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# GLOXINIAN

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*Streptocarpus vandeleurii*

# American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc.

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**OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY** — The objects of the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc. are to afford a convenient and beneficial association of persons interested in gesneriads, to stimulate a widespread interest in, and gather and publish reliable information about the identification, correct nomenclature, culture and propagation of gesneriads; and to encourage the origination and introduction of new cultivars.

**GESNERIAD REGISTRATION** — The American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society, Inc. is the International Registration Authority for the names and cultivars of gesneriads excepting the genus *Saintpaulia*. Any person desiring to register a cultivar should contact Judy Becker, 432 Undermountain Road, Salisbury, CT 06068 <jbecker@mohawk.net>.

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## COVER

*Streptocarpus vandeleurii*  
grown and photographed by  
Toshijiro Okuto (see scented  
*Streptocarpus* article on page 35)

## Seed Storage

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A number of years ago, I decided to run a test of seed storage methods. From a plant of *Sinningia sellovii*, I harvested a freshly dehisced pod that contained many hundreds, possibly thousands, of seeds. I placed the seeds on a sheet of weighing paper (on my lunch break of course!) under a dissecting microscope in my laboratory (the Casagrande Lab, a Visual Neuroscience lab at Vanderbilt University). I then carefully counted out seeds, dividing them into four groups of 100 each. I wrapped each group up in a separate piece of paper and placed them into separate 7 ml glass counting vials with three crystals of *Drierite*. One group I placed on the shelf above my desk, one went into the refrigerator at +4°C, a third one went into the freezer at -20°C, and a fourth went into the ultracold freezer at -70°C.

Two years later I was cleaning out the -70°C freezer and found a little vial of seeds. I went and retrieved all four vials and took them home. I sterilized my usual potting mix (Peters' Professional at that time) by heating in the microwave. I then planted all 400 seeds in separate little plots in covered plastic containers. Surprisingly, the first ones to come up (in only three days) were the -70°C seeds. Ninety-seven or ninety-eight of them (just try counting that many seedlings in that small of a space and you will see why I waffle) came up within a few days. The next to come up were the -20°C batch (within a day or two), then the +4°C batch after another day. For about a month the latter two played catch-up, but in the end there was no statistically significant difference in the numbers, though the +4°C had quite a size range for some time. None of the room temperature seeds came up at all – this in spite of the fact that they were in a laboratory where the temperature rarely changed more than a degree or two.

I distributed the seedlings to our chapter members, with the labels marked according to temperature, and requested feedback. No one reported any particular problems with any of the plants, so presumably the low temperature storage did not cause any serious damage. This information does not necessarily apply to all gesneriads, especially since *Sinningia sellovii* has proven to be fairly hardy, but it does give us food for thought.

*Thanks to Vivien Casagrande, PhD, Department of Cell and Developmental Biology, for use of the microscope and for storage space in the freezer.*



Seedlings sprouting after two years' storage at -70°C, -20°C, +4°C (left to right)