

**LIST OF
GESNERIAD GENERA**



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GESNERIAD COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

LIST OF NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF SELECTED GESNERIAD GENERA

NOTE: The following list of names and descriptions of gesneriad genera is taken from The Gesneriad Society Inc. (formerly A.G.G.S.) *Flower Show Manual for Judges and Exhibitors* – (Revised 2010).

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- Achimenes:*** Rhizomatous New World (Mexico and Central America) genus; primarily summer flowering. In habit, may be trailing or upright, with large or small flowers of red, rosy pink, orange, yellow, purple or white. The plants are somewhat difficult to transport, apt to drop flowers in transit. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Agalmyla:*** Epiphytic vines of 97 species from Indonesia and perhaps the Malaysian archipelago, in semi-montane forest above 1000m, but not much higher, probably to about 1,500m. There is a definite rainy and dry season, but because it is a forest they never get too dry. Tubular red/orange flowers are similar to those of *Aeschynanthus*.
- Aeschynanthus:*** Epiphytic sub-shrubs or vines which are native to India, Nepal, S.W. China, Malaysia, Philippines, Solomon Islands and some Pacific Islands. Trailing, spreading or upright plants bear red, orange or yellow-green flowers, usually in clusters at tips of stems. Large showy, long lasting flowers make good subjects for arrangements. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Alloplectus:*** New World, epiphytic genus has few species in cultivation and is distinguished from *Drymonia* by smaller, tubular flowers tightly clustered in leaf axils.
- Alsobia:*** Small group of New World plants with fringed white flowers, forms stolons, has less ornamental foliage and is more cold tolerant than *Episcias* from which *Alsobias* were separated. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Amalophyllon:*** Related to *Phinaea*, these compact rhizomatous New World plants have small white flowers and attractive leaves.
- Anna:*** This Old World genus from China grows from smooth rhizomes. It produces thin unequal leaf pairs on fleshy green stems.
- Amalophyllon:*** Related to *Phinaea*, these compact rhizomatous New World plants have small white flowers and attractive leaves.

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- Anodiscus:** Upright vigorous plant with small white flowers in a lengthened raceme. Endemic to Peru and Ecuador. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Asteranthera:** Temperate zone plant from Chile with large red flowers which somewhat resemble *Columnnea* blossoms. Allied to *Mitraria* and *Sarmienta*.
- Bellonia:** Small shrubby plant from Hispaniola and Cuba. The white flowers are flat and symmetrical. *B. spinosa* is the only gesneriad with thorns.
- Besleria:** Large New World genus with few species in cultivation. Flowers are yellow, white or red, often with showy calyces. The fruit is a berry.
- Boea:** Rosette forming genus that has wide distribution from Asia to Australia. Species in cultivation are small plants with blue flowers resembling *Saintpaulia*.
- Briggsia:** Hardy and semi-hardy alpine plants from China, Tibet, and India that bear campanulate flowers in the yellow-orange range, shaped like *Smithiantha*, are produced from a basal rosette.
- Bucinellina:** See *Columnnea* in The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Calcareoboaea:** Rhizomatous herbs that grow on limestone rocks in Asia. *C.coccinea* has bright red tubular flowers.
- Capanea:** Shrubby genus of Central and South America consists of tall plants with pink, white or greenish-white flowers dangling on long stems. Seldom grown. See *Kohleria* in The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Chirita:** Plants formerly known as *Chirita* have been reclassified. The former *Chirita* species have now been placed in the genera of *Damrongia*, *Henkelia*, *Liebigia*, *Microchirita* and *Primulina*. Each is listed separately.
- Chiritopsis:** Rosulate form from China with approximately eight species. Small tubular white and cream coloured flowers; new to cultivation and easy to propagate.
- Chrysothemis:** West Indian and Central American tuberous genus has an erect habit with either green or reddish leaves. Yellow flowers occur in clusters in the upper axils, lasting only a day or so, but the orange or yellow-green calyces persist. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Cobananthus:** A New World (Cobaán, Guatemala) genus, containing one species, *C.calochlamys*. Long narrow leaves with white hairs and tubular yellow flowers, persistent light orange calyces, and upright habit.

