

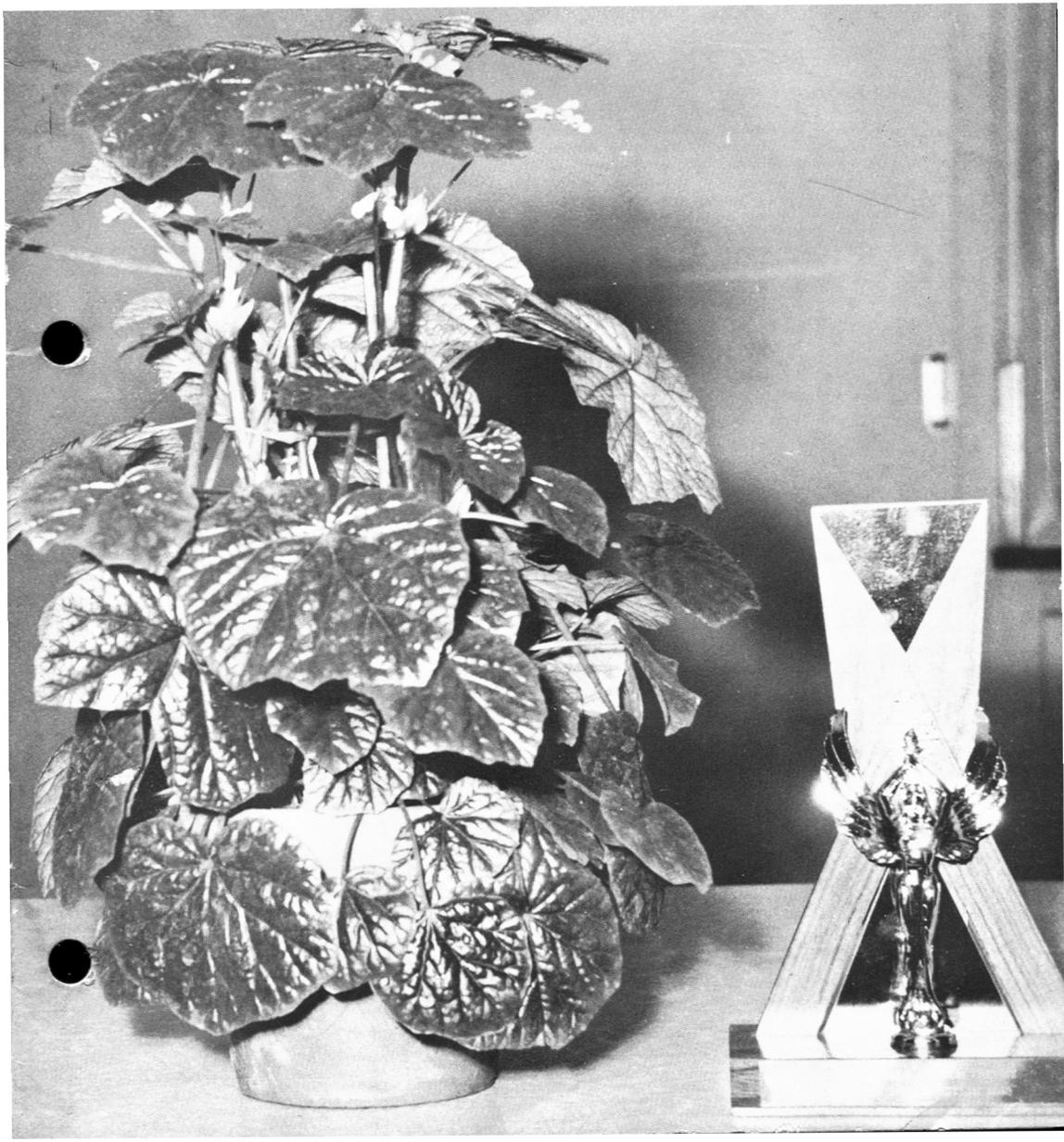
The Begonian

DEVOTED TO THE SHELTERED GARDENS

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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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From The Editor—

This past month I took 39 into Alaska on one of my monthly tours. I was absolutely amazed at the grandeur of the great country, and the majesty of the scenery. Everyone should see this state of ours and its untouched beauty. But most of all were the bright colored begonias everywhere!

At Carcross, entrance to the Yukon; Juneau, the state capitol; Wrangel, Prince Rupert, Ketchikan, inside passage towns all had tuberous begonias in pots, in beds, hanging baskets and borders. Gorgeous Stanley Park in Vancouver, The Burchard Gardens in Victoria, and the arboretum of the University of Washington were loaded with begonia blossoms like they belonged to the American Begonia Society. The flowers were much deeper shaded than I expect—and everyone was growing them from parks to alleys!

