



March 2005

Volume 10, Issue 3

The Violets are Blooming!



Apache Heart Beat
Standard



Ma's Midland Fantasy
Standard



Precious Pink
Semiminiature



Rob's Bee Boopsie,
Miniature



Harbor Blue
Standard



Pixie Blue Trailer
Trailer



Pink Soufflé
Streptocarpus (African Violet family)

A Publication of Denton County Master Gardener Association.

Comments & Suggestions: Please call Pam McClimon with your comments and suggestions.



Growing African Violets



I have grown African violets off and on all my adult life. My mother and grandmother grew African violets, and I always thought they were beautiful. I attended an African violet show sponsored by the First Denton African Violet Society several years ago, and I decided to join the club to seriously learn how to grow and show African violets. I love African violets because they come in various sizes, have beautiful blooms that last several weeks, are easy to grow and propagate.

African violets are easy to grow provided they are given the correct cultural environment. African violets were discovered growing in Tanzania in East Africa around 1892 by a German, Baron Walter von St. Paul, and was given the genus name *Saintpaulia*. Because the flowers had a resemblance to a violet, it was given the species name, *ionantha*. Therefore, the Latin name for African violets is *Saintpaulia ionantha*.

Since the natural habitat of these plants is near the equator, they thrive in temperatures between 68 to 77 degrees with humidity of 40 to 50%, which makes them perfect houseplants since most of our homes are kept around those temperatures.

African violets can be grown in natural light or fluorescent light. They cannot tolerate direct sunlight, so place them several inches away from any window that gets direct sun. An east window is usually ideal. Fluorescent lights are probably the best light source. Double tube fixtures are best with the lights left on 12 to 14 hours a day (do not leave the lights on all day and night—the plants need rest, too!), and the plants should be 8 to 10 inches below the tubes.

The plants should be potted in a soilless mix especially made for African violets. They should be placed in pots according to the size of the plant. There are three sizes of African violets—standard (12 to 14 inches), semiminiature (8 inches), and miniature (6 inches). **NEVER POT AN AFRICAN VIOLET IN A LARGE POT IF YOU WANT IT TO BLOOM.** An African violet must be root bound in the pot in order to bloom. A regular-size standard violet should never be potted in a pot over 4 ½ inches. The semiminiature and miniature violets should never be potted in pots over 2 ½ inches.

African violets may be watered from the top, the bottom, or by wicking. Unless a wicking system is used, be sure to water only when the top of the soil feels slightly dry to the touch. Most growers use a constant feed method of fertilizing—using ¼ teaspoon of African violet fertilizer to one gallon of lukewarm water each time they are watered. Do not let the pots sit in the fertilizer solution for more than 20 minutes.

Be sure to give violets plenty of space to grow. Crowding them together can stop airflow and cause powdery mildew and other diseases to occur. Keep dead leaves and faded blossoms removed.

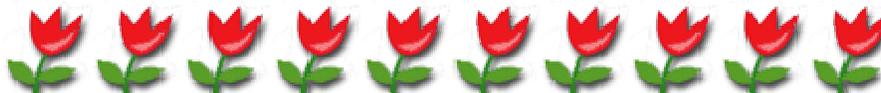
There are several methods of propagating violets. The most common way is by leaf cuttings. Remove a fresh leaf from the plant; cut the stem to about 1 ½ inches long, and plant in a mix of half vermiculite and half perlite. Many plantlets will come up through the mix and can be separated and started in small pots.

There are excellent web sites that give detailed instructions on growing African violets. Plants, soil, and other supplies can be ordered. One of the best web sites is The Violet Barn, www.robsviolet.com. The web site for the African Violet Society of America is www.avsa.org. Membership in that organization costs \$25 per year and includes six issues of the "African Violet Magazine," which has many wonderful pictures, informational articles on culture, propagation, pests and diseases, and advertisers offering plants, light stands, and supplies.

I love all plants, but I am very fond of African Violets. They really brighten up the indoors, especially in the winter.

By Adele Petty

Enjoy a topiary workshop and save money. The Topiary Team is preparing to present a workshop at the 2005 Advanced Training Conference in May and needs your help for a "dress rehearsal". Instead of the \$30 convention price, pay only \$20 for the same fun experience and two hours of advanced training. Join us March 31 from 10:00 to noon at the Extension Office. Space is limited so contact Carolyn Tinner for reservations by March 29.



