

The Gesneriad Society Convention 2026 Flower Show Schedule

"Chicagoland Celebrates 75 Years of The Gesneriad Society"

June 28 – July 4, Wheeling, Illinois

Entries will be accepted on Wednesday, July 1, from 9:30–11 a.m. Late entries may be received on Thursday morning from 6:30–7 a.m. only by prior arrangement and with written permission of the Flower Show Co-Chairpersons.

Division I – HORTICULTURE

SECTION A — New World Gesneriads in Flower – Tuberous

- Class 1 *Sinningia speciosa* species
- Class 2 *Sinningia speciosa* cultivars
- Class 3 *Sinningia* species and cultivars (leaf blade less than 1" long)
- Class 4 *Sinningia* species and cultivars (leaf blade maximum 2.5" long)
- Class 5 Other *Sinningia* species
- Class 6 Other *Sinningia* cultivars
- Class 7 Other tuberous gesneriads (*Nauticalyx*, *Chrysothemis*)

SECTION B — New World Gesneriads in Flower – Rhizomatous

- Class 8 *Achimenes*, ×*Achimenantha*
- Class 9 *Kohleria*
- Class 10 *Seemannia*, ×*Gloximannia*
- Class 11 *Smithiantha*, ×*Smithicodonia*
- Class 12 Other rhizomatous gesneriads less than 5" in all dimensions (excluding container)
- Class 13 Other rhizomatous gesneriads

SECTION C — New World Gesneriads in Flower – Fibrous-Rooted

- Class 14 *Codonanthe*, *Codonanthopsis*, ×*Codonanthus*
- Class 15 *Columnea*
- Class 16 *Episcia*, *Alsobia*
- Class 17 *Gesneria*, ×*Rhytidoneria*
- Class 18 *Nematanthus*
- Class 19 Other fibrous-rooted gesneriads

SECTION D — Old World Gesneriads in Flower

- Class 20 *Aeschynanthus*
- Class 21 *Henckelia*
- Class 22 *Petrocosmea*
- Class 23 *Primulina* species
- Class 24 *Primulina* cultivars
- Class 25 *Streptocarpus*, subgenus *Streptocarpella*
- Class 26 Subg. *Streptocarpella*, Sect. *Saintpaulia* species and their clones
- Class 27 Sect. *Saintpaulia* cultivars classified as miniatures (leaf span max 6" diameter)
- Class 28 Sect. *Saintpaulia* cultivars classified as semi-miniatures (leaf span max 8" diameter)
- Class 29 Sect. *Saintpaulia* cultivars classified as standards (leaf span over 8" diameter)
- Class 30 Sect. *Saintpaulia* cultivars classified as trailers (minimum of 3 crowns)
- Class 31 *Streptocarpus*, subgenus *Streptocarpus*, species
- Class 32 *Streptocarpus*, subgenus *Streptocarpus*, cultivars with non-variegated foliage
- Class 33 *Streptocarpus*, subgenus *Streptocarpus*, cultivars with variegated foliage
- Class 34 Other Old World gesneriads

SECTION E — Gesneriads grown for Ornamental Qualities Other Than Flowers: Decorative fruit and calyces are permitted, but no flowers or buds showing color. A plant should have some special quality of color, texture or growth habit to be entered in this section.

- Class 35 *Episcia* with pink and white/cream leaf variegation
- Class 36 Other *Episcia*
- Class 37 *Primulina* species
- Class 38 *Primulina* cultivars
- Class 39 Other gesneriads with variegated foliage
- Class 40 Other New World Gesneriads, species or cultivars
- Class 41 Other Old World Gesneriads, species or cultivars

SECTION F — New Gesneriads: Introductions made within the last 5 years, but not previously entered in this section of any Gesneriad Society Convention Show. A white card (not to exceed 8.5" × 5.5") must be provided giving educational information such as name of hybridizer, collector, place of origin, special cultural requirements, etc. Contact Karyn Cichocki <kdc05@ptd.net> for a list of species and cultivars ineligible for entry in Section F.

- Class 42 Species in flower
- Class 43 Species not in flower
- Class 44 Cultivars in flower
- Class 45 Cultivars not in flower

SECTION G — Lesser-Known Gesneriads Seldom Grown or Seen in Shows: A white card (not to exceed 8.5" × 5.5") must be provided with educational information such as habitat, source and cultural requirements.

Class 46 In flower

Class 47 Not in flower

SECTION H — Trained or Sculptured Gesneriads: An educational 8.5" × 5.5" white card is required stating what training the exhibit received and how the exhibit is to be viewed (all sides or from the front).

