

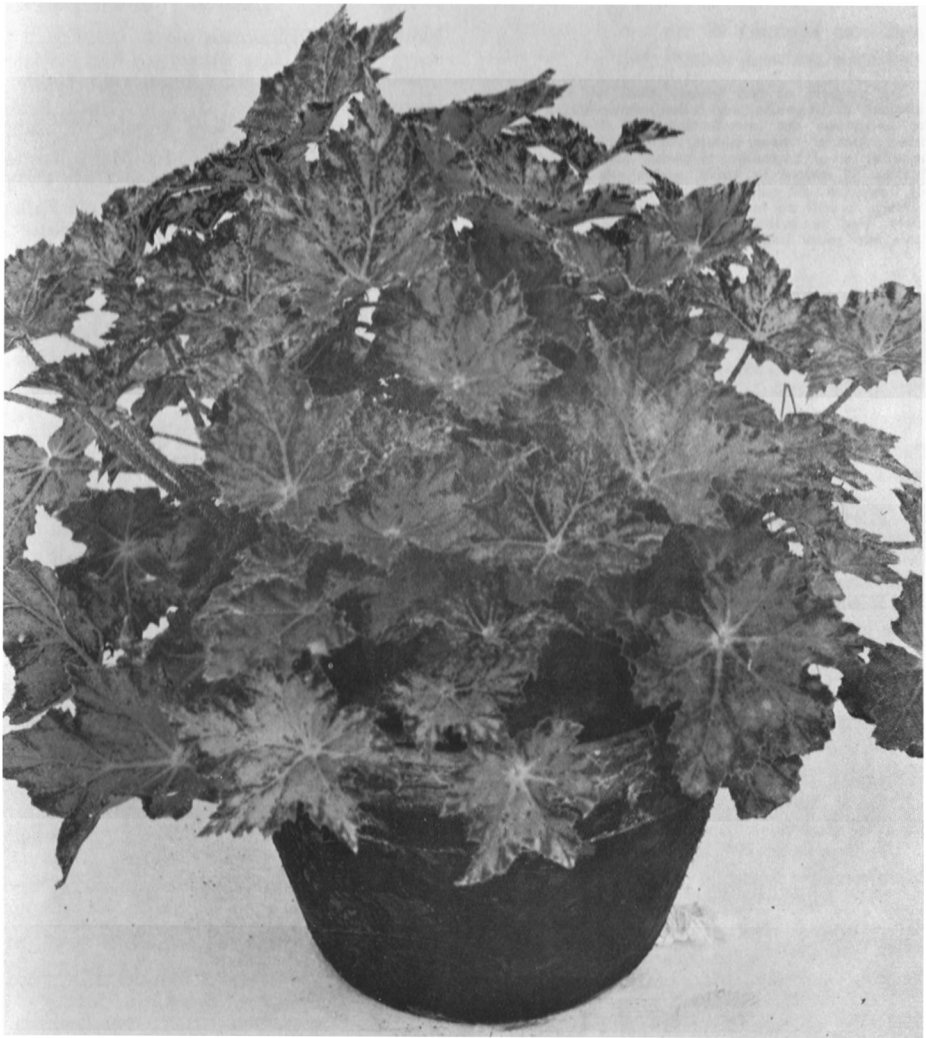
The Begonian

DEVOTED TO THE SHELTERED GARDENS

JANUARY, 1964

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VOLUME XXXI NUMBER 1



Editor N. Trumond Peterson, 1641 W. 125th Street, Los Angeles 47, California
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AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY, INC.

The purpose of this Society shall be: to promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants; to encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants; to standardize the nomenclature of begonias; to gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation and culture of begonias and companion plants; to issue a bulletin which will be mailed to all members of the Society; and to bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY

This issue of *The Begonian* marks the beginning of a new year, a new growing season, and a new opportunity for all of us to be of greater service to other members of this begonia-loving society. This service includes sharing our knowledge and experiences with others, telling about our successes and our failures, reporting our group activities and our lone efforts, and giving encouragement and friendly assistance to those who are struggling to understand the phenomena of plant life.

For most members, communicating with other members can be accomplished best through the pages of this magazine. More than half of our members are members-at-large — they belong to no organized Branch, they attend no meetings where begonias are discussed — but they belong to the American Begonia Society because they love their begonias and they expect *The Begonian* to give them all the benefits of their membership.

All of you who read this are members of an organization — not merely subscribers to a magazine. What you receive from the organization will be determined by what you give to it. As our former president, Clarence Hall, stated in last month's issue, "The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea gives nothing. Its name is the Dead Sea!"

As your Editor, I want to work for all of you — not for any favored area, not for any favored group. Whether you live in Alabama or Alaska, California or Connecticut, New York or New Zealand, I want to give you all the help I can, and I want you to give me all the help you can.

Foremost in importance, of course, are articles covering the many phases of begonia growing — propagation, planting, fertilizing, soil conditioning, climate control, and general care. Of interest, too, are discussions of individual varieties, parentage, growing

characteristics, and inherited tendencies, as well as historical studies of species and the explorations that discovered them. Whatever interests you will interest others.

Begonias do not live alone. Therefore, articles need not be confined to begonias alone. Other compatible companion plants should receive their share of attention, too.

During this new year of opportunity, these are the features I would like to see in *The Begonian*, in addition to the cultural subjects already mentioned:

Stories about personalities, people who are accomplishing things worthwhile, finding a better growing procedure, or producing a new cultivar.

Stories about *you*. What plants do you prefer, and why? What unique problems must you contend with and how have you solved them?

Reports of Branch activities that stimulate gardening interest, experiments, growing projects, shows, and similar group efforts.

More pictures! Any article becomes more interesting if it is illustrated with pictures of the subjects discussed, whether they be plants or people. I believe it would be especially appropriate to show a photograph of the writer of each article published. Through photographs we can become acquainted. We become people instead of names on a printed page.

These are my suggestions for a better magazine. What are yours? Whether you agree or disagree, I would like to know what you think. What you, the members, want is the important consideration. Do not hesitate to write to me, either for publication or as a personal letter. My editorial office is not in a lofty ivory

(Continued on Page 16)

COVER PICTURE

Begonia 'Maphil' — photographed at the New York Botanical Gardens by the late Bernice Brilmayer.

