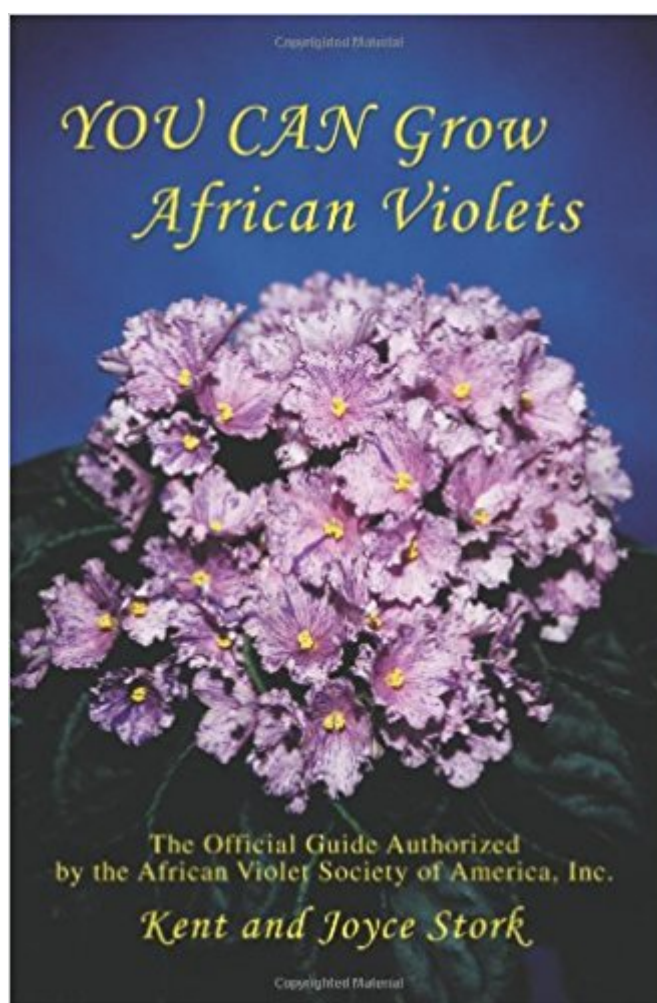


The book was found

You Can Grow African Violets: The Official Guide Authorized By The African Violet Society Of America, Inc.



Synopsis

Have you ever killed an African violet? Kent and Joyce Stork killed their first violet too! They soon mastered the skills for growing the plant and eventually wrote for the African Violet Magazine, the official publication of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. for over ten years. Their column For Beginners explained the basic elements of growing violets in an entertaining and straightforward way that anyone could understand. Now these columns have been adapted and edited to provide even the most novice grower with a step-by-step guide, whether the goal is simply to keep violets alive or to exhibit the plants in competitive shows.

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Customer Reviews

Kent and Joyce Stork have grown violets for over 30 years. From 1991 to 2004 they wrote a column in the African Violet Magazine, which became the foundation for this book. Kent and Joyce are married and live in Fremont, Nebraska, where they own a business specializing in African violets.

I was initially disappointed by this book and wrote the following preliminary review: "African violets are not easy to grow. Reading this book will not make the difference in your technique, if you currently love African violets but struggle to grow them well. This book is not for novices or even for the home grower who wishes to improve his/her horticultural technique. This is a book geared towards the exhibition circuit, for growers who show or aspire to show their plants. The authors concede with surprise that it is possible to grow African violets skillfully without following much of

any of their advice." I looked for a better book, a general-purpose guide to growing African violets in the home; I didn't find such a book, and then I took a closer look at this one. I had remarked that reading this book will not make the difference in your expertise with violets, but I would revise that to read that reading this book may indeed make such a difference: Even if you don't understand capillary matting or want a fluorescent apparatus in your home or see the point of disbudding an African violet, the effort to adapt the practices outlined in this book, to one's home growing, can and will make that difference in time. In adapting the information in this book to what we do in our homes, we find that there's little not covered in these pages. So this is an even better book than at first it appears to be, especially in light of the other options available for home growers of African violets. There is a quiz in the back of the book to help each of us evaluate his/her proficiency with these plants, and as someone who rated a "5" (out of a possible 20), I am haunted by an observation made a couple of times in the book: that the art one can learn by following this book's advice, can bring about the transition from being an average grower who is just trying to keep African violets alive, to being someone who understands the form of these plants and works to maintain that form. In short, this is the "big step" of mastery in growing African violets. I have not yet made that shift, but I am beginning to aspire to do so. Also, what I had interpreted as the authors' hubris turns out not to be that at all. A thorough and informative and well-written guide.

The plant books I have had, are excellent. However all of them are at least 20 years old. I found this book on , it is recently written and contains much information I wasn't familiar with. Since I lost my old collection of standards last Summer during a nine week hospitalization, and moved to a new location last Fall, I decided to restart my African Violet hobby by getting updated in my knowledge base before buying new plants. My plan was to start with miniatures and semi miniatures, since our new apartment is much smaller. After reading this book, I have been able to expand my plans and flesh them out more completely. Based on what I have read here, I want plants that are more genetically stable to start out with, Fantasies maybe restricted to one or two at the beginning since they are, moderately unstable and frequently sport back to a parent's appearance on leaf cuttings and sports. They may also send up multiple different colors on one plant. Limiting them will give me a chance to learn to handle them well without being overwhelmed. I also like the new bicolor flowering plants, but I have learned they are temperature and light intensity sensitive. For best results I will need to raise my growing temperature to 72 - 75 degrees, where I formerly kept my standards at 66 - 68 degrees. Fortunately we have paid heat here so that is doable. I also like variegated leaves and interestingly shaped leaves that respond to the same conditions. Finally I like

the bright and deep colored blossoms as well as semi doubled, doubled, and tripled flowers, as well as both plain and ruffled edges. All of these more specialized plants respond to more even temperature and lighting conditions. I learned a number of more modern techniques such as wick watering while continuing to use pebble trays for humidity. I definitely want to try this way of watering along with low dose constant fertilizing. Found a DIY method of making wick + reservoir pots that are attractive and in expensive. The author also encourages a lighter soil mix than I'm accustomed to for improved wicking and root growth. These modern plants are more susceptible to problems from the slightly heavier mix I used to use. Learned a lot more about pests and diseases and different ways to combat and treat them. There is a wealth of tips and tricks for improving the health and beauty of these plants. It's all very easy to read and follow and she backs everything up with sound facts and reasoning. I recommend it to anyone just starting out in or wanting to improve and modernize, their care and technique.

I started my African Violet hobby more than a year ago and I've expanded my collection to include a sinnigia and some streps. This would have been more useful to me when I first started. I don't mind the lack of photographs; however, this looks reads like a compilation of previously published magazine articles, so there is quite a bit of duplicated information. Also, I believe I've already seen some of the articles online. The part on forcing blooms was useful to me, but the other parts, not so much. I didn't find it overly technical and it would be good for someone starting out, but I would recommend borrowing a copy or seeing if you can get it from the library. I don't see myself pulling it off the shelf frequently as a reference book; it will probably go into the donation box. With good research skills, or a helpful research librarian, you could likely find most of the information here in short order online. I thought the price was a little steep considering the content.

I LOVE this book. It's my AV bible. I have learned so much and every time I go back to read it I pick up on new things I didn't notice before. It has helped me so much! BUY THIS BOOK!!!! I never thought I would succeed in growing flowers and now It feels like I always have grown them. Also, its not a boring read. They have personal input and stories that lighten the material.

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