March 3:
Annie Brackin (01)
Tracy Durmick (01)
Gracie Egan (04)

Happy Birthday

March 19: Andrea Hawk (05)

March 24: Sue Chellew (02)

March 25: Nancy Brown (05)

March 27: Amy Marcotte (02)

March 28: Donna Ware (03)

March 6: Shelli Stone (02)



March 17:
Maggie Metzinger (04)
Cheryl Parkinson (02)

Updates

the dirt 2005 Conference Update

Registration is going well! At press time we had 58 registrants. We expect March to be the busiest month for registration. Have YOU registered yet?

While we can't anticipate all the wrinkles that may come up associated with volunteering at and attending the conference, a few guidelines have been established for Denton County MG volunteers. If you are volunteering only and do not plan to attend any of the conference events, you do not have to pay and you will earn service hours; you will not be able to earn any advanced training hours. If you pay, i.e. register for the conference, you may take the hours served as advanced training or service. If you volunteer as a bus tour guide you must still pay the \$35 which pays for the bus, lunch and admission fees; tour guides do not need to pay the registration fee and can get service hours credit. As you can guess, these may only be a few of the situations we encounter. If you're unsure of how to credit your volunteer time, check with Donna or Peggy. These and other guidelines will be discussed at the two volunteer training meetings. Volunteers are encouraged to attend either meeting: 9:30am, April 4, or 7:00pm, April 18, in the Guadalupe room, Doral Hotel and Golf Club.

Other than the conference directly, service hours can be earned for helping stuff goodie bags, 3:00-5:00pm, March 22, and 29, (if needed). We'll also be adding redbud seedlings to the goodie bags 9:00am, April 26. These opportunities to help will be at the extension office.

The excitement continues to build! The conference committee hopes each of you will find a way to participate in this huge Denton County undertaking. Call or email Donna to volunteer.



Speakers Bureau

Rodney Solwalskie, 2005 intern, will be making a presentation to The Colony Early Childhood PTA on the topic of "The Three Keys to Successful Gardening" on Monday, March 14. Anyone interested in volunteering with the Speaker's Bureau should contact Annell Burns.

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee needs volunteers to provide refreshments for the DCMGA meetings on Wednesdays, Sept. 14 and October 12 (evening meeting at 7:00pm.) If you can help, please contact Sue Chellew, Chairman.

Volunteer Opportunities

North Denton Branch Library

Work has begun again on the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton Branch Library, at the corner of Locust and Windsor. Plan to work each Thursday morning from 9:30-12:00. Work will continue for the next month or more. Bring shovels, gloves, hand tools, buckets, and wheelbarrows.

The project committee is asking for donations of the following plants: Rudibeckia Goldstrum, Lamb's Ear, Yellow Lantana, Purple Cone Flower, Mexican Mint Marigold, Yellow Yarrow, Mealy Blue Sage, Copper Canyon Daisy, Russian Sage, Butterfly Bush (prefer dark color), Vitex (prefer dark color), and Redbud Trees.

Please consider donating some of these as you get your beds ready for spring planting. Contact Carol Fitch regarding pick-up of donated plants or for more information.

Children's Arbor Day Project

Volunteers are needed to bag redbud seedlings on Wednesday, April 6, 9:30am, at the Keep Denton Beautiful office, 1117 Riney Rd. Presentation of Arbor Day programs and distribution of seedlings to Denton third-graders will be Thursday, April 7, and Friday, April 8. A sign-up sheet is in the ext. office or you may contact Carolyn Gold.

Bayless-Selby House Victorian Gardens

Gardening days have been scheduled for spring clean-up and planting in the perennial and herb gardens. The dates are Wednesdays, March 16, April 20, and May 18, at 9:00am. The Gardens are located at the corner of Mulberry and Carroll Streets in Denton. Please bring gardening tools. If you would like to be on a committee to look after individual gardens, (herb, antique rose, perennial, pass-a-long, etc.), water trees, or be a docent on the Walking Path, please contact Carolyn Gold.

Highland Village Elementary School Outdoor Classroom

This outdoor classroom project is in need of a "refurbishing". Workdays have been scheduled for Friday, March 4, 8:00am-12:00, and Saturday, March 5, 9:00am-12:00. The school is located at 301 Brazos Blvd., Highland Village (corner of Sellmeyer and Brazos). Volunteers should bring gloves, garden tools and wheelbarrows (if possible). The project needs donations of mulch, newspapers, native plants and grasses, small vegetable plants, herbs, and any plants appropriate for a butterfly garden. Please contact Jill Peak, 2005 intern, for more information.