CYCADS . . . DO YOU KNOW THEM

By ALEX D. HAWKES

Garden Editor

Tropical Living Magazine

In many comprehensive collections of tropical plants, under glass and in more tropical areas outside, we encounter occasional specimens representing a small group known collectively as the Cycads (pronounced *syekads*). These are often called, by the lay person, palms (which they are not), or sago palms (which they are not), or fern-palms (which they are not).

In actuality, the Cycads constitute an unique aggregation which formerly made up much of the global vegetation on this old earth of ours, but which is now almost on the verge of extinction. They are, peculiarly enough — when one considers their superficially fern-like or palm-like appearance — closest in relationship to the gymnosperms (*jim-noe-sperms*), such as the pines, the Maidenhair-Tree (*Ginkgo*), etc.

According to a complete survey of the Cycad Family — the Cycadaceae (*syekka-day-see-ee*), which I published in a Brazilian technical magazine in 1960, there are 164 species of these remarkable plants known presently, these distributed amongst ten genera.

Eons ago — especially during the Coal Age, the Carboniferous period — their numbers were myriad and amazingly varied. In fact, paleobotanists tell us that the fallen trunks and fronds of these extinct kinds of Cycads form a large proportion of that vital material which we know today as coal.

Although, in prehistoric times, these fascinating plants ranged over most of the terrestrial globe, today they are restricted to the tropical regions. In the Americas, they range from south-central Florida and Mexico well down into South America. The American genera are *Zamia* (*zam-ee-ah*),

which is the largest group in the Cycadaceae, *Ceratozamia* (*se-rah-toe-zah-mee-ah*), *Dioon* (*dye-oh-on*), and *Microcycas* (*my-krow-sye-kas*).

In the African tropics, we find the rather large genus *Encephalartos* (*en-sef-ah-lar-tos*), and in South Africa the very odd and rare *Stangeria* (*stan-ger-ce-ah*). Australia has two major groups — *Bowenia* (*bo-wen-ee-ah*) and *Macrozamia* (*mak-row-zah-mee-ah*) — while in the Asiatic tropics (and subtropics, north to Japan and China), we find *Cycas* (*syekas*), another rather sizeable genus.

In Florida, where several of the Cycads of the genus *Zamia* occur abundantly in the pine woods (and even in vacant lots in such cities as Coconut Grove), they are known as Coonties, and their subterranean tubers have long been used by the Seminole Indians to make a starch-like substance which is later baked into a type of bread. Other *Zamias* — including several very spectacular ones from Central America — have intricately plaited leaflets, set on stalks several feet in length. These, too, have underground tuberous stems, but these contain a starchy material which is so poisonous that in the past it has been used in ritual assassinations, etc.! The attractive orange-scarlet seeds of some of these *Zamias* are edible — but those of others are definitely very toxic.

Cycas contains the other most frequently-seen Cycads. In this country, two out of the known thirty-eight species are reasonably common. All of the *Cycas* are natives of the Old World tropics, extending from East Tropical Africa and Madagascar (now officially the Malagasy Republic) to China, Japan, and the Marianas Islands, then on to New Guinea, Australia, and New Caledonia.

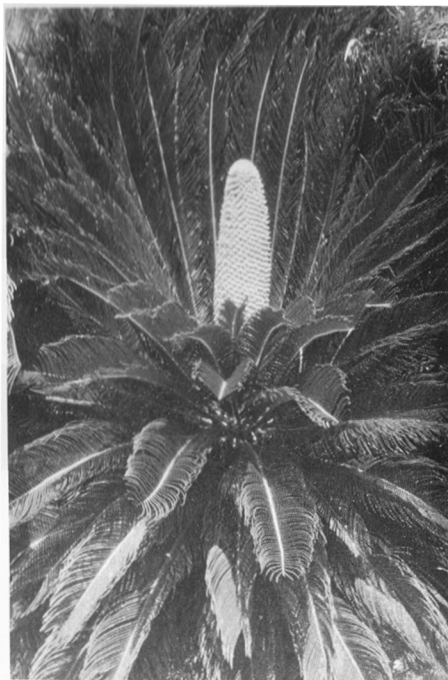


The rare Australian *Macrozamia spiralis*, a showy Cycad, growing at Fairchild Tropical Garden near Miami, Florida, in the world's largest collection of these odd plants.

Cycas circinalis (sir-si-nah-liss) is a relatively tender plant, but even if its massive crown of feathery, lacquered fronds is cut back by a moderate cold snap (say, 35 degrees F.), the heavy, palm-like trunk is seldom permanently injured, and usually soon puts up a new flush of marvelously graceful foliage.

Like all Cycads, this one bears the male and female reproductive parts (true flowers, as such, do not occur in this family) on separate specimens, mostly in complex cone-like structures. In *Cycas circinalis*, the male (staminate) cones are elongate often two feet or more in length; when mature, these give off an incredibly pungent, rather objectionable odor which — particularly in the evening — can be detected hundreds of feet away. The female structure is an amazingly complex affair, the showy modified leaves of which are often used by tropical horticulturists in flower arrangements.

Cycas revoluta (rev-oh-loo-ta) is far hardier than its more tropical rel-



A staminate (male) specimen of the hardy *Cycas revoluta*, in Fairchild Tropical Garden.

—Photos by Alex D. Hawkes

ative, *C. circinalis*, since it inhabits the cooler climes of Japan rather than the torrid islands stretching from Madagascar to Guam. Its simple branched trunk bears a smaller tuft of shorter, more rigid, and less graceful leaves than its allied species. These leaves are, on occasion, used on Palm Sunday and during other religious celebrations. The one to two hundred large, vivid red seeds which are produced in each cluster of the female plants of this species ripen about Christmas-time, and are often utilized in tropical decorations of the holiday season.

The largest collection of Cycads which is open to public inspection in this country (and probably anywhere in the world) is located at the Fairchild Tropical Garden, near Miami, Florida. Here one may study a remarkably wide variety of these amazing and ancient plants, growing out-of-doors, in prime condition.