Class 48 Bonsai, topiary, espaliered, or other style

SECTION I — Gesneriads Grown by a Novice – A Novice is anyone who has never won a blue ribbon in the Horticulture Division of a gesneriad flower show (including AVSA sponsored show). Exhibitors wishing Novice Status for the Horticulture Division may not enter other Horticulture classes.

Class 49 Gesneriads in flower

Class 50 Gesneriads grown for ornamental qualities other than flowers (no flowers or buds showing color allowed)

SECTION J — Collections of Gesneriads – A grouping of 3 to 5 different plants in flower or grown for ornamental qualities, or in combination (**non-blooming saintpaulias must have variegated foliage**). Exhibitor must provide a white card, not to exceed 8.5" × 5.5", with identification of plants. In Class 51 exhibitor is encouraged to reflect variety, as this is a consideration in judging. In Class 52, exhibitor must provide a white card, (not to exceed 8.5" × 5.5") identifying the plants and providing educational information. Class 53 is for a grouping of 3 to 5 plants, each from a different gesneriad genus. Exhibitor should depict a clearly developed theme, (e.g., various root structures, miniature or compact gesneriads, ornamental qualities, a collection of genera from Asia, Africa, South America, etc.)

Class 51 Plants of a single genus either species or cultivars

Class 52 Kinship group – Interspecific or intergeneric hybrid/hybrids exhibited with one or more parents

Class 53 Multiple genera

Division II – ARTISTIC

Each entry may be interpreted and executed in any way the exhibitor chooses (suspended, kinetic, etc.), except where specified. There is a limit of 4 entries in each class in Sections K, L & M, except for Underwater Class 61 that has a limit of 6 and Challenge Classes 55 and 60 both with a limit of 5 each. All challenge, miniature, and underwater design classes will be staged on risers about 17" above table level. Tabletops and risers will be covered in a neutral color, and niches are white except where noted. White cardboard sheets will be placed behind designs without niches to prevent distractions from hotel walls.

Reservations for the Artistic Division must be made with Linda Hall via email <llhall@grm.net> or mail (517 E. Elm St., Ravenwood, MO 64479) by June 1, 2026. Early reservations are appreciated and all will be confirmed with either a return email or postcard. All exhibits must be entered between 9:30–11 a.m. on Wednesday. Designers will have additional time from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 9–10 p.m. (Design plant material adjustments will be allowed from 6:30–7 a.m. on Thursday.)

SECTION K — Designs of Fresh-Cut, and/or Dried and/or Growing Gesneriad Material

Class 54 **"Snow, Wind, & Fire"** – a free-standing miniature design not to exceed 6" in any dimension.

Class 55 **"Challenge Class"** – Class title announced at 9:30 a.m. on the day of entries. All materials (except container and mechanics) will be provided. Only materials provided may be used. Design to be staged in a niche 7"H × 5"W × 5"D.

Class 56 **"Proud"** – in honor of Chicago's Pride parade. A design to be staged in a niche 10"H × 10"W × 10"D.

Class 57 **"Lollapalooza"** – an annual music festival. A design to be staged in a niche 14"H × 11.2"W × 10"D.

Class 58 **"O'Hare Airport"** – a design to be staged in a niche 18"H × 12"W × 10"D

Class 59 **"Garfield Park Conservatory"** – Must feature New World and Old World material in a free-standing design with maximum space allotted of 18"W × 18"D. Designer may use any portion of the allotted space; height is at the discretion of designer.

SECTION L – Designs of Fresh-Cut Gesneriad Material

Class 60 **"Challenge Class"** – Class title announced at 9:30 a.m. on the day of entries. All materials (except container and mechanics) will be provided. Only materials provided may be used. Design to be staged in a niche 7"H × 5"W × 5"D.

Class 61 **"Shedd Aquarium"** – an underwater design featuring completely submerged plant material in a container not to exceed 12" in any dimension.

Class 62 **"The Chicago Cocktail"** – a free-standing design to be staged in a stemmed cocktail glass (provided by designer), not to exceed 12" in width.

Class 63 **"Chicago-Style Pizza"** – a free-standing design in a round 8"-10" metal pan with sides (to be provided by the designer).

Class 64 **“Oak Park Conservatory”** - An exuberance of nonflowering gesneriads to display the diverse textures, colors, and shapes of gesneriad foliage. A design to be staged in a niche 8”H × 12”W × 10”D.

