Karyn Cichocki

Karyn Cichocki photos



Achimenes 'MM's Mihail'
Karyn Cichocki



Karyn Cichocki photos



Sphaerorrhiza rosulata
Karyn Cichocki

"The plants only get about three to four inches high in my conditions. The flowers are about ¼ inch in diameter. *Sphaerorrhiza* rhizomes look like mouse droppings. If you don't look carefully you can miss them so I just continue to water the pots until new growth appears." — Karyn Cichocki

Back to Basics: Pot Sizes and Transplanting

Dale Martens

I think people are quite reluctant to repot plants. There's a fear of transplant shock. Therefore, I often see people put plants into a pot that's too big for them, hoping the plant eventually grows into the pot. When the plant is unable to fill the overly large pot with roots, then the mix near the bottom of the pot stays soggy leading to root-rot. I have the solution: don't disturb the roots when repotting from a small pot to the next larger size pot. Leaching is the key to success. Leaching is the pouring of at least one cup of room temperature water through a pot, removing fertilizer salts. Let it drain for 30 minutes, not allowing the pot to sit in that water. The Solo cup is the perfect size for most young plants because the roots fill that pot fairly quickly, perhaps taking about two or three months to rapidly grow. Soon the plant will grow to a good size, looking like it needs repotting into a 3-inch pot. First I leach the soil, then five to seven days later after the soil has had time to dry, I'll transfer the plant to the 3-inch pot without disturbing the roots. That's critical in my opinion: Do not disturb the roots of a young plant in a small pot when transplanting into the next larger size pot. Also critical is the removal of buds/flowers for at least one month so the transplanted gesneriad focuses on roots and not flowers.

What is the next size pot? My plants are repotted in this order: Solo cup to 2.5-inch or 3-inch, 3-inch to 3.5 or 4-inch depending on what I know about the eventual leaf size and/or height. Taller gesneriads such as

smithianthas or kohlerias will get the 4-inch pot. See the photos of a miniature sinningia that initially started out in a 2.5-inch pot in January. Buds/flowers were not allowed. After bottom leaves were removed, it was transplanted into a deeper Solo cup on February 14 after leaching. No buds/flowers were allowed



The sprouted 1-inch tuber removed from greenhouse tray's cell



January 26: bottom two leaves removed, tuber potted in a 2.25-inch pot



February 14: bottom two leaves removed, and potted in a Solo cup

Dale Martens photos

until mid-March. It was in bloom by April 25.

How large should a streptocarpus get before transplanting it into a 3 or 4-inch pot? Usually I put two or three Solo cup sized, young streptocarpus in one 4-inch pot. The more leaves in the pot, the more flowers! That's why I often put more than one streptocarpus in a pot.

Should a young plant with first buds or flowers be transplanted to a larger pot? I allow a couple of flowers to confirm the identity of the plant. I leach the plant of fertilizer salts. All buds and flower stems are removed before I put the plant in the next size pot. See my photos of *Damrongia orientalis* that I grew from seed (originally called *Streptocarpus orientalis*) shared with me by Ingrid Lindskog.



April 25: *Sinningia* 'Heartland's Smooches' in full bloom



November 13: *Damrongia orientalis* seedling's flower stems removed, transplanted to a 3-inch pot without removing lower leaves

Do I replot a newly purchased plant, or do I leave it alone and acclimate it to my light routine and environment? The first thing I do is pour room temperature water through the pot and collect that water in a clear container. Wait about twenty minutes, then look with a magnifying glass for anything that moves! If I see evidence of insects like mealy bugs, then I have to decide if I'll keep the plant after proper measures are taken such as using insecticides. If the plant with insects does not have a tuber/rhizome, I throw it away after I take a leaf for propagation. I spray

Dale Martens photo

that leaf with insecticidal soap, leaving it on for about ten minutes before rinsing it off. When I get plants from that propagation, I will use a systemic insecticide when I pot it. If the plant has a tuber or rhizome, then I'm more likely to throw away the top of the plant and wash the tuber or rhizome with insecticidal soap. I'll store the washed tuber/rhizome in a plastic bag containing moist vermiculite with a few grains of systemic insecticide so when new roots are formed, the plant will absorb the insecticide. In about two months I'll pot the tuber/rhizome in the smallest pot possible and use more systemic insecticide, following the instructions on the insecticide's label. The pot will be isolated inside a clear container with a lid. I draw two large X's on the pot so I'll always be wary of that plant. Eventually I'll acclimate the plant to room air, constantly watching for insects. I tend to isolate newly acquired plants for about five months.



January 15: *Damrongia orientalis* in full bloom

Dale Martens photo

This article appeared originally in GESNERIADS Vol. 69, No. 1, First Quarter 2019, Peter Shalit, editor. Read other interesting articles like this about gesneriads by becoming a member of The Gesneriad Society and receiving our quarterly 64-page journal.

The Gesneriad Society's First Virtual Flower Show

Paul Susi

Where can you find 345 gorgeous gesneriads from 92 exhibitors representing six countries? The Gesneriad Society's Virtual Flower Show, viewable at <https://www.gesneriadsociety.org/conventions/2020-convention-st-petersburg-fl/2020-virtual-flower-show/>, is a site for gesneriad-deprived eyes. Have fun viewing all the images. Which one would you have selected as the People's Choice Award winner? Send your selection to me (class number, exhibitor's name and entry name) at gesneriadawards@gmail.com and we will publish the results in the October issue of *Gleanings*.



Smithiantha 'Designer's Ice Pop'
Lan Wu, CA



Sinningia defoliata
Peter Shalit, WA



Primulina depressa
Jiaqi Qin, China

Photos by the exhibitors



Episcia 'Unpredictable Valley'
Barbara Stewart, VA



Oreocharis ronganensis
Hong Xin, China
De-chang Meng photo

Photos by the exhibitors except where noted



Columnea microphylla
Doreen Dragon, AB Canada



Saintpaulia 'Jolly Wit's End'
Mary Corondan, TX



From the editor —

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

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

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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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