Several different kinds of Cycads are now available from specialists in rare and unusual plants in this country, and they have long been popular — though generally not available in the trade — in Europe. Interest in them is ever increasing, and there is even an international Cycad Society currently in the process of formation. Details regarding this organization can be had upon application to the author of this article, at P. O. Box 435, Coconut Grove 33, Florida.

Cycads, by and large, are very slow-growing plants. They germinate as casually as do many palms — often six months or even a year before the first sprouts appear — and as a result, in the trade, large specimens are rare and seemingly expensive. They are ideally suited for use in the small amateur greenhouse or lath-house, and of course may be grown out-doors in the warmest regions of the country.

They thrive in a rich, moist soil, and without exception do best in

partial shade. Bulb-like plantlets are formed near the trunk-bases on some Cycads, and after these have reached a suitable size, they can be removed, and potted up separately. For best results, when working with these Cycad "bulbs," any foliage attached should be removed, to avoid excessive transpiration.

As horticultural curios, these remarkable Cycads — essentially unchanged in their form for millions and millions of years — are well deserving of more widespread cultivation.

THE IDENTIFICATION GARDEN

By MARIE TURNER

Testing plants begins at home!

From the time that you plant your seeds, you start observing them until germination starts. Then you watch for and select the best and most promising. By the time the plants are in three-inch pots, you have made up your mind as to which are the best, the ones you want to send to the test garden.

Before you do that, be sure you have a cutting of the one you are sending out. In that way you can keep up with your plant in the test garden.

You see — the plant in the test garden belongs to you, unless you specify differently. A cutting will be made, but only for study, not for distribution.

When the time comes that the plant is suitable for displaying in the Flower Show, it should be entered under a hybrid name.

The test garden is, in a small measure, like your plants in a flower show.

It is at the discretion of the committee to do the best for all plants in question.

MY PLANTS TRAVEL

By HAZEL M. HARMON
Sudbury, Massachusetts

Traveling with plants is an exacting experience under any conditions. Then add to your load a lively little Beagle dog and a canary, top it off with cold nights and an automobile exhaust with a slight leak — and you have a problem.

I have made two short trips of sixty miles each, plus two long trips of fifteen hundred miles each, with four hundred containers of plants in my ranch wagon. With this experience, I believe I know how to move plants.

I think the preparation and planning of the trip are the most important; but unexpected variations in the weather can ruin plants. The two short trips required very little planning. I made many mistakes on the first fifteen hundred mile trek, but did not lose a plant — only my temper and disposition.

When you are planning to make a long trip, if you know far enough ahead of time you can make cuttings and divisions, and collect seed of the easy-to-start varieties. Small plants are easier to move than large ones. Then there are always some plants which you do not wish to discard. I always try to plan how I can take the largest number to make the best collection.

If plants are small, you can put two or three in one pot. Now that you have trimmed the number and size of the plants, the next step is to collect suitable containers. For about two weeks before moving, I went everywhere with the car full of boxes which I had collected and fitted in the car in such a way that they could neither slide nor upset. They were good, substantial boxes with lids, and they could be stacked three deep. The area back of the front seat in my ranch wagon was filled completely with containers.

Before you can move plants safely from one state to another, a plant inspection permit will have to be obtained. This will be no problem if you use sterilized soil and do not put plants out-of-doors in the summer, and if you can show that your plants are clean.

If the plans and preparations have been thorough, the actual packing will move smoothly. I had all sizes and shapes of pots, and all sizes and shapes of plants. I did not wrap them in paper and used little or no paper in packing. Plants had to be placed in the cartons so they could not slide or upset. I used many small pots of plants slipped under the foliage between the larger plants to keep them immobile.

I watered the plants as I packed them. I put a layer of plastic in the bottom of every box and another on top of the plants before I put on the lid and closed it tightly. Most of the boxes were eight and one-half inches deep. I did not need to be concerned about the plants in the closed boxes. They would stay perfect. The uncovered boxes had to be shaded from excess sun and checked for dryness.

This last trip from Kansas to Boston, Massachusetts, was in late October and took three days and three nights. The boxes were all packed and left in the house until the day of departure. I tried to pack the car so no plants would be exposed to too much sun. I also shook every box before placing it in the car, to be sure no plants could move. At night we left the car engine running at a speed that would maintain a temperature of about sixty degrees — no lower. I left one window down about three-fourths of an inch for ventilation. I also got up in the night to check the temperature.

I had about four hundred con-

tainers of plants in the car. Three or four large plants were put in the van with our furniture. All the amaryllis and gloxinia bulbs were taken from the pots, cleaned free of dirt, wrapped in paper, labeled, and packed in a metal cabinet, which came in the van with the furniture.

I had made arrangements so that upon arrival I could unpack the plants immediately and place them on tables in a proper place. I checked all of them for water. Most of the plants came through very well. Actually, I believe I lost only one very small plant and two or three rooted leaves. Some plants were damaged, but in time all recovered.

Incidentally, I drove the ranch wagon, and my husband drove our sedan, with his hunting dog.

At present I am searching for ways to improve my methods for the next time I move plants.

* * * * *

About the author: Hazel is an avid plant lover. In her ranch house she grows plants in every room, including the bathroom. In her collection are saintpaulias, gloxinias, episcias, begonias, and miscellaneous plants, including a huge azalea, which she has toted back and forth from Kansas. When she went to Kansas to live near her daughter, we in the Bessie Raymond Buxton Branch thought we had lost a valued member, but she returned, much to our delight. Now she is talking about returning to Kansas, but we hope that time will be in the distant future.

—Ruth Merry
Eastern Editor

Begonia parviflora seed — 50 cents per pkt.

BEGONIAS SLANTED TOWARD THE BEGINNER

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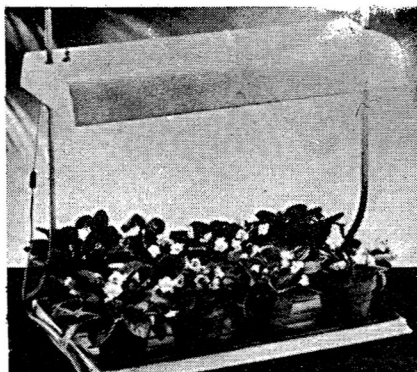
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Dr. W. C. Drummond (on right) President Emeritus of Los Angeles Fern Society, points out one of his 140 fern specimens on display at Fern Dell Nature Museum. Richard E. Bullard (left), Supervisor of Horticulture for the Recreation and Park Department, and Frank Shearer, retired Los Angeles Park Superintendent, look on. — Photo by Los Angeles City Recreation and Park Department.

