

# GloxNews

The publication of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society

Volume 58, Number 6 – February 2023

<http://www.greaternygesneriad.org>

<http://www.gesneriadsociety.org>

**Saturday, February 18, 2023**

11am-2pm at the LGBT Community Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York

## **2022 Gesneriad Society Convention Flower Show**

Join us this month as we review the prize-winning entries in the 2022 Gesneriad Society Convention. Be prepared to ooh and aahh over all the beautiful, blue-ribbon entries, including plants grown to perfection, shown at this annual convention. Gary Vellenzer will lead us through the slideshow, and will elicit discussion from our knowledgeable members. You will be so carried away that you will want to attend this year's convention in Richmond, Virginia.

As always, we'll have a fantastic plant sale, a judged Little Show, education, refreshments and camaraderie. It is cold outside but there'll be plenty of warmth inside. Please join us for this wonderful occasion. Guests are welcome. Hope to see you then!

A few of Carolyn Ripps's plants blooming under lights at home. From top: *x Achimenantha* 'Northwoods Sunburst', a wonderful intergeneric hybrid of *Achimenes* and *Smithiantha*; *Gesneria depressa* GRE11970, one of 40 species endemic (found nowhere else) in Cuba; *Smithiantha* 'Capistrano'. Members, remember to send your photos to your editor, [piabinha@yahoo.com](mailto:piabinha@yahoo.com).



## Officers and Directors 2022 - 2023

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<u>Editor, <i>GloxNews</i></u>	Tsuh Yang Chen (email <a href="mailto:piabinha@yahoo.com">piabinha@yahoo.com</a> )

GLOX NEWS is the official publication of the Greater New York Gesneriad Society, a chapter of **The Gesneriad Society** (formerly AGGS). It is published monthly, except July and August. GNYC annual dues are \$30 for individuals, platinum memberships are \$40, and family memberships are \$60. Send dues and address changes to the Membership Chair. Article submissions should be emailed to the Editor.

Dues for the Gesneriad Society are separate from the NYC chapter dues. Membership to the Gesneriad Society includes subscription to GESNERIADS, the society's journal. For more information, visit [gesneriadsociety.org](http://gesneriadsociety.org).

### NOTE TO EDITORS

Usage of material from the GLOX NEWS is permitted with the provision that credit is given to the publication and the original author and that no editing is done without permission from the original author.

### PRINTING SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE INFORMATION

The deadline for submissions to the GLOX NEWS is the Saturday two weeks before the chapter meeting. Electronic submissions are encouraged and can be emailed to [piabinha@yahoo.com](mailto:piabinha@yahoo.com).

## President's Message – February 2023

Are you going to Convention this year? The latest edition of *Gesneriads*, the journal of the Gesneriad Society, has just been published, and with it the program, flower show schedule, and registration form for the 2023 Convention. This year, Convention will be held during the week of July 2nd, in Richmond, Virginia – within driving distance from the greater NYC area. This is a fabulous opportunity for our chapter members. I know that several of us are planning to make the trip, and I hope you are among them.

Even if you aren't going to Convention this year, have you considered growing and donating plants for GNYGS to sell there? Convention attendees are eager buyers, and plants sold at convention fetch premium prices – much more than we pay for the same plants at our monthly meetings. Even with the commission paid to the Gesneriad Society, we come out ahead, and these profits come home to GNYGS to benefit our chapter. As you consider your plant stands, think about what you might propagate or grow out for the Convention sales table this year.

Our February program will put all of us in the mood to think about Convention: Gary Vellenzer will present a slideshow of the 2022 Convention Flower Show winners. This is an opportunity to learn about and admire the best entries, from a flower show where growers have brought "the best of the best". I hope to see you there!

*Megan*

### **HOSPITALITY** by Al Romano

It was good to see everyone at the meeting and visiting our refreshment table last meeting. As you may know, I've been bringing in a hot water kettle for those members who prefer hot drinks. We have an assortment of teas and we also have hot chocolate as well. Coffee, of course is always available too!

Thanks to Gussie for bringing in and donating the Mallow Mars which quickly disappeared! I brought some chocolate grahams and ginger snaps. Please feel free to donate something you think everyone will enjoy and it's a good time to bake something special to share with your fellow members and, at the same time, "heat up" your living space. Sharing is a good thing!!