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- Codananthe:** New World (Mexico to S. Brazil & Peru) plants have trailing or spreading habit with pale yellow, pink, or white flowers. Berry fruit often adds to decorative appearance. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Codonanthopsis:** This is a small genus from north western South America, Brazil and the Guianas. The succulent-leaved epiphytic plants have tubular white flowers
- Columnnea:** New World epiphytic genus with hundreds of species and cultivars, some are so similar that it is very difficult to distinguish between them. In habit the plants may be trailing spreading, or upright. Flowers range from small to large, lasting well. Some are ever blooming. Berries in various colours may add to decorative appearance of the plants. Some botanists divide this group into five genera: *Bucinellina*, *Columnnea*, *Dalbergaria*, *Pentadenia* and *Tricantha*. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Conandron:** An alpine from Japan with strap-like leaves, flowers of purple, pink, or white, and flat star-like corollas.
- Corallodiscus:** The few species are native to Bhutan, China, N. India, Nepal, Sikkim and Thailand. They are perennial herbs, epiphytic, rhizomatous and stemless.
- Corytopectus:** New World genus of several species. Erect stems, a few large, often colourful leaves; yellow or coral flowers tightly clustered in upper leaf axils, and persistent coloured calyces and bracts. Individual flowers are of short duration. The berries are blackish in colour. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Creemosperma:** A terrestrial genus of small, humid-loving perennial herbs found principally in Columbia and Ecuador with a few in Panama.
- Cubitanthus:** One species that is native to the east coast of Brazil.
- Cyrtandra:** Large genus of shrubby plants from Asia and some Pacific Islands including Hawaii. The flowers are red, yellow or white. The fruit is leathery, somewhat sausage-shaped. Seldom exhibited.
- Dalbergaria:** Plants of the lower rain forest canopy, usually 2-4 metres up and on tree trunks. Stems are thick, with rarely branching, fern-frond-shaped growth pattern. Leaves are often marked with red. Flowers and fruit are only on the underside of leaves. See *Columnnea* in the Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Damrongia:** There are seven known species, all from Thailand, with one reaching into Peninsula Malaysia. All occur only on limestone rocks and have white, blue and purple flowers. They are hypothesised to belong to the group of Asian genera with twisted fruits, even though this characteristic has been lost in *Damrongia*. Currently no species are known in cultivation.

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- Diastema:*** Rhizomatous genus from Central and South America. Most species have small white or lavender flowers, but *D. comiferum* has red flowers. Fairly long blooming season and excellent light garden plants because of compact growth habit. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Didissandra:*** A genus of 8 species occurring in Sumatra, Borneo and Malay Peninsula. Flowers are white and sometimes bear two yellow lines at the throat.
- Didymocarpus:*** Large genus from Asia, similar to Chirita.
- Drymonia:*** Large New World genus of shrubby or vining plants and large white or yellow flowers of short duration. Distinguishing characteristic of *Drymonias* from other gesneriads is unique “saddle-bag” anthers. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Episcia:*** New World genus with plants characterised by often striking foliage in various shades of green, pink, or bronze colour, sometimes with metallic sheen. These plants often exhibited in foliage class. Flowers are red, pink, yellow, white or lavender. Plants often displayed with or without stolons, as hanging plants or as a single rosette. Plants grow rapidly and require warmth. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Epithema:*** Genus from Africa and S.E. Asia. Plants are low growing; flowers are white or lavender, subtended by a large bract.
- Eucodonia:*** Rhizomatous New World (Mexico, Oaxaca and Chiapas) genus characterised by the wooliness of the stems, sometimes with coloured hairs. Flowers are small to medium size, in shades of purple. Habit may be trailing or rosette forming. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Fieldia:*** Temperate zone plant from Australia with small leaves, shrubby stems and symmetrical creamy-white flowers.
- Gasteranthus:*** Several species of this Central and South American genus are in cultivation. Most have an upright habit and flowers in the yellow-orange-red range. Plants require warmth and high humidity. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Gesneria:*** Genus native to West Indies. Plant habit is usually rosette or fountain shape, from small plants to large shrubs. Flower colour range is white, green, yellow, orange or red. Some botanists have transferred the plants in the genus *Rhytidophyllum* to this genus. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.