DR. DRUMMOND HONORED

Dr. William Clyde Drummond, retired dentist, passed away on October 29, 1963.

An alumnus of St. Louis University and a life member of the American Dental Association, he had practiced dentistry in E. St. Louis, Illinois. He retired from his profession and moved to Los Angeles, where he resided for the past thirty-one years.

During this time, his interests led him to horticulture, particularly in the category of ferns. He distinguished himself in this field, becoming one of Southern California's authorities. Los Angeles civic and government leaders honored him for his work in pressing and classifying fern specimens, and his fern herbarium is on exhibit at the Fern Dell Nature Museum in Griffith Park, Los Angeles. The educational fern display was compiled with the cooperation of the Smithsonian Institution, the University of California, and the Horticultural Division of the Los Angeles City Recreation and Park Department.

A fortunate recipient of books from Dr. Drummond's extensive fern library is the Biomedical Library of the University of California at Los Angeles. The books will be presented by his widow, Mary Hazel Drummond. As founder and President Emeritus of the Los Angeles Fern Society, he wished that these books would be useful to both scientists and horticulturists.

At the thirty-first annual convention of the American Begonia Society, held in September, 1963, Dr. Drummond was awarded the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award, which is presented to a person for having helped to cement good will and harmony among American Begonia Society members, or for contributing original material — other than begonias — to help members further their study and enjoyment of the Begoniaceae.

Mrs. Drummond gratefully acknowledges the many flowers and cards of condolence.

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Flight

No. 1 — *B. undisilvestris*—

Epiphytic begonia from Panama, having small leaves and trailing habit. Makes a nice basket; resembles *B. 'Ingrami'* but not so stiff. Dainty sprays of white flowers in profusion. Something different. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. micrantha frimbriata* —

South America. Syn. *B. #1041*. Stems are short, stout, and succulent. Leaves are broad-ovate, soft-hairy, irregularly lobed, green; margins toothed and ciliate. Flowers usually in pairs, bright orange-red with masses of yellow stamens. Choice begonia but not many seeds. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. quadrelocularis* syn.

***B. egregia*—**

Plant with long, tapering, pointed, pebbly green leaves drooping neatly from both sides of the stem; flowers like tiny pink-tipped hearts. Grows easily from seed and is considered one of our best begonias. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 4 — *B. gracilis* H.B.K.—

Also known as *B. martiana* and 'Hollyhock' begonia. Tolerates considerable sun. Bulbils form in the leaf axils next to the stem and may be collected in the fall, stored, and planted in the spring. Tall stalk with rosy flowers nestled close. Grow in bright light for most compact plants. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. vitifolia*—

Large, gleaming green leaves, lobed and finely toothed on the edges, somewhat downy beneath. Flowers pink and white. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. sanguinea*—

Brazil. Thick, leathery, oval leaves, brown over green on top, red underneath. Branches from the base and makes a good basket plant. Flowers white. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 7 — *B. rubro-setulosa*-A.D.C.

No description available. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 8 — *B. nelumbifolia*—

Mexico. Also called 'Water lily' be-

gonia. Leaves peltate attached near the center, lotus-leaf fashioned. Foot-long leaves, green, round at top, pointed at the end, with hairs beneath. Flowers small, also white to palest pink. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 9 — *B. venosa*—

Brazil. Growth shrubby, erect, medium height. Stems succulent, round, green with small white lines, surrounded entirely with large, almost transparent, fine, venous, light brown, vesicular bracts, in such a way that the stems, themselves, are hardly visible. Petioles are as long as the leaves or slightly longer, fleshy, covered with brownish pubescens. Leaves auricular, succulent, margins entire; green background is covered with a dense tomentum of white hairs. Flowers abundant, medium large, white, spicy-fragrant. Blooms the latter part of summer to early spring — in some places all the year around.

B. venosa is quite an important plant, but we do not see it often. The white tomentous cover, which comes off easily when the plant is touched, constitutes the ornamental value of the plant. This begonia thrives best in a warm location, where it gets a few hours of the morning and afternoon sunshine. This condition turns the leaves to a beautiful white. If the plant is placed in the shade permanently, the plant remains greenish. Water sparingly in winter months. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 10 — *B. Yates* seedling—

Small, cane type, with carmen flowers. Very good. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 11 — *B. 'Pinafore'*—

(*B. 'Elaine'* seedling.) Slim, substantial, crimped-edged leaves dark slate-green with faint silver spots, beet-red beneath. Bright salmon flowers, not large, but long-lasting and plentiful. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 12 — *B. 'Orange rubra'*—

(*B. dichroa* x *B. 'Coral rubra'*). Clear green leaves, sometimes faintly silver-

spotted, sometimes not. Ornate clusters of large salmon-organic flowers. Nice begonia. 25 cents pr pkt.

No. 13 — B. Cane type—

Light green leaves, pink blooms. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 14 — B. Semperflorens—

Mixed colors, singles and doubles. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 15 — B. Tuberhybrida—

Camellia-type picotee, white with pink edge, and cream with red edge. 35 cents per pkt.

No. — 16 — B. Lloydi—

Hanging type with bright pink flowers. 35 cents per pkt.

No. — 17 — B. Illumination—

Tuberous type, mixed colors. Suitable for bedding, pots, or window boxes. 35 cents per pkt.

OTHER GENERA

Coffea arabica—

Rubiaceae. Mexico. 'Arabian Coffee'. Evergreen shrub with willowy branches bearing shining, dark green, ornamental, elliptic foliage to six inches long and wavy at the margins. The pure white, fragrant flowers, in axillary, at the base of the leaves, followed by brilliant crimson, pulpy, one-half-inch berries. Good greenhouse plant where climate does not permit growing outside. 25 cents per pkt.