SECTION M — Designs of Growing Gesneriad Material

Class 65 **“Chicago Botanic Garden”** - a freestanding foliage only design with maximum space allotted of 18”W × 18”D. Designer may use any portion of the allotted space; height is at the discretion of the designer.

SECTION N — Container Plantings of a selection of a variety of Growing Gesneriad Material with a landscape plan (not to exceed 24” in any dimension)

Class 66 Terrarium – Straight-sided

Class 67 Terrarium – Curved

Class 68 Tray Landscape

Class 69 Natural Garden – planted on any naturally occurring material, (e.g., rock, wood, shell)

SECTION O — Artistic Entries by Novices – A Novice is anyone who has never won a blue ribbon in the Artistic Division of a gesneriad flower show (including AVSA sponsored show).

Exhibitors wishing Novice Status for the Artistic Division may not enter other Division II classes.

Class 70 Artistic entries suitable for any class in Sections K, L, M or N, except for the Challenge Classes.

Division III — THE ARTS

All entries must have been made by the exhibitor and feature gesneriads in some form. Exhibitors are required to reserve space (indicating the size of the exhibit) for all entries in Sections P and Q. **Limit: One entry per exhibitor per class.** Reservations must be made with Linda Hall via email <llhall@grm.net> or mail (517 E. Elm St., Ravenwood, MO 64479) by June 1, 2026. All exhibits must be entered between 9:30–11 a.m. on Wednesday.

SECTION P — Photography: The subject must be identified on the entry card. **Prints may not exceed 8”×10” and mats or frames may not exceed 14” in width. Easels must be provided for all prints.** There is a limit of six entries per class. Images of gesneriads growing in natural habitats are **not eligible** for entry in Class 72.

Class 71 Color print of parts of a gesneriad (flowers, fruit, foliage, etc.)

Class 72 Color print of a whole gesneriad plant (see additional Arts rule #3, regarding how this class is judged).

Class 73 Color print of gesneriad(s) growing in a natural habitat. The subject must be portrayed growing wild in an area of the world considered by botanists to be its natural range, not cultivated in pots, gardens, or greenhouses. A white card (maximum 8.5”×5.5”) must be provided detailing location, climate, month/year photo was taken, how the site was accessed and any other pertinent information.

Class 74 Monochrome print

SECTION Q — Arts and Crafts Representing Gesneriads: Exhibitors must include a white card (not to exceed 8.5” × 5.5”) describing the medium chosen, techniques and/or processes used in the creation of an entry. Manipulated photographs, (i.e., montages and other techniques in which manipulation is the principal element) are eligible for entry in Class 77. All such photographs in Class 77 must respect the **same easel requirement and size limit** stated for exhibits in Section P.

Class 75 Painting or drawing: An easel must be provided by the exhibitor.

Class 76 Needlework or textile: Exhibitor to provide the source of the design.

Class 77 Other arts and crafts.

Division IV — EDUCATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL

Reservations including the size of exhibit must be made with Linda Hall via email <llhall@grm.net> or mail (517 E. Elm St., Ravenwood, MO 64479) by June 1, 2026. Limit: one entry per exhibitor per class. All exhibits must be entered between 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Wednesday.

SECTION R — Educational Exhibits

Class 78 Exhibit illustrating information of scientific or horticultural importance, or gesneriad promotion.

Class 79 Exhibit of plant material with educational information.

Class 80 Exhibit of photograph(s) of gesneriads that because of their seasonal nature and/or rarity are not often exhibited. A white card, (not to exceed 8.5”×5.5”) must be provided outlining source, natural habitat, cultural information, and reason for suitability in this class.

Class 81 Exhibit of photograph(s) of gesneriads growing outdoors as bedding, accent, or container plants. Gesneriad(s) must be identified and additional information included about climate, growing medium, culture, etc.

SECTION S — Commercial Displays

Class 82 Display table with a grouping of gesneriads (10 or more different plants).

Class 83 Display table with a grouping of gesneriads (fewer than 10 different plants).

General Rules and Exhibitors Information

Each exhibitor must provide a list of plants and other exhibits with the appropriate Section and Class numbers to facilitate the work of the Entries Committee. The Flower Show Committee will assist in identifying material unknown to the exhibitor. An entry form will be included with each registration confirmation with additional forms available on the website or at convention. Exhibitors must complete their entry forms and submit them to Judi DuPont via email <2manyhobbies2@gmail.com> or postal mail (12300 Sleezer Road, Newark, IL 60541-9532) by Saturday June 20, 2026, or at the Registration table no later than Tuesday by 1:45 p.m. **Entry forms not received by Tuesday's deadline will be accepted FOR EXHIBIT ONLY.** Entry forms may be revised after submission (planned entry plants not ready for show, or other plants may unexpectedly be ready). All exhibitors must have submitted their entry forms by the dates listed above. Only entries of exhibitors who have submitted entry forms in advance will be considered for the show. Your cooperation will help expedite the actual entries process for everyone.

