

MAAVS, was founded in 1991 as a regional affiliate of the African Violet Society of America (AVSA) operating in the Middle Atlantic States. We stimulate a wide spread interest in the propagation and culture of African violets and other gesneriads, provide opportunities for fellowship and friendship among and between all member clubs and individual members, and bring information to the public about our hobby. Visit our web site at www.midatlanticafricanvioletociety.org

Advantages of joining a local African violet club

- Learn how to grow plants
- Attend local club shows
- Purchase new hybrids
- Meet new friends

Advantages of joining MAAVS

- Informative quarterly Newsletters by mail or on line - - **THE MAAVS MEMO**
- Annual Convention and Show in Mid-Atlantic area (South Carolina North thru New York and Maine)
- Opportunities to meet national African violet hybridizers
- Opportunities for MAAVS awards at Affiliate Shows
- Opportunities for CASH awards at the Annual MAAVS Convention Show

JOIN US

CONTACT one of the Affiliate African violet clubs in your area, or call our President, Rodney Barnett, at 717.244.5020. Find a local club on the AVSA web site: https://africanvioletocietyofamerica.org/participate/affiliates_home/

**Application for Membership in the
Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society**

We look forward to you joining our Society. Here are the dues which run from December to January of each year. Existing members, can use this form too.

Individual	_____ \$25.00
Joint (2 members, same address)	_____ \$30.00
Affiliate/Commercial	_____ \$30.00

If you join **now** as a new member, or rejoin as an expired member, your membership will expire December 31, 2025, unless you have paid ahead for more years. If you join after Jul 1, 2025, your membership will expire on December 31, 2026.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

E Mail _____

Local Affiliate _____

Member of AVSA Yes ____ No ____ # ____

**Check here if you want to receive the MAAVS MEMO
by Post _____**

Make checks payable to MAAVS or for \$1 more use a
Credit or Debit Card

Credit Card   

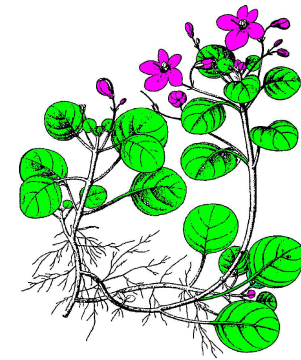
Credit or debit card

 Card number _____ MM / YY CVC _____

Mail this form to:

Jackie Leitzel
1078 Dyer Road
New Columbia, PA 17856

Grow African Violets and Other Gesneriads



S. goetzeana

presented by

The Mid-Atlantic African
Violet Society

www.midatlanticafricanvioletociety.org

How to grow African Violets and Other Gesneriads

African Violets and Other Gesneriads are the most popular indoor house plants. They bloom year long and come in an abundance of colors, sizes, and types. Other gesneriads such as episcias, chiritas, streptocarpus, gloxinias, and sinningias to name a few, have different blooming characteristics, and are very exciting to grow. Treat gesneriads as you would any African violet giving them similar care.

Natural Light Adequate light is the most important factor in promoting blossoms. Place the plants near any window that has bright, but filtered, light. An east window is good because plants do very well in the light of the morning sun.

Fluorescent Light If you use a light stand, use double tube fixtures, have the lights on 12 to 14 hours a day, and place the plants so the foliage is about 8 to 10 inches below the tubes. If you have a cubical in an office lighted with fluorescent lights, put your plants on top of your partitions.

Watering Over watering is the most common reason plants don't do well. They may be watered from the top, the bottom or by wicking. Use room temperature water, and add water when the top of the soil feels slightly dry to the touch. Wait about 1 week before watering them again. Reverse osmosis units or rain water are fine sources of water for your plants. If your house has a water softening system, do NOT use tap water on your plants—the salt in the water will kill them. Use your untreated water obtained from an outdoor spigot which is usually bypassed from the water softening system, but check.

Feeding Lack of fertilizer or too infrequent fertilizing is another of the primary reasons for lack of blossoms. Mix a commercial African violet fertilizer at a quarter the proportion called for in the manufacturer's brochure if wick watering. If it calls for 1 teaspoon per gallon of water, use 1/4 teaspoon

per gallon of water. African violet fertilizers typically contain 12-36-14 parts of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium which is optimum. Be consistent in your regiment from week to week.

Atmosphere If you are comfortable—not too cold, not too hot, not too dry—your plants will thrive. Fresh air with gentle circulation (no drafts) and a relative humidity of 40 to 50 percent. Daytime temperatures between 70 and 75 degrees; nighttime temperatures between 60 and 65 degrees with a 10 degree day-night difference. Variegated varieties prefer cooler temperatures to keep their variegation—so go with 70 degrees days and 60 degrees nights.

Potting Most of the commercial potting mixes sold today are the “soilless” type. This means the mix is light and airy to allow easy root growth. Many of our members have found that these mixes are too heavy and dilute them 3 parts commercial mix to 1 part medium horticultural grade perlite. Make sure you buy a top quality mix especially formulated for African violets. If you want to make your own mix, here are three popular varieties. One – Hortense Pittman's “Texas” formula: 5 gallons sterilized fine peat moss, 5 gallons coarse horticultural grade vermiculite, 2 ½ gallons coarse horticultural grade perlite, 1 cup crushed horticultural grade charcoal, 5 quarts of water, 1 teaspoon frittered trace elements, and 1 cup of pulverized dolomite lime. Two – Marie Burns' “Show” mix: 5 gallons Baccto African Violet Soil, 3 gallons coarse horticultural grade perlite, 1 gallon sterilized fine peat moss, 2 gallons coarse horticultural grade vermiculite, 6 cups horticultural grade charcoal, 1 cup dehydrated cow manure, 2 tablespoons Ferban, and 10 tablespoons dolomite lime. Three – Fisher's Soil Formula from Canada: 2 quarts sterilized clay loam (garden loam or top soil), 2 quarts perlite, 2 quarts medium or coarse vermiculite, 2 quarts fine chip horticultural charcoal, 8 quarts sphagnum peat moss (screened to remove sticks or buy

fine screened). Mix separately the following: 1 cup bone meal, 1 cup calcium carbonate OR dolomite lime powder (not granular), and 1 tablespoon Fermate or Ferbam. Combine the above ingredients with about a half a gallon of water.

Grooming A properly groomed, fresh, clean African violet or other gesneriad is a pleasure to behold. Keep dead leaves and faded blossoms removed. With a soft brush, flick away soil particles, lint, animal hairs, etc., or damp-wipe the foliage with a soft wet sponge. About once a month, the foliage can be washed under a gently stream of tepid water. Pat excess water with a soft sponge or tissue. Allow the plant to dry in a warm draft-free place away from direct sunlight.

Pests and Diseases African violets and other gesneriads are very palatable plants as more than 50 species of insects and mites have been found feeding on them. Remember to quarantine new plants for 60 to 90 days after purchase in the event they have bugs, before you combine them with your primary collection. Keep in mind many pesticides on the market have not been specifically tested on African violets, and may not work as they do with other house plants or kill them. Always read the label to make sure the pesticide can be safely used on African violets, and follow those instructions precisely. The best source of information on pests and pesticides has been published by AVSA in, *Insect and Mite Pests of African Violets* by Dr. Charles L. Cole. Call AVSA at 1.409.839.4725 to order it.

Other Information The *Handbook For Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, 2022; and Pauline Bartholomew's seminal work, *Growing to Show '08*, first published in 1985 are available from AVSA at 1.409.839.4725.