Dracena hookeriana—

Medium growth, occasionally branching, topped by a crowded rosette of spreading, sword-shaped, very thick, leathery leaves, dark green and glossy, to four inches wide with translucent edges. Slow growing. Greenish flowers in large panicles. Seeds are large and very hard; require soaking before planting. 25 cents per pkt.

Bombax ellipticum—

Compound leaves, three to seven leaflets arranged finger-fashion. Flowers large and red, appearing when the tree is leafless; hence very showy. 25 cents per pkt.

Xanthosoma—

Tropical plant related to the ele-

phant ear. Therefore, it should be treated as a greenhouse plant in cold climates. Leaves are large and arrow-shaped, sometimes cut or divided, and with thick channeled leaf stalks. Plants require a rich, moist soil, and should have ample fertilizer to keep them growing well. 25 cents per pkt.

Carica-Papaya—

Straight, palm-like, trunk, with a milky juice, topped by a cluster of immense leaves that are deeply lobed, finger-fashioned, and very long stalked. Fruit suggesting a yellow or orange melon, in some varieties oblong, in others globe-shaped, the flesh aromatic and delicious. Makes a beautiful greenhouse plant but can be grown outdoors in mild climates. Seeds are from a friend in Mexico. 35 cents per pkt.

Amaryllis—

From Mexico, seeds of native amaryllis — not too many — but someone could use them to cross with our American hybrids. The color is pink. Three seeds for 25 cents.

Chlorophytum variegatum—

Leaves long, flat, often one inch wide, variegated. Grown in greenhouse for its ornamental value. 25 cents per pkt.

Geranium, lancastriense—

Also called 'Crane's bill'. (Not a pelargonium). Hardy perennial, grows in sun or shade, forming broad, green mats, with continuous flowers of light rose. Especially nice in a rock garden. 25 cents per pkt.

Viola pedata—

Bird's foot violet. Leaves basal, cut into lobes shaped like a bird's foot, the lobes cut and toothed near the tips. Flowers usually with two upper dark violet and the three lower soft lilac. Grow in dry, open places. 25 cents per pkt.

Smilax rotundifolia —

Creeping vine. 25 cents per pkt.

Browallia speciosa—

Smooth-branching plant rarely fifteen inches high. Flowers with the tube about one inch long, the ex-

panded limb larger and not notched; purplish. 25 cents per pkt.

Acalypha hispida—

'Chenille Plant'. Showy tropical or greenhouse plant, with broad ovate, bright green, hairy leaves with crenate margins. Bright red flowers in long, pendant spikes resembling the tail of a fox. 25 cents per pkt.

Solanum pseudo-capiscum—

'Jerusalem cherry'. Popular greenhouse plant widely grown by the florist trade. Scarlet or yellow fruits, globe-shaped about one-half inch in diameter. 25 cents per pkt.

Epidendrum ibaguense—

Reed-type terrestrial (orchid) with slender leafy stems to four feet in height, rooting from the nodes. Leaves very fleshy. Small flowers on long stems in dense clusters, orange with fringed yellow lips. While this plant will grow outside in mild climates, it is better to grow it under greenhouse conditions. 25 cents per pkt.

* * * *

Why not enhance the beauty of your garden next spring and summer by growing some or all of the above-mentioned other genera. All are easily grow from seed, and most of them require very little effort and maintenance.

MRS. FLORENCE GEE,
Seed Fund Administrator,
234 Birch Street,
Roseville, California, 95678.

CORRECTION—

In the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Flight in the November issue, there were two errors.

The last line of item no. 14 was accidentally dropped to the item below it. Corrected, item no. 14 should read: B. 'Apple Blossom' — single type semperflorens with apple-blossom blooms, green leaves. Good bedding plant, 25 cents per pkt.

The first item under "Other Genera" should be spelled *Gypsophila paniculata*.

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Buxton Check List of Begonias

The Buxton Check List of Begonias is a "must" for hybridizers to check on previously registered names, and is a valuable reference book for identification and origin.

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4943 FIESTA AVE., TEMPLE CITY, CALIFORNIA

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

I hope all of you have caught your breath from the excitement of the holidays. Let's get back to the garden. It's time to start seed planting and planning for new and better varieties. Let's all get to work and get out something new.

Did you know — there are two songs dedicated to our lovely begonias? Ann Meyer came up with this one when we were visiting there last month. To the tune of "Back In Your Own Back Yard".

Your begonias in bloom
Are waiting for you
Back in your own back yard.
You'll see their beautiful hues
Through your window panes
Back in your own back yard.
Oh! You can go to the east—
Go to the west—
And some day you'll come,
Weary at heart,
Back where you started from,
You'll find your happiness lies
Right under your eyes,
Back in your own back yard.

And this is another begonia song:
We're the lovers of begonias
Of the U. S. A.
We're the lovers of begonias
To brighten up our day.
How we love our rex and fibrous,
Love our tuberous, too.
Now we spend our nights and
Sundays,
Begonias, just with you.
How we'd love to have a lath-house
In some sunny spot.
We could show our rex in winter
Instead of just a pot.
We dislike those slugs and aphids,
Worms and sow bugs, too.
Any yard is made a garden,
Begonias, just by you.
Does anyone know any more?

Did you remember that this is founders' month? Your American Begonia Society was founded thirty-two years ago this month by Mr. Herbert Dyckman of Long Beach, California.

That's all for now.

TERRY OLMSTED,
President.

DO WE WANT A BETTER BEGONIAN?

When we open our **Begonian** each month, what do we hope to find?

A larger magazine with more pages.

An article concerning one particular begonia each month, giving the description, original habitat, its culture in that location, how to grow it successfully here in the United States, and what plants have been propagated with it as one of the parents.

Articles concerning begonias from all parts of the world.

More about other shade plants.

Round Robins revised.

No requests to the Branches for money to keep our bills paid.

All these things and more will be the look of the new **Begonian** if the membership dues are raised to \$4.00 per year.

Think about your **Begonian**. Costs have risen considerably since our last raise in membership dues. We cannot stand still. Either we have a better magazine or we have one that will from necessity grow smaller and smaller.