I've asked for and have gotten a couple of suggestions for adding to and hopefully improving our table. Please help out by telling me your ideas and if you'd like helping out in our efforts to do more and better things for the hospitality table, please let me know.

## Two high-elevation *Sinningia* species in the Serra do Mar Fluminense montane habitat (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) by Rodrigo Freitas

(translated by Tsuh Yang Chen, editor, GloxNews)

*Editor's Note: Brazil is home to the vast majority of the more than 70 *Sinningia* species that are known to science. The majority of these Brazilian species are concentrated on the eastern coast, including in the Atlantic Rainforest, a world hotspot for biological diversity and endemism, but which is unfortunately highly endangered. It is estimated that today only about 10% of the original Atlantic rainforest cover remains.*

The unique geography and topology of the highest layers of the Serra do Mar in the state of Rio de Janeiro -- with its sudden slopes, almost vertical cliffs (as it is often the case with the montane region of the Atlantic rainforest on the eastern coast of Brazil) -- has prevented its exploitation for coffee plantations, other types of agriculture, cattle raising and mining. This has allowed for the preservation of this unique, biodiverse habitat -- unlike the flatter, lower regions of eastern Brazil, which have been largely cleared and degraded by human economic development since the arrival of the Portuguese colonists centuries ago. It is in these high-altitude rocky hills, where the primary rainforest and vegetation still survives, that two rare species are found in the "mist forests" and high-elevation grasslands: *Sinningia cardinalis* and *Sinningia cochlearis*.

Found at 1,700-2,000 meters (5,000-6,000 ft), *S. cardinalis* blooms in profusion between October-December (summer), often up to the end of January if there's good precipitation, offering bright spots of red amidst the hills.

In contrast, *S. cochlearis* is found in a more restricted area, on cliffs between 1,900-2,300 m high (5,700-7,000 ft). It is found mostly in the higher peaks, with tubers wedged in fissures between rocks, which helps retain moisture and protect them from strong sunlight. They are also often found growing at the base of bromelias, shaded from the sun as well as sharing nutrients from these "host" plants.

Throughout most of the year, the climate at this high elevation is quite harsh, with an extensive dry season, and with the native vegetation withstanding strong sunlight and winds, receiving only moisture from mist. These plants also contend with a wide range in temperatures throughout the day, with a high of 30 degrees C (86 degrees F) at the peak of sunlight midday, and often 5 degrees C (41 degrees F) overnight. I once recorded a temperature of -5 degrees C (21 degrees F) overnight, in June (winter).

In October, at the beginning of the short rainy season, the tubers awaken and begin producing flower spikes. Plants in more hospitable locations will start blooming then; whereas those in more inclement ones will not begin blooming until November. The peak flowering is usually in December, and with an extended rainy season, blooming can continue until January. During the blooming season, there is strong competition among many insects and hummingbirds for their nectar. Among insect species, various species of

*Freitas, continued*

bees, large bumblebees, beetles and flies -- sometimes lizards -- are observed foraging for nectar amidst the flowers.

At an intermediate altitude (1,900-2,000 m -- around 6,000 ft), we often find both *S. cardinalis* and *S. cochlearis* growing side by side and often blooming concurrently. However, I have not yet found a natural hybrid between the two species in the eight years I have been exploring this region. There is however one plant I have been monitoring, that is a possible hybrid between *S. cochlearis* and *S. gigantifolia*. I'm currently collecting more data on this specimen to further determine its status.

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Rodrigo Freitas, a former systems analyst, is currently studying Biology at the State University of Rio de Janeiro. For the past eight years, he has self-financed a personal project compiling an inventory of plant species in the montane region of Rio de Janeiro state. He has to date inventoried and compiled data on 600 species, the majority of which are endemic (found nowhere else) and highly endangered, due to habitat destruction or illegal collection. Rodrigo's work is motivated by his love of this unique habitat, a hotspot of biodiversity unparalleled in the world. His work is also driven by his belief that humans will only take care of what they can love, and can only love what they know and understand. He has freely shared his photos and data online, using accessible language, to further expose the beauty of this region to a vast audience. For those interested in supporting his work, please send donations to this PayPal account: [rodrigofs2904@hotmail.com](mailto:rodrigofs2904@hotmail.com).