Datebook



March 2005

Mar. 3 at 9:30am to 12pm - Workday for the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton Branch Library

Mar. 4-6 - The 2005 Spring Dallas Home & Garden Show at Market Hall. The show hours are: Fri. 2-8pm, Sat. 10am - 8pm and Sun. 11am - 6pm.

Mar. 4 at 8am to noon - Highland Village Elementary School Outdoor Classroom Workday

Mar. 5 at 9am to noon - Highland Village Elementary School Outdoor Classroom Workday

Mar. 7 at 9:30am - Conference Committee meeting, Health Department conf room (same building as Extension Office)

Mar. 7 at 1:00pm - Our Gift from Spain: Colonial Farming and Ranching Comes to Texas, an illustrated talk by William W. Dunmire, at the Denton Courthouse-on-the Square Museum

Mar. 8 at 9:30am to 12:30pm - Butterfly Habitat Certification Class, Fort Worth Botanic Garden Center

Mar. 9 at 7pm - DCMGA Monthly Meeting at the Extension Office. The general meeting program will be Adaptive Gardening, presented by Sher Harnish. She is a DCMG member and is the interim director of Occupational Therapy training at TWU's Houston campus.

Mar. 10 - Upper Trinity workday

Mar. 10 at 9:30am to 12pm - Workday for the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton Branch Library

Mar. 14 at 9:15am - LISDOLA workday

Mar. 16 at 9am - Bayless Selby House Workday

Mar. 16 at 10am - Photography-From Landscape to Close-Up, second session.

Mar. 17 at 9:30am to 12pm - Workday for the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton Branch Library

Mar. 21 - Conference Committee meeting, Extension Office conference room

Mar. 22 and 29 (if needed) at 3-5pm - Stuffing goodie bags

Mar. 23 - Bayless-Selby House workday

Mar. 24 at 9:30am to 12pm - Workday for the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton Branch Library

Mar. 31 at 10am to noon - Topiary Workshop at the Extension Office

Mar. 31 at 9:30am to 12pm - Workday for the xeriscape garden project at the North Denton

Branch Library



April 2005

Apr. 4 at 9:30am - Volunteer training meeting, Guadalupe Room, Doral Hotel and Golf Club

Apr. 4 - Conference Committee meeting, following volunteer training meeting, Guadalupe Room, Doral Hotel and Golf Club

Apr. 6 at 9:30am - Bagging of the seedlings for Children's Arbor Day. If you need more information, please contact Carolyn Gold

Apr. 7 & 8 - Distribution of redbuds to the 3rd graders for Children's Arbor Day. If you need more information, please contact Carolyn Gold

Apr. 13 - DCMGA Monthly meeting, Dotty Woodson, Orchids

Apr. 18 at 9:30am - Conference Committee meeting, Health Department conference room (same building as Extension Office)

Apr. 18 at 7:00pm - Volunteer training meeting, Guadalupe Room, Doral Hotel and Golf Club

Apr. 20 at 9am - Bayless Selby House Workday

Apr. 25 at 9:15am - LISDOLA workday

Apr. 26 at 9am - Adding Red Buds to goodie bags, Extension Office



May 2005

May 5-8 - 2005 TMG Advanced Training Seminar, Doral Tesoro Hotel and Golf Club

May 14, 10:00am - 4:00pm, and May 15, 1:00pm - 5:00pm - Hood County Garden Tour On Saturday and Sunday the Hood County Master Gardeners will host a Garden Tour. The tour will feature several Master Gardeners' homes and will provide educational displays on drip irrigation and rainwater harvesting. Save the date; more information will be coming soon

May 18 at 9am - Bayless Selby House Workday

May 23 at 9:15am - LISDOLA workday



June 2005

Jun. 8 - DCMGA monthly meeting, Trinity Turf at Pilot Point

Jun. 21 & 22 and again on **Jun. 28 & 29** - A two-day "[Specialist in Oak Wilt](#)" training session will be offered at Tenroc Ranch in Salado



July 2005

Jul. 13 - DCMGA monthly meeting, Nancy Collins and Owen Yost, Backyard Habitats

Jul. 24-27 - 2005 International Master Gardener Conference in Saskatoon, Canada

Minutes

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 2, 2005



President Carolyn Tinner called the DCMGA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 9:10am. Those in attendance were Karen Archambault, Annie Brackin, Celia Cohen, John Cooper, Peggy Durrett, Sandy Hiatte, Linda Krimm, Maurine LeBeau, Carolyn Tinner, Linda Williams, Donna Wolfe, and Mary Morrow.