Watch for the ballot in a future issue and vote.

Vote YES — if you want a better magazine.

Vote NO — if you are not interested.

—Howard Small,
Vice-President.

Bumblin' Along With



It has been called to my attention that I made a big "boo-boo" in the November issue, namely, in the list of nurseries or begonia growers who will ship. Four corrections were made last month.

Add this correction: Cecil Houdyshel, of La Verne, California, does not grow begonias. He grows African violets and tropicals.

In my correspondence, I note that many begonia growers are anxious to learn where they may obtain different begonias, especially the new ones and the rare ones. I would sincerely appreciate it if any of you who know of a good source of begonias of this type will send me the name and address, together with any other information you have regarding the source.

I am appealing especially for the members-at-large, who do not belong to a Branch. These are the folks that are in need of information like this. Since more than half of the Society's members are members-at-large, let's make an extra effort to supply information for their use.

A list of nurseries active at the present time in all fifty states would render a great service. Even sources that do not ship would help members living within driving distance who might not be aware of them. Also, begonia growers who travel might have the opportunity of "dropping in" and making a real find.

Let's all join in. Send me a postcard, please!

In the November *Begonian* we also asked for help in finding a source of Pink Queen Anne's Lace. I have the following letter from Mrs. Iola Hall, of Woodland Hills, California:

"In reading your column in the November issue, and being an Easterner, myself, I believe that Mrs. J. W. of Dothan, Alabama, is really talking about Yarrow (*Achillea*) rather than Queen Anne's Lace.

"Yarrow comes in white, yellow, and pink: *A. ptarmica* — sneezewort — white *A. filipendulina* (*A. eupatorium*) Yarrow yellow common in dried arrangements in the east. *A. millefolium* — a cosmopolitan weed — pink, crimson, or purple.

"All of these yarrows dry nicely for use in winter bouquets. I hope this is what she wants to know."

Thank you very much for your help, Mrs. Hall. Perhaps with this information at hand, Mrs. J. W. will have no trouble in locating her plant.

From Mrs. J. V. of Miami, Florida, we have the following question:

"I stepped into a fix-it shop here and was surprised at what I saw — a big metal washtub filled with a beautiful begonia, dark green and reddish hairy grape leaves, red undersides, iridescent flower, tall pink spikes — just beautiful. I can never see the lady who owns it. Her husband doesn't know the name of it and isn't interested. I'm ashamed to show my face in there any more. Would you know what it is?"

Dear Mrs. J. V.: Thank you for your inquiry. However, it is impossible for me to name your begonia; at best, it could be only a guess. To make proper identification, it would be necessary to provide a description in much greater detail, accompanied by an herbarium specimen.

I would suggest that you gather up your courage and try again to meet the lady grower. In spite of her hus-

band's indifference, she will undoubtedly be delighted to name her lovely begonia and discuss it, since it is a specimen plant. All growers of specimen plants are so proud of their plants that their greatest joy is derived from showing off their plants and talking about them.

If this is impossible, I suggest that you send a specimen to the Director of our Identification Garden.

We have a question from M. L. McIntyre, a new member in Liverpool, England. He states:

"One of my plants is B. Clifton, given to me as a B. boweri x B. moysii cross. Another is *B. timotheth* — no parentage being given. I have two others with uncertain names, *B. fagifolia* and *B. plageoneura*. If you can tell me whether the names are correct I will be very grateful, also further information, if any."

M. L. McIntyre does not give a description of his plants, but we may presume that they are small, because he states that he goes in for small plants like *B. boweri* because he has little room and cannot keep the larger types of begonias.

Dear M. L. McIntyre: Thanks so much for your letter. I find that *B. fagifolia* is mentioned in *Les Begonias* by Charles Chevalier. It is listed *B. fagifolia Fisch (Wagenaria fagifolia Kl)*, a species closely related to *B. scandens*, *B. glabra*, and several others. It is a climbing or creeping begonia, with stalks that are sarmentose, bending, and stem-rooting. It differs notably from the others in the fawn hairs which cover the plant.

The climbing species of begonias are originally from tropical America. They are collectors' plants rather than ornamental. *B. fagifolia* is listed in *Buxton's Check List of Begonias*. Found in St. Hilaire, Brazil, in 1836. Buxton's authority is *Index Kewensis*, England, and Alphonse de Candolle, author of *The Prodrômus*, France and Switzerland, 1864.

B. plagioneura (spelled with an

"i" instead of the "e" as written by M. L. McIntyre) is found in *Buxton's Check List*. It was found listed in *Index Kewensis*, and was found also in the *Bontanical Magazine* of Curtis, England, as being found under the date 1930. There was no reference to this begonia in other texts.

None of the reference library mentioned *B. Clifton*, *B. moysii*, or *B. timotheth*.

Help begonia members. If any of you know anything about any of these above - mentioned begonias, please advise, so that we may pass the information along to our new member in England.

From M. C. P. of Mahaffey, Pennsylvania, we have some helpful hints for begonia-raising that I am sure all of us will be happy to have, as follows:

"I have raised begonias for years; also help my brother run a greenhouse, mostly vegetables. Each spring, for years, when damp - off strikes we use a few drops of household Clorox or a little vinegar in the water they are watered with. I also keep a salt shaker filled with powdered sulphur and dust that on when I see a bit of damp-off starting. These are simple and effective and items most households have on hand."

In her letter, M. C. P. goes on to tell us she enjoys reading past *Begonians* and raises many begonias from seed from the Seed Fund. However, she asks the following question:

"I have tried many times but B. Iron Cross will not germinate for me. Complete failure on it, but nearly all others come up nicely. I would like to know what I do wrong with that one."

Dear M.C.P.: I have received letters from others stating that they have had trouble getting *B. masoniana* (Iron Cross) to germinate—some reporting complete failure — others reporting spotty germination. Again I have been advised that every seed seems to germinate. Many begonia growers in this area have tried as

many as three times before getting a good germination.

I would advise your trying again. *B. masoniana* takes longer to germinate than most begonias, so it is necessary to be patient. If possible, bottom heat should be provided to encourage germination. Once you obtain germination, the little seedlings seem to be quite hardy and grow on well to mature plants. Certainly they are worth trying several times before giving up. I sincerely hope that you will try again and that you will be rewarded with wonderful results.