At left, *Sinningia cochlearis*. Above, a stunning view of *Sinningia cardinalis* growing on the rocky cliffs at high altitude. Photos by Rodrigo Freitas.

**Wanted:** Carolyn Ripps is looking for a cutting of *Streptocarpus* ‘Good Hope,’ also sold as ‘Concord Blue’. Please bring a cutting to the meeting or contact her at [rippscs@aol.com](mailto:rippscs@aol.com).

**Correction:** In the January issue, the correct name for the *Achimenes* on page 2 should be *Achimenes admirabilis*, not *A. variabilis*.

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## Gesneriad Society Virtual Education Program on *Streptocarpus*

(Free event via Zoom)

Save the date!! The Gesneriad Society invites you to register for the Virtual Education Program on *Streptocarpus*. This event will take place Saturday, February 18, 2023, at 3:00 pm Eastern Standard Time. This is an opportunity to learn about the genus *Streptocarpus* from award winning growers Terri Vicenzi, Stephen Covolo-Hudson and Dale Martens. Terri who won "Best *Streptocarpus*" for her entry of *S.* ‘Little Kan’ will show photos and discuss how to grow a show plant. Stephen will instruct on how to hybridize. Dale who won "Sweepstakes in Horticulture" will show photos of propagating, repotting and discuss other culture issues.

You do not need to be a member of The Gesneriad Society to register. Wherever you live in the world, check your time zone compared to Eastern time zone.

Click on the following link to register in advance:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_rCX3XEKJQx6tPPUaqJO34w](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rCX3XEKJQx6tPPUaqJO34w)

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**Plant Sales** many thanks to the donors to the January plant sales table: Brigitte, Ed, Francisco, Gary, Gussie, Tsuh Yang.

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**At the January meeting, we had two outstanding entries for Show and Tell.** At left is Gary’s *Sinningia* ‘Ozark’s Scentimental Journey’ (sic), a hybrid by David Harris and Dale Martens (photo by Tsuh Yang Chen). At right is Michael’s x*Achimenantha* ‘Dale’s Clownfish’ (photo by Ed Hittig).



**Glox News**

**Greater New York Gesneriad Society**

36 Crooke Avenue #F7  
Brooklyn, NY 11226-1149

**Attention:** Next Meeting:  
**February 18, 11am-2pm**  
(see first page)

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**Bulletin Board**

**Please contribute to *GloxNews*** Members, please send articles, photos, questions, requests for plants/information and other submissions to your editor at [piabinha@yahoo.com](mailto:piabinha@yahoo.com). Deadline is always two weeks before meeting date. Got suggestions, cultural questions or any requests for plants or supplies? Send them along as well. We also need photographers to take pictures at the meetings. Please see your editor at the meeting to volunteer.

**Reminder** Please check our society's FB page with more regular updates (including recent photos of members' plants and of our meetings) at: <https://www.facebook.com/NYGesneriad>. Please remember to send photos of your plants to your editor at [piabinha@yahoo.com](mailto:piabinha@yahoo.com) to be posted there. (You don't have to join FB to view our photos or posts.)

**Gleanings** *Gleanings* is a free monthly e-newsletter from The Gesneriad Society and includes articles and photos selected from chapter newsletters, the journal *Gesneriads*, and original sources. You can subscribe via email or download them from this page: <http://www.gesneriadsociety.org/current-gleanings>.

**Membership Application – The Greater New York Gesneriad Society**

I would like to \_\_\_\_\_join or, \_\_\_\_\_renew my membership.

Annual Dues: \$30 - Individual    \$40 - Individual Platinum (plant sale priority)  
                  \$45 - Family         \$60 - Family Platinum

Please make check payable to **GNYS** and mail to:  
  Brigitte Lifschitz, Membership Secretary  
  222 West 83rd Street, # 7C  
  New York, NY 10024

Or via Paypal (with credit card) at:  
<http://www.greaternygesneriad.org/join-us>

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like *GloxNews* via printed copy \_\_\_\_\_**  
**or email \_\_\_\_\_ (via email is faster)**