Shows what can be done with the many types of begonias in all climates! I mentioned begonias to one back yard gardener and they sort of laughed when they said, “we don’t have to belong to any society to love begonias!” And well said too! I particularly enjoyed seeing the use of thousands of multi-flowered types in window boxes, pots and as edgers.

Towards the end of my term as editor I have received a great number of interesting letters from our eastern folks. One, without mentioning the name, I would like to quote, for I think you will enjoy it as I have. It’s like frosting on the cake. She was speaking at length on the broad field of begonias and the new ones being developed and said, “The field is now large and could be larger if our members had vision to see what with available funds a better magazine could be produced. A better magazine would bring more advertisers . . . my imagination even pictures underwriting research and exploration . . . we might even have an Executive Secretary who could satisfy the perennial complaint of unanswered letters” . . .

I am for that for sure! She went on to say, “I think that an editor should edit, but not rewrite, even to correct grammar, for that destroys the personal flavor of the writer . . . few of us know or realize the time and energy expended by Mrs. Gee, Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Olson or our President. I would like to see the new cultivars fully described and evaluated, some of the old confusions cleared, and changes of established plant names justified not just announced . . . I beg of you not to clutter the Begonia with tales of elephant hunting or collecting bus transfers” . . . and many other things in the letter I thoroughly enjoyed and were of great interest.

Well, I can’t remember publishing an elephant hunting tale . . . But I will admit I wondered at times about materials. Plenty of technical material is available but this is not wanted by you and I average backyard begonia growers. Some must be used of course to fill the need of the very avid grower.

I think we have done that with the help of our staff and we are all right people of a “part time” put together magazine.

Help, I am going to miss the mail from my wide spread begonia friends. However you will write from time to time . . . after all, my work is horticultural information and I can always use materials in my lesson sheets and releases—your stories on what you grow!

Coming are the winter months for many of you, and I thought you would enjoy a story of windowsill gardening—found in my files left over from a previous editor. I enjoyed it and I think you will too.

Well, this winds it up . . . and thanks to my regulars, Bee, Herb, Mrs. Gee, and Mabel for the many detail readings.

Who knows, I may see some of you along the way, and be happy with you because “if you wish to be happy forever, become a gardener”!

Gordon L.

"Convention Notes"

With the Editor

I have been to many a National Convention, in fact banquet speaker several times, and I have never seen a more orderly conducted convention, and banquet evening! Your convention went off beautifully smooth!

Plants arrived by the hundreds. The best specimens I have ever seen . . . The banquet evening had a great speaker with lots of humor . . . Mabel did herself proud with the program . . . and the installation of officers beautifully and smoothly done by Mrs. Ziesenhenne . . . the pledge the incoming officers took together for a better society was very unusual, as they repeated the words of the pledge from the installing officer.

Bert Slatter gave thanks to all of his "helpers". This is the 43rd year of Bert's various show managerships. This will be his last year, my old friend told me. His hard work will always be remembered, that's for sure. His untiring interest in flowers and in begonias will always be remembered fondly. Bert has had several bad bouts with his heart and repeated physical illnesses. His courage to keep going is always typical of the good people in life we brush so very unfrequently. May we all give a prayer for Bert and his return to stronger physical health. "Thanks also" we need to say for support of his wife and daughter.

The show, well attended by several thousand visitors, I found plants brought from as far as Sacramento by Bob Hale . . . Elmer Reid of Ventura brought a whole trailer load to fill a great big table . . . 47 picture entries were on the wall from growers all over the East and even one from England! . . . Hyacinth Smith flew down to our convention and brought gorgeous tuberous blossoms . . . everywhere I saw people taking notes on what they saw . . . examining various plants, mentioning now and again they had "one home even better" . . . I always love

this! Why don't folks bring out their plants! . . . ribbons galore . . . and gorgeous trophies all over the place! Something to see . . . saw folks getting more information from the information booth . . . asking about memberships . . . which is always good to hear . . .

The afternoon seminar was a surprise to everyone . . . display of all kinds of lights and plants including the gift from the Neas Growers of wide spectrum light that M. Corwin and I had been "airing" for a few months . . . as well as plants from houses, seed and cutting started from the Burpee people of River Calif.

Chaster Nave of San gave his story on his calla b. introduction. Always great to hear a story of how a plant was developed . . . His bright smiling face is a gift to everyone he meets . . .