Thank you so much for your helpful hints. This is the sort of thing we all enjoy and can put to good use.

If *you* have any question on the fascinating subject of begonias and begonia growing, write to:

Mrs. Bee Olson
13715 Cordary Avenue
Hawthorne, California

OPPORTUNITY . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

tower. It is in an ordinary garden where, as I write this, I can look out and see begonias, ferns, fuchsias, philodendrons, bromeliads, and their friends absorbing the warm sunshine. A greenhouse only a few feet away is filled with African violets in bloom; another is filled with orchids and anthuriums; while a third serves as the joint maternity ward. The office is at ground level; the door is open — literally and figuratively — and you are welcome to enter.

During the past year invaluable assistance has been given to me by Ruth Merry, the Eastern Editor. Besides contributing her own writing, she has been responsible for many articles written by others. I am confident that her continued help will be a big factor in bringing a closer understanding and co-operation between widely scattered members.

In the background I hear the bleat

of the pessimists who cry, "That's impossible! We haven't got the money. We can't afford it. We have to cut expenses; We'll lose members."

Who will deny that a good magazine costs money? But money is not the all-important consideration. Of far greater importance is the good will and support of all the members, evidenced by our willing participation in furthering our common purpose — to promote interest in growing begonias and to promote friendships among begonia growers.

If we all recognize the new year as a new opportunity, we cannot fail. As *active, living members* of the American Begonia Society, we will enjoy participating in its principal activity, disseminating information through *The Begonian*, and we will not hesitate to give it our support in any way we can.

It is my hope that 1964 will be a year of opportunity in many ways — may it bring all of you the best that nature has to offer, good health, good gardening, and glorious begonias.

TRU PETERSON,
Your Editor

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER NOW AVAILABLE

A list of the names and addresses of all members of the American Begonia Society is now available for members' use. This roster will help you find other members living near you, so that you can become acquainted, discuss your common interests, and perhaps even start a local Branch. When you are traveling and want to visit begonia growers along the way, the roster will tell you where to find them.

Order your roster from the Membership Secretary. The price is \$1.00 including postage.

CALENDAR

January 2 — Westchester Branch:
Two members of the Branch who are begonia-growing experts will speak. John Thiehn will speak on Fibrous Begonias and Walter Pease will give cultural information on Tuberous Begonias. A question and answer session will follow.

January 9 — Orange County Branch:
The speaker will be Kelsey William from the Plaza Nursery in Buena Park; his topic will be "Pruning Fuchsias and Other Plants". Orange County Branch, organized in 1941, will be twenty-three years old this month.

January 11 — San Gabriel Valley Branch: The Branch will hold its annual dinner meeting at the Flamingo Hotel in Arcadia. The guest speaker will be Dr. George C. Kennedy, professor at the University of California at Los Angeles. His topic will be "Journey of a Plant Collector".

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COPY DEADLINE

All material for publication in THE BEGONIAN must be received by the Editor not later than the fifth of the month preceding month of publication.

IN MEMORIAM

The Western Pennsylvania Branch of the American Begonia Society mourns the recent death of a charter member, Mrs. John J. Brockmeyer. She was the second president of this Branch and she knew and loved her begonias.

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Branch Directory

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT THESE MEETINGS

BRITISH BRANCH

F. J. Bedson, Secy., Kent, England

BUXTON, BESSIE RAYMOND BRANCH

3rd Saturday, Homes of Members
Miss Cynthia Webber, Secy.
5 Hillside Ave., Bedford, Mass.

DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS BRANCH

3rd Monday, 10 a.m., Member's Homes
Mrs. George Wilkins, Secy.
3625 N. Fitzhugh St., Dallas, Texas

EAST BAY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:45 p.m., Willard School
Telegraph at Ward, Berkeley, California
Miss Dorothy F. Osburn, Secy.
5015 Cochrane Ave., Oakland 18, Calif.

EL MONTE COMMUNITY BRANCH

3rd Friday, Members' Homes
Daisy Morrow, Secy.
2821 Musgrove Ave., El Monte, Calif.

FOOTHILL BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
La Verne Community Bldg.
2039 Third St., La Verne
Miss Christine E. Kindell, Secy.
338 W. 11th St., Claremont, Calif.

FORT, ELSA BRANCH

1st Saturday, 1:30 p.m.
Miss Lola Price, Secy.
628 Beech Ave., Laurel Springs, N.J.

GLENDALE BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday Afternoon Club, 400 N. Central
Mrs. Ethel Arbuckle, Secy.
5932 Seville Ave., Huntington Park, Calif.

GRAY, EVA KENWORTHY BRANCH

2nd Saturday, 1:30 p.m. (except Dec. & Jan.)
Seacoast Hall, 3rd and E St., Encinitas, Calif.
Mrs. Alice E. Roberts, Secy.
523 Hermes Ave., Encinitas, Calif.

GRAY'S HARBOR BRANCH

2nd Monday, 8:00 p.m.
Hoquiam Public Library or
Messingale and Roseneau Music Store
Aberdeen, Washington
Mrs. Jessie B. Hoyt, Secy.
1013 Harding Road, Aberdeen, Wash.

GRUENBAUM, MARGARET BRANCH

4th Tuesday, 10:30 a.m., Homes of Members
Mrs. Adolph Belser, Corr. Secy.
Welsh and Veree Rd., Philadelphia, Pa.

HOLLYWOOD BRANCH

Meetings temporarily suspended.
Mrs. Georgina Barton, Secy.
2821 Herkimer St., Los Angeles 39, Calif.

HOUSTON, TEXAS BRANCH

2nd Friday, 10:00 a.m.
Garden Center, 1500 Herman Drive
Mrs. Grant Herzog, Secy.
12601 Broken Bough, Memorial Station
Houston 24, Texas

HUMBOLDT COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Monday, 8:00 p.m.
Los Amigos Club, Loleta, Calif.
Miss Margaret Smith, Secy.
P.O. Box 635, Ferndale, Calif.

