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African Violet Society of America

AVSA Weekly Growing Tip

March 28, 2016

Greetings!

Welcome to today's Growing Tip email from the [African Violet Society of America](#).



Look closely to find two thrips crawling just below the yellow pollen sacs.

Thrips may be hiding in your flowers right now...

Last week we looked closely at a flower. Did you happen to see anything moving? If so it might have been thrips, a dreaded and persistent pest of African violets.

Western Flower Thrips feed on the pollen in the anthers, and may serve as a pollinator in nature. When they are present, you may see pollen spilled on the flower petal or perhaps find an unexpected seed pod developing at the base of the flower. They often hide in the center of the flower, but you can make them crawl onto the petal by flicking the pollen sacs or just blowing sharply into the center of the flower. They are about the size and shape of a printed hyphen - and may be white, yellowish, or gray. They are very small when in the flying stage and can fly through window screens with ease.

When thrips are present, flowers will fade much more quickly than they should. Western Flower Thrips also spread a disease called Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus also known as INSV. This viral disease is incurable and has unpredictable symptoms as it invades violets. It is important to be able to recognize and control thrips quickly if they are present in your collection.

The cure for thrips lies in multiple approaches. First of all, remove and discard all flowers (outside of the growing area) for several months. Second, consider using an appropriate insecticide on all of the plants in your growing area. Third, consider using a biological product such as Neem oil which makes the treated area undesirable for reproduction. Finally, keep your violets separate from outside air; away from open windows or doors.

Learn more about [insect pests in African violets](#) at the [AVSA](#) website, or purchase a copy of the book [Insect and Mite Pests of African Violets](#) by Dr. Charles L. Cole from the [AVSA Store](#)

[AVSA Office](#)

Do you know someone else who would like to receive the weekly growing tip from the African Violet Society of America? All interested persons are welcome to sign up on the "Join Our Mailing List!" icon below. Subscribers are not required to be members of AVSA.

Have a growing question? Feel free to contact us at the AVSA Office!

Sincerely,

**News
from
the
African
Violet
Society
of
America**

There are many tours available this year at the [2016 AVSA Convention and Show in Albuquerque, NM](#), including a tour to Santa Fe, NM, a visit to the Sandia Peak Tramway, Historic Old Albuquerque, the Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm, and an exciting experience with Mystery at the Marriott. We also have an exciting **Bucket List Special** where you can lift off in a **balloon ride** in time to see the sun rise over "The Land of Enchantment". Don't miss these [AVSA tour](#) opportunities!

Please call (844) 400-AVSA or [email the AVSA Office](#) with any questions you may have. We welcome you to join in Albuquerque!

Not a member of the African Violet Society of America? You are invited to [Join](#) today!

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