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- Glossoloma:*** Formally part of the genus *Alloplectus*, the 27 species of *Glossoloma* that are found in Costa Rica and north western South America are unbranched terrestrial sub-shrubs. Flowers are resupinate and laterally compressed with non-constricted pouch.
- Gloxinella:*** Formerly *Gloxinia lindeniana* and previously *Kohleria lindeniana*, the New World rhizomatous species *Gloxinella lindeniana* is a compact plant whose dark leaves have pale green veins. The white and purple flowers are mildly fragrant.
- Gloxinia:*** There are now just three *Gloxinia* species, *Gloxinia erinoides* (formerly *Koellikeria erinoides*), *Gloxinia perennis* and *Gloxinia xanthophylla* (formerly *Andodiscus xanthophylla*). All other species have been transferred to other genera.
- Gloxiniopsis:*** Formerly in the genus *Gloxinia*, the single New World species *G. racemosa* has plain green leaves and white flowers and makes scaly rhizomes.
- Haberlea:*** Alpine from the Balkans with small leaves and more tubular flowers than *Ramonda*.
- Hemiboea:*** At least three species of this Asian genus are in cultivation. *H. henryi* has a spreading habit and can withstand cold when grown outdoors. Plants produce a smooth rhizome.
- Henckelia:*** There are approximately 56 species of *Henckelia* found in Sri Lanka, southern and north-eastern India, Nepal, Bhutan, southern China, northern Vietnam, northern Laos and northern Thailand. They are generally plants of the forest floor or on non-limestone rocks. Ten species are known in cultivation.
- Heppiella:*** New World rhizomatous genus of somewhat trailing habit with sticky leaves. The tubular flowers are red. Prefers cool conditions.
- Jancaea:*** Alpine from Mt. Olympus, Greece with small rosettes of silver-white leaves and purple flowers, more cupped in shape than *Ramonda*.
- Koellikeria:*** Small New World (Costa Rica to northern South America) rhizomatous rosette plant with dark brownish leaves marked with silver spots. Inflorescence is a terminal shoot of small pink and white flowers. See *Gloxinia* in The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Kohleria:*** Rhizomatous New World genus, a number of species and numerous cultivars available. Often quite tall in habit, with an erect stem, though there are few smaller plants. The spotted or striped flowers in yellow, orange, red or purple occur in the upper axils and are showy and long lasting. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.

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- Lembocarpus:** *Lembocarpus amoenus* is the sole representative of its genus. Although superficially similar to *Sinningia*, this tuberous species is probably more closely related to the odd genus *Rhoogeton*. *Lembocarpus* is found in French Guiana and Surinam where it grows on wet, moss-covered rocks in forests.
- Liebigia:** This is the only entirely Malesian genus to emerge from *Chirita*. It occurs in Sumatra, Java and Bali and has twelve species (according to Olive Hilliard – 2004). They are coarse perennial herbs of the forest floor. One species occurs in cultivation – *Liebigia speciosa*. However, given that all species of the genus used to be lumped into *Chirita asperifolia*, it might be that there are more species being cultivated than is currently appreciated.
- Lietzia:** *L. brasiliensis* has been transferred to *Sinningia*.
- Loxostigma:** The rhizomatous herbs can be epiphytic or terrestrial and grow on damp, mossy rocks or on tree trunks in forests. Seven species native to NE India, Bhutan, Nepal, Burma, S. China, Laos and N. Vietnam.
- Lysionotus:** Several species of this Asian rhizomatous genus are in cultivation. Habit is spreading. Large funnel-shaped flowers are white or lavender. Most species have leaves with broadly serrate margins, but some are entire. Plants produce somewhat thickened smooth rhizomes with widely separated scales at ground level and below.
- Mandirola:** Includes 3 Brazilian species formerly included in *Gloxinia*. Only *M. ichthyostoma* is in cultivation. The species are very similar to *Achimenes* species and were once included in that genus.
- Microchirita:** Fleshy short-lived or annual plants found in India, the foothills of the Himalayas, continental Southeast Asia, Sumatra and Java. They are all species of limestone rocks. There are approximately eighteen species. Many species in this genus have an unusual crest-like inflorescence that emerges from the leaf petiole with the flowers opening sequentially. Several species are in cultivation.
- Mitraria:** Small, temperate zone, Chilean shrub with small red flowers.
- Monophyllaea:** Genus from S.E. Asia produces flowers along the midrib of a single large leaf like some *Streptocarpus*. It will tolerate low light levels.
- Monopyle:** This New World rhizomatous genus has asymmetrical leaves resembling *Achimenes*. Cup-shaped flowers are white and purple.
- Moussonia:** Similar in appearance to *Kohleria*, but does not produce scaly rhizomes. Generally, the plants are less robust with smaller yellow-orange tubular flowers.
- Napeanthus:** New World genus with a low rosette habit. Small white flowers are very short-lived. It requires warmth and humidity.