1. All exhibitors are required to submit a completed entry form, even those who have reserved space prior to the show.
2. All plant material must be free of insects and disease. All entries will be inspected, including those for exhibit only.
3. Entries shall be in accordance with the schedule and **must be approved by the Classification Committee.** Nonconformity to schedule may bring disqualification.
4. Entries will be accepted only during the hours specified. An exhibitor may request that an entry be accepted for exhibit only. Educational information should be provided where appropriate. These and any entries arriving after the Entries process closes will be placed in a separate area of the showroom For Exhibit Only and will not be judged.
5. Exhibitors need not be members of The Gesneriad Society **but must be registered for convention.**
6. All entries will be staged in the showroom by the Placement Committee. Collections, artistic, educational and commercial entries may be placed in the showroom by the exhibitor in the space designated and during the stated time for entries.
7. Institutions and commercial growers whose employees assist with the culture and grooming of potential entries may not make more than two entries in each of the Horticulture, Artistic, or Arts Divisions.
8. Classes may be subdivided or consolidated at the discretion of the Show Committee after entries close.
9. Only exhibitors and show committee members are permitted in the showroom when the show isn't open to the public.
10. No entries may be removed from the showroom until the show closes, unless directed by the show committee.
11. Standard competitive judging, as established by The Gesneriad Society, will be used.
12. Awards will be made according to the following point scores: 1st, blue ribbon (90-100); 2nd, red ribbon (at least 80); 3rd, yellow ribbon (at least 70). Honorable Mentions may also be awarded.
13. Special Awards (more than a class ribbon) are reserved for Gesneriad Society members of record at the time of Flower Show entries, unless specifically offered to nonmembers. An exhibit must score 90 or above to be considered.
14. Awards for Best and Runner-Up to Best Gesneriad in Show in Division I, (excluding Saintpaulia cultivars) are given for horticultural perfection. These awards and those for Best and Runner-up in Divisions II, III, and IV are reserved for Gesneriad Society members of record at the time of Flower Show entries. Exhibits in all Divisions must score 95 points or higher to be considered for these awards.
15. Sweepstakes and Runners-Up awards for Divisions I, II, and III require a minimum of three blue ribbons in a Division to be eligible. These awards are reserved for Gesneriad Society members of record at Show entries time.
16. Live streaming of convention flower show entries preparation in any location is not permitted and will be cause for disqualification from the flower show and immediate removal from the entries area. All types of photography, video recordings, and social media posts are strictly prohibited during flower show judging.
17. The Gesneriad Society will endeavor to protect all entries but assumes no responsibility for loss or damage.

Additional Horticulture Division Rules and Information

1. All plants must be grown by the exhibitor and have been in the exhibitor's care for at least 3 months prior to the show.
2. An exhibitor is limited to one specimen of the same plant per class. An exhibitor may submit more than one entry per class, provided each entry is a different species or cultivar, unless otherwise prohibited.
3. Exhibitors are permitted to indicate the front of a horticulture entry.
4. No particular type of container is specified; however, all containers used must be clean. A protective container or cover made of transparent material to shield delicate plant material from dry air or cold drafts may be used for any exhibit requiring it. These exhibits may be judged uncovered.
5. An exhibitor may provide educational information on a white 3" x 5" card for any entry, if desired.
6. All exhibits in flowering classes must have at least one fully opened flower.
7. Seedpods or fruit (not spent blossoms) are permitted on all gesneriads entered in the Horticulture Division. The exhibitor should realize when entering a blooming plant with seedpods or fruit that some judges may find these enhancements of, or detractions from, the plant's appearance.
8. An exhibitor desiring to elevate their entry from the table surface needs to supply their own means of doing this. Items used for elevating should be clear, solid black, green, or white in color.
9. Prior arrangements need to be made by June 20, 2026, with the Show Chair for exhibits in hanging baskets.
10. An entry, once placed, may not be touched, altered or replaced by the exhibitor.
11. Entries in Classes 27-30, saintpaulia cultivars, will be classified according to AVSA standards.