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

1st Tuesday, 7:45 p.m., American Legion Hall
3208 West 85th St., Inglewood, Calif.
Mrs. Elsie M. Willick, Secy.
13214 Merkel Ave., Paramount, Calif.

KNICKERBOCKER BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Library, Horticultural Society of N.Y.
157 West 58th St., New York
Mrs. Phyllis Cherof, Secy.
115-44 194th St.,
St. Albans 12, N. Y.

LONG BEACH PARENT CHAPTER

3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Linden Hall
208 Linden Ave., Long Beach, Calif.
Mrs. Vera Ohlson, Secy.
1925 Maine Ave., Long Beach 6, Calif.

LOUISIANA CAPITAL BRANCH

1st Friday, Capitol Room
1701 Main St., Baton Rouge
Mrs. Elaine Wilkerson, Secy.
5764 Robertson Ave., Baton Rouge 5, La.

MIAMI, FLORIDA BRANCH

4th Tuesday, 8:00 p.m.
Simpson Memorial Garden Center
Mrs. Ray Rosengren, Secy.
5530 N.W. 21 Ave., Miami, Fla.

MISSOURI BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 1 p.m.
World War Memorial Bldg., Linwood and Paseo
Kansas City, Mo.
Miss Nina Austin, Secy.
1104 Askew St., Kansas City 27, Mo.

NORTH LONG BEACH BRANCH

3rd Friday, 7:30 p.m.
3901 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach
Mrs. Rebecca Anthony, Secy.
153 Ellis St., Long Beach, Calif.

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Garden Grove Grange Hall, Century and Taft Sts.
Garden Grove, Calif.
Jack N. Schumann, Secy.
13382 Laux Circle, Garden Grove, Calif.

PASADENA BRANCH

Meetings on Call, Homes of Members
Col. C. M. Gale, Secy.
2176 N. Roosevelt Ave., Altadena, Calif.

PHILOBEGONIA BRANCH

2nd Friday, Members' Homes
Mrs. Anne W. Stiles, Secy.
R.D. No. 2, Box 43B, E. Delaware Trail,
Medford, N. J.

REDONDO AREA BRANCH

4th Friday each Month
Lincoln School Recreation Center
Ernest and Vail Sts., Redondo Beach, Calif.
Mrs. Margaret Buell, Secy.
1441 - 21st St., Manhattan Beach, Calif.

RHODE ISLAND BRANCH

1st Saturday, Homes of Members
Miss Ruth Harrington, Secy.
372 Lloyd Ave., Providence, R.I.

RIVERSIDE BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Shamel Park
3650 Arlington, Riverside, Calif.
Mrs. Lillian Maddox, Secy.
7172 Mt. Vernon St., Riverside, Calif.

ROBINSON, ALFRED D. BRANCH

3rd Friday, 10:30 a.m., Homes of Members
Constance D. Bower, Corr. Secy.
1609 W. Lewis St., San Diego 3, Calif.

SACRAMENTO BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 8:00 p.m., Garden Center
3300 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, Calif.
Elmer A. Thomas, Secy.
913 Sonoma Way, Sacramento 22, Calif.

SAN DIEGO BRANCH

4th Monday, Barbour Hall
2717 University Ave., San Diego
Leah Jones, Secy.
3734 - 40th St., San Diego 5, Calif.

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH

1st Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.
Garden Center, Golden Gate Park
9th Ave. and Lincoln Way
Lillian A. Beach, Secy.
3006 Castro St., San Francisco 12, Calif.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH

2nd Friday, 8:00 p.m.
Los Angeles State and County Arboretum
501 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, Calif.
Mrs. Lillian Hale, Secy.
113 N. Ardmore Drive, San Gabriel, Calif.

SAN MIGUEL BRANCH

1st Wednesday, Youth Center, Lemon Grove, Calif.
Mrs. Lucille Williams, Secy.
1261 Concord St., El Cajon, Calif.

SANTA BARBARA BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
2559 Puesta Del Sol
Elnora Schmidt, Secy.
3346 Calle Cita, Santa Barbara, Calif.

SEATTLE BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 7:45 p.m.
Loyal Heights Field House,
21st Ave., N. W. and N. W. 77th St.
Mrs. Janice W. Barnette, Secy.
2735 N. E. 53rd St., Seattle, Wash., 98105.

SHEPHERD, THEODOSIA BURR BRANCH

1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Alice Barlett, C.H., 902 E. Main, Ventura, Calif.
Mrs. Clermont Morris, Secy.
538 Jones St., Ventura, Calif.

SMOKY VALLEY RANCH

3rd Thursday of each Month
Mrs. Lyle L. Melvin, Secy.
833 E. Jewell Avenue, Salina, Kansas

SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
Burbank School
319 B. St., Hayward, Calif.
Mrs. Evangeline Muller, Corr. Secy.
36937 Cherry St., Newark, Calif.

TALL CORN STATE BRANCH

Mrs. Edna Monson, Secy.
South Taylor, Mason City, Iowa

TARRANT COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Monday, 10:00 a.m.
Members' Homes
Mrs. F. E. Mahler, Secy.
1815 Sixth Ave., Fort Worth, Texas

TEXAS STATE BRANCH

1st Tuesday Night in Members' Homes
E. Weaver,
1325 Thomas Blvd., Port Arthur, Texas

TEXASTAR BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 10 a.m., Garden Center
1500 Herman Dr., Houston, Texas
Mrs. J. L. Linkenhogor, Secy.
11310 Holidan Way,
Houston, Texas, 77024

WESTCHESTER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Westchester Women's Club
8020 Alverston St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Mrs. Walter W. Pease, Jr., Secy.
8101 Vicksburg Ave., Los Angeles 45, Calif.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 11:00 a.m., Homes of Members
Mrs. A. S. Lash, Secy.
1228 Oklahoma Drive, Pittsburgh 16, Pa.

WHITTIER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Palm Park Community Center, 1643 Floral Drive
Anne L. Rose, Secy.
1255 Ramona Dr., Whittier, Calif.

WILLIAM PENN BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 2:00 p.m., Homes of Members
Mrs. Ernest C. Drew, Secy.
635 Moreno Rd., Narberth, Pa.



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