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- Nautilocalyx:*** Some species of this New World genus form tubers. There are a number of species in cultivation, of varied habit – from rosettes to tall, erect or spreading plants. Some foliage is very handsome. Red, pink, white or yellow flowers are often comparatively large, but short-lived. See also: Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Negria:*** Large shrub or tree from Lord Howe Island off the coast of Australia with large orange flowers.
- Nematanthus:*** Very popular New World genus most characterised by shiny, smooth foliage, a few with downy foliage, sometimes with red patches on the reverse side. Durable flowers are pouched, usually red or yellow, sometimes small and held close against the stem, sometimes large and dangling from long pedicles. Plants may be large and shrubby, trailing or quite small. One of the best gesneria genera used in bonsai or topiary training. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Neomortonia:*** New World genus. *N. nummularia* is a small plant with pouched red flowers, sometimes deciduous with curious stem tubers. One other species, *N. rosea*, is in cultivation.
- Niphaea:*** New World rhizomatous genus with one species, *N. oblonga*, seen most often. It is a spreading plant with red veined leaves and flat white flowers.
- Nomopyle:*** This small rhizomatous South American genus consists of two species, requiring low light, high humidity and constant moisture. *N. dodsonii* was formally *Gloxinia dodsonii* and *N. peruviana* was formally *Niphaea peruviana*.
- Opithandra:*** Alpine plant from Japan with small leaves in a rosette and funnel-shaped lavender flowers.
- Ornithoboea:*** These herbaceous, shrubby Asian gesneriads have pale blue flowers. *O. arachnoidea* has dense hairs on the stem and inflorescence.
- Paliavana:*** Very tall plant from Brazil with large bell-shaped green or lavender/purple flowers.
- Paraboea:*** These are herbs, rarely sub-shrubs, which are perennial, epipetric or terrestrial, stemmed or stemless. There are a large number of species in Bhutan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.
- Paradrymonia:*** New World genus of erect or spreading habit. Flowers occur in tight clusters in the axils of the long narrow leaves. Individual white or yellow flowers are short-lived, but clusters continue to open for some time.
- Parakohleria:*** Genus of plants similar to *Kohleria*, but generally of more slender habit with smaller, tubular lowers. May form rudimentary scaly rhizomes. Some botanists have transferred species in this genus to *Pearcea*.

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- Pearcea:** Rhizomatous genus from Ecuador. *P. hypocrytiflora* has handsome white-veined or pink-veined leaves in a flat rosette and pouched orange flowers with almost no mouth opening. It requires terrarium conditions. Some botanists have transferred the species from *Parakohleria* to this genus. See: Gesneriad Society publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Pentadenia:** Pentadenias have five nectary glands or four with two dorsal glands enlarged and grown together, while fruit is a white or lavender, globose berry. See also *Columnea* in the Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Petrocosmea:** Asian genus with sometimes very flat rosettes of white-haired leaves. Most species have purple/lavender flowers, but *P kerrii* has white and yellow flowers. The species with flat rosettes produce offsets tightly clustered around the crown. The bloom usually occurs from these offsets, so it is not advisable to remove them. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Phinaea:** Rhizomatous New World genus of some small rosette plants with white flowers; usually grown in a terrarium.
- Primulina:** By far the largest genera to emerge from *Chirita*. Known to growers through *Primulina tabacum*. Only found in the limestone areas of western and southern China and northern Vietnam. They are perennial rhizomatous herbs and often have rather leathery leaves and attractive flowers. Over 20 species are currently known in cultivation.
- Ramonda:** European alpine from the Pyrenees and Balkans; extremely hardy with a rosette of evergreen leaves. Flowers are purple, sometimes pink or white, and shaped like *Saintpaulia*.
- Raphiocarpus:** This smooth rhizomatous genus was transferred from *Didissandra* in recent years. It is native to Vietnam and China. Leaves are distinctively marked and flowers are yellow.
- Reldia:** Terrestrial herbs of 5 species with small white, spurred flowers. The genus is distributed from Panama to northern Peru. *Reldia* occurs in forested, deeply shaded and highly humid ravines usually along streams. The altitude ranges from sea level up to 2,500 metres.
- Rhabdothamnus:** Small temperate zone New Zealand shrub with slender stems, small birch-like leaves and orange or yellow flowers - bloom well in cultivation.
- Rhoogeton:** This is a tuberous genus of terrestrial, perennial, acaulescent herbs with few species. *Rhoogeton* grows on wet rocks and is found in Guyana, Venezuela and Panama.
- Rhynchoglossum:** Only gesneriad to occur in both the Old and New World is characterised by very asymmetric leaves, watery stems, and small blue and white flowers.