Mary Morrow, Secretary, submitted the minutes from the January meeting via the Roto-Teller. Carolyn Tinner made a correction, indicating the website was nominated for the multi-media award. The minutes were accepted as corrected.

Linda Williams, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report. The ending balance, as of January 31, was \$14,118.90. The report was accepted. Linda Krimm made a motion to have the report available at the monthly general meetings. Mary Morrow seconded the motion and all present approved. Linda presented the 2005 Budget. She expressed a concern regarding the Board approving monies for which there is no budget item approved by the general membership. Presently the by-laws read:

ARTICLE IX> PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. *All disbursements not included in the annual budget and exceeding \$25 must have prior approval from the Executive Board. Any budget items requiring funds over the approved budget amount must have Executive Board approval.*

Linda felt this should be broadened to include guidelines for approval by the general membership when disbursements exceed the annual budget or are not included in the annual budget. After discussion and corrections, Annie Brackin made a motion to submit the budget to the general membership for final approval at the February meeting. Linda Krimm seconded the motion and all present approved.

Donna Wolfe, Volunteer Coordinator, advised that Redbud Day is April 9 at the Courthouse on the Square. Selena Schindler volunteered to chair the DCMGA booth. Donna advised that there are currently 111 veterans and 27 interns.

Celia Cohen, Mentor Coordinator, gave the following dates for the interns: February 28, LISDOLA Workday; March 10, Upper Trinity Workday; and March 23, Bayless-Selby House Workday. There will be a project manager or substitute at each location to initiate the interns into the work to be completed. A lunch for mentors and interns is planned at Dianne Land's garden, either April 7, or April 11.

Sandy Hiatte, First Vice-President, reported that the first program committee meeting of the year has been held. The committee consists of Brent Bloechle, Pam Owens, Suzie Cook, and Anne Banks. She reviewed the items they discussed. She also announced a second Brown Bag Lunch Project Day for interns and project managers on March 22. The first, held on February 1, was a success with six project managers presenting their current projects.

Peggy Durrett, 2005 Advanced Training Conference Chairman, advised there are 10 registrants for the conference. Linda Krimm advised she would submit an invitation list to the Board at the next meeting. Guidelines for service and training hours during the conference were discussed.

Linda Krimm made a motion to update the website server, which would increase our monthly fees to \$17-\$18 per month. Mary Morrow seconded the motion to approve and all present agreed. Linda gave an overview of the meeting with the Texas A&M University landscape design students working on the DCMGA Demonstration Garden. There will be a design review on February 18, and the final design presented on March 9. Linda also advised that she is speaking to local libraries to set-up garden-related displays and question and answer sessions.

Carolyn Tinner advised that the State Board Meeting is March 5, and requested that AV monetary support for both the state and JMG portions of the conference be made.

Karen Archambault, Second Vice- President, advised she is organizing the inventory for the Fund-Raising Committee. She reviewed plans for fund-raising projects to be held throughout the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45am.

Reminders

Master Gardener Specialist-Oak Wilt

A two-day "Specialist in Oak Wilt" training session will be offered at Tenroc Ranch in Salado on June 21 & 22 and again on June 28 & 29. This very intensive class will train Master Gardeners to be certified as a specialist, working with the Texas Forest Service, to provide public awareness of oak wilt and give technical support for the Oak Wilt Suppression Program. If you are interested in this training, contact John Cooper.



2005 International Master Gardener Conference in Saskatoon, Canada

Greetings Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardeners:

We have been working very hard to pull together a diverse and interesting conference program filled with stimulating educational sessions, world-class speakers and fabulous garden tours. Combine the conference with the pre- and post-conference tours and we're sure you'll agree that Master Gardeners will be treated to an unforgettable learning and travel experience.

On behalf of the Master Gardeners of Saskatchewan we cordially invite you to be our special guests. Not only is this the 10th International Master Gardener Conference, but in 2005 the province of Saskatchewan is celebrating 100 years since joining the Canadian confederation, so there is even more to see and do here during this special year. For those of you who joined us for the 1995 International Master Gardener Conference, welcome back for an even more memorable experience. For the rest of you, come to Saskatoon, enjoy our unique brand of hospitality and share the passion of our Master Gardeners.

I, and all of the members of the 2005 International Master Gardener Conference Organizing Committee, look forward to seeing all of you here in Saskatoon in July!

Patricia Hanbidge