Additional Artistic Division Rules and Information

1. Gesneriads must predominate.
2. While saintpaulias are permitted in all artistic classes, the use of other gesneriads is strongly encouraged.
3. Other live and dried (but not artificial) plant material is permitted in sections K, L and O (design only).
4. Plant material used in the Artistic Division need not have been grown by the exhibitor.
5. Challenge Classes: **Only materials provided** may be used in the execution of the design. Exhibitors must provide container and other mechanics (e.g., florist's wire/clay, water vessels for cut blossoms, etc.).
6. All plant material used is to be identified on an accompanying 3"×5" white card, except for the challenge classes. Supplemental titles or descriptions may be added but are not required.
7. Accessories are optional unless specifically required.
8. All niche sizes stated are for space dimensions allotted. **Actual niche side wings are roughly one half of the depth stated.** Exhibitors may provide additional background, but tape or other adhesives are not permitted on niches.
9. Cut blossoms or plant material may be placed in the designs on Thursday morning from 6:30 to 7 a.m.
10. "Dimension" refers to the linear measurements of height, width, and depth only.
11. Straight-sided terrariums are composed of flat pieces of glass or plastic; curved terrariums have rounded pieces. Terrariums with mirrored backs are allowed.
12. All designs must be kept in show condition for the duration of the show.

Additional Arts, Educational and Commercial Division Rules and Information

1. All entries must have been made by the exhibitor and feature gesneriads in some form.
2. Entries must not have been exhibited before in any Gesneriad Society Convention show.
3. Photography: The exhibit is being judged on the skill, technique and composition displayed, not on the quality of the plant material chosen as a subject, except for Class 72.
4. Educational exhibits may be entered by institutions, chapters, study groups or individuals. In Class 79, any project relating to gesneriads must combine illustrative materials with live plants.

Call for 2026 Convention Judges and Clerks

If you would like to volunteer to judge or clerk at the 2026 Convention Flower Show, please do so when you register for the convention. If you registered to volunteer in other capacities, please be careful that it doesn't interfere with Thursday morning judging of the show.

If you forgot to volunteer to judge or clerk when you registered or have changes to make, please send an email to <judges.clerks@gmail.com>. If you need to use postal mail, please send changes to Judy Niemira, 12 Dappled Drive, East Amherst, NY 14051.

Please assist us in making our judging and clerking run as smoothly as possible. If you volunteer, please understand that you are making a commitment to be available on Thursday morning until the completion of judging, or until the Judges & Clerks Co-Chairs have confirmed the completion of your assignment. All judges and clerks should attend the pre-judging instruction session that will be held during the judges breakfast at 7:30 a.m. on Thursday morning. The breakfast may be purchased through convention registration. It is not mandatory to purchase breakfast but if you so choose, you may come to the meal room for instructions at 7:30 a.m. Commitments to judge or clerk the show will be confirmed via email from the Judges & Clerks Co-Chairs prior to the convention.

We are looking forward to seeing you all again in Illinois.

—Deanna Belli and Judy Niemira, Judges & Clerks Co-Chairs

Judges Training

Judging school sessions will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2026 and will consist of a morning session for those wishing to become student judges, two afternoon sessions running concurrently (student/senior and a judges workshop), and later, one combined session. The morning student and afternoon student/senior sessions will be for those preparing for their judging exams. The workshop is open to all certified Gesneriad Society judges (topic to be announced in the January issue of *Appraisal*). Anyone interested primarily in growing and showing, but not necessarily in becoming a judge, is welcome to pay the fee and attend the student, senior or combined sessions.

It is important when registering that you clearly indicate which of the sessions you wish to attend. The late afternoon session will combine all groups for discussion and practice judging exams will be conducted on Friday afternoon, 1:15–3 p.m., for those seeking certification as Gesneriad Society judges.

The registration fee for all sessions is \$25, payable when you register for convention. Note that no payments for judging schools will be accepted once convention is underway. Judges are encouraged to attend all judging schools even if they have already met their requirement to do so within a particular certification period; this is to hone their judging skills as part of their on-going education.

Subscription renewals for *Appraisal* must be paid separately, either through The Gesneriad Society website at <<https://shop.gesneriadsociety.org/collections/membership-and-subscriptions/products/appraisal-subscription>>, or by check via postal mail sent to Jill Fischer, 339 Lake Drive, Farmville, VA 23901. Students who meet all requirements to be certified as student judges must subscribe to *Appraisal* no later than September 30, 2026.

A flower show review, open to all who have participated in judging or clerking the 2026 Flower Show, will be held on Friday, July 3, 2026, from 8:45–9:45 a.m.

—Paul Susi and Judy Zinni, Shows and Judging Committee co-chairpersons