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- Rhytidophyllum:*** Genus of large shrubby plants related to *Gesneria* with rough textured large leaves and greenish flowers. Some botanists have transferred these plants to the genus *Gesneria*.
- Ridleyandra:*** This recently resurrected genus consists of 23 species from Borneo and the Malay Peninsula. *R. porphyrantha* has dark purple flowers.
- Rufodorsia:*** This New World genus consists of several similar low growing plants. Small red and white flowers in leaf axils resemble those of *Gloxinia erinoides*.
- Saintpaulia:*** Very popular African genus. Habit is a symmetrical rosette, although a few have a trailing habit. Modern cultivars have single or double flowers of many shades of fuchsia, pink, coral, purple or white, with plant size ranging from miniature to quite large. Many have variegated foliage. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Sanango:*** A monotypic genus, *Sanango racemosum* is a South American tree (to 15 metres) with equal leaf pairs. It bears small white flowers held above the foliage.
- Sarmienta:*** Temperate zone trailing plant with small leaves and urn-shaped red flowers from Chile.
- Seemania:*** Species of this scaly rhizomatous genus from the Andes were included in the genus *Gloxinia* for the past few decades, but is now a separate genus. The flowers are brightly coloured red, magenta or purple (rarely yellow). See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Sinningia:*** Tuberos genus mostly from Brazil, with plants ranging in size from the smallest miniature to medium-sized rosettes to erect plants up to several feet tall. *S. speciosa*, florist gloxinia, has large flowers in a wide colour range. *S. tubiflora* is strongly fragrant. Plants of former genus *Lietzia* transferred to *Sinningia*. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Smithiantha:*** Rhizomatous Mexican genus has a few similar species. Heart-shaped leaves are often very handsome and of a velvety texture. Plant size may be tall or short with a cone-shaped growth habit. Flowers in shades of orange, red white, pink, lavender and yellow are borne on a terminal root. Plants generally bloom in autumn. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Solenophora:*** Genus from Central America (Mexico and Guatemala). Seldom exhibited as it grows to be a large shrub or small tree. The red, yellow or white flowers are exceptionally large and funnel shape.

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- Sphaerorrhiza*:** Is a new genus. It includes the former *Gloxinia* species *Gloxinia sarmentiana* and *Gloxinia burchellii* which is not in cultivation. The distinctive characteristic of *Sphaerorrhiza* is that the plants produce “lumpy rhizomes” unlike the scaly rhizomes found in most members of the tribe *Gloxinieae*.
- Streptocarpella*:** (see *Streptocarpus*)
- Streptocarpus*:** African genus of three types. Most popular is the plurifoliate or rosulate types with strap-like leaves in a basal cluster, and funnel-shaped flowers rising from base of a leaf’s midrib on a series of peduncles. The unifoliate type has only one leaf and flowers are similarly borne along the midrib. There are species with small or very large leaves. The caulescent or stemmed type, the sub-genus *Streptocarpella*, has small oval leaves and spreading or trailing stems. Often grown as a basket plant. See also The Gesneriad Society Inc. publication *How to Know and Grow Gesneriads*.
- Titanotrichum*:** Rhizomatous genus from Taiwan of a single species. It is a tall plant with yellow and maroon flowers that is difficult to flower, often producing propagules instead from bracts on a terminal shoot.
- Tricantha*:** (see *Columnnea*) *Tricantha* stems are usually thin and wiry; leaf pairs are often unequal in size; corolla tube is usually inflated; nectary consists of two united dorsal glands.
- Vanhouttea*:** Large shrubby genus from Brazil resembling *Kohleria*. Leaves are crowded on the tips of branches. Flowers are red outside, yellow within and deeply spotted red.

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