

Discover the Flora of Our Campus

Uzambara violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*)

African violet is one of the most popular ornamental indoor plants in the world. The plant belongs to the Gesneriaceae family and is mainly distinguished by its beautiful appearance and long-lasting flowering period. Its leaves are round-shaped, soft, and hairy. The flowers can be purple, pink, white, blue, or mixed in color. Despite its small size, it is widely used in homes, offices, schools, and various indoor spaces because of its aesthetic appearance. African violet was first discovered in East Africa in the 19th century. Later, due to its decorative characteristics, it spread to Europe and other countries. In the modern era, hundreds of different

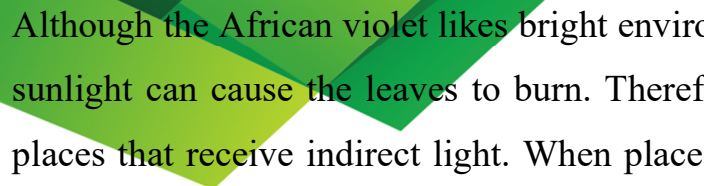


varieties and hybrids of this plant have been cultivated.

One of the main advantages of the plant is that it takes up little space and easily adapts to indoor conditions.

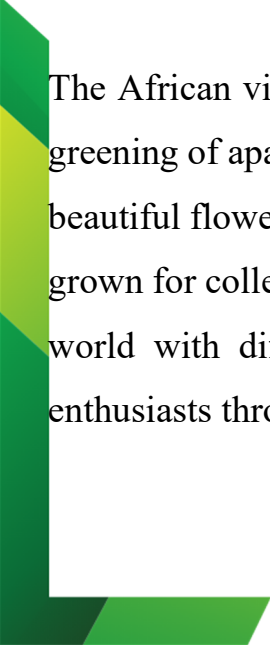
The natural homeland of the African violet is East Africa. It is mainly found in the humid mountainous forests of Tanzania and Kenya. In nature, it grows mostly in shady and moist places. This plant has adapted to tropical climate conditions and prefers high humidity. Today, the African violet is cultivated as an ornamental indoor plant in many countries around the

world. It is especially popular as a houseplant in European, Asian, and American countries. In Azerbaijan, it is also widely grown in apartments and indoor spaces. Since it is not fully suitable for outdoor conditions, it is mainly kept as an indoor plant.




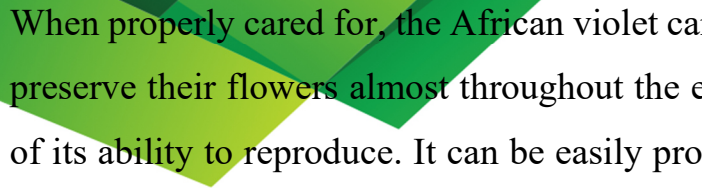
Although the African violet likes bright environments, it is sensitive to direct sunlight. Strong sunlight can cause the leaves to burn. Therefore, it is more appropriate to keep the plant in places that receive indirect light. When placed near a window, it is recommended to keep it behind a transparent curtain. The most suitable temperature for the development of the plant is considered to be approximately 18–25°C. Cold air and sudden temperature changes can negatively affect the plant. Since the African violet loves a humid environment, it is important that the room air is not too dry. Care must be taken during watering. Excessive watering causes root rot. It is recommended that water should not fall on the leaves during watering because this may cause spots to form. Soft, well-aerated soil with good drainage is more suitable for the plant.

The African violet is considered one of the ornamental plants that positively affects people's psychological condition. It is known that green plants create a sense of calmness and comfort in people. For this reason, the African violet is widely used to create an aesthetic and comfortable atmosphere in homes and workplaces. The plant helps improve indoor air quality to some extent. Like other green plants, it absorbs carbon dioxide and releases oxygen during the process of photosynthesis. It has been observed that people feel more comfortable in places where green plants are present. The African violet is not considered a poisonous plant and is not dangerous to humans when used properly. Therefore, it is considered one of the convenient and safe ornamental plants for growing at home.



The African violet is mainly used for decorative purposes. It is widely applied in the interior greening of apartments, offices, schools, libraries, and various public spaces. Its small size and beautiful flowers make it a suitable plant for windowsills, tables, and shelves. The plant is also grown for collection purposes. There are numerous hybrid varieties of the African violet in the world with different colors and forms. New decorative varieties are obtained by flower enthusiasts through special care and selection.





When properly cared for, the African violet can bloom during most of the year. Some varieties preserve their flowers almost throughout the entire year. The plant is also interesting because of its ability to reproduce. It can be easily propagated through leaves, and a new plant can be obtained in a short time. Although the scientific name of this plant was previously known as *Saintpaulia ionantha*, in modern botanical classification it is also referred to in some sources as *Streptocarpus ionanthus*. Nevertheless, the name “African violet” is more widely used throughout the world.