Mr. Ziesenhenne gave a great number of fine points on what to do when you take begonias from a moist area to a dry one, which frequently happens in the Western states . . . sure to give them a protected space . . . no wind to prevent wilt . . . in a plastic bag where humidity is great and as they begin to grow new leaves gradually remove the bag . . . many gift plants take a heavy set back because they come from high humidity to poor humidity . . . forced feeding to none at all . . . either feed often or repot and start . . . In dry areas Rudy said the hairy types seem to do better for the hairy prevents flow of air and builds up humidity on the leaf . . . I took enough notes to write a good story! His ideas are always food for thought and are based on long years of experience. I hope he writes for the new editor often!

After the seminar, coffee, cook and punch, a gift from Mabel Corwin was beautifully served by Vera Naumann . . . and everyone gathered

around the table peering at "light grown" plants . . . asking questions . . . and just generally enjoying being begonia growers! . . . Sunday began to rain, and rained all day Monday . . . something new for California this time of the year . . . next month Bert will give to you the dope on all the winners . . . and I found out who the new Editor will be . . . one you have had before. Good luck old chap! Great Show . . . great commitment . . . the San Gabriel Branch had over 50 at the banquet . . . and they surely did work! The plant sale under Ray Eppley was something to see . . . in a 20 foot square booth they moved plants . . . more people walked out of the Arboretum with begonias than . . . work all Congratulate them on a great show!

MEMORIAM

Joe E. Owen of Encino passed away recently after a long illness. He leaves a wife, Millie, two daughters and many relatives and friends. He was a charter member of the Pasadena City Branch, also the West Valley Branch. He was a staunch supporter of the A.B.S. We will all miss his great optimism, friendliness, and hearty laughter.

BOOK REVIEWS

Trees and Shrubs for the Southeast, by Brooks F. Wigginton; 280 pp., illus.; 1963; University of Georgia Press, Athens.—\$7.50

Written by an able professional landscape architect, this well done book contains a great deal of potential interest to the gardener in the Southeast. It should be noted that this area, in Mr. Wigginton's hands, excludes subtropical Florida, from the middle of the peninsula southward.

Particular attention has been paid to plant materials which are a bit "different," which is certainly refreshing both to the gardener and to this

reviewer.—Alex D. Hawkes

★ ★ ★

How to Landscape Your Own Home, by J. I. Rodale and staff; 1544 pp., profusely illus.; 1963; Rodale Books, Inc., Emmaus, Penna.—\$9.95

This rather remarkable volume is described as "by far the most complete book on ornamentals ever published in which the organic method is followed!" And it is certainly a "complete" work, whose contents run the gamut of wild flowers of the far northern reaches of this country, to the orchids and Begonias of the subtropics. I found particularly valuable the more than 300 pages of tables, giving an amazing amount of valuable data in very concise form.

Even if you are not strictly an "organic gardener," you will find this encyclopedic volume a very worthy addition to your library.—Alex D. Hawkes.

★ ★ ★

Japanese Flower Arrangement: A Complete Primer, by Ellen G. Allen; 86 pp., profusely illus.; 1962; Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, Japan.—\$2.75

The arrangement of flowers, according to the several recognized Japanese schools, today occupies the attention of many avid gardeners outside of the Orient. A good text dealing with the basics of these often confusing schools has been needed, and Mrs. Allen seems to have succeeded admirably in here reducing a great deal of information to a concise volume.

The book is arranged into fourteen lessons, whereby the novice can start from the beginning, as it were, and in theory at least become an expert by the end of the work. The text is easily followed, and the numerous photographs and step-by-step diagrams are especially helpful. The book, printed in Japan, has the unique charm we have happily come to expect from this publisher.—Alex D. Hawkes.

COVER PICTURE

B. Crispia (crispula x dregii). A Belva Kusler Hybrid. It won the Glendale Branch Award for the highest rating new cultivar at the National Show, September, 1965. Plant grown by Bee and Wilbur Olson. Picture by Ralph Corwin.

HINTS FOR GROWING BEGONIAS ON YOUR WINDOW SILL

By Rudolph P. Benjamin

Success with begonias in your home or with any other house plant, should start with an exploration to find the most suitable location for the plants.

Much also depends on good judgment in selecting the plant, and the skill in caring for them. Certainly, every all-year-around gardener has more handicaps and limitations than a grower in the country, who can keep his plants out of doors in the summer. However, the experience and the challenge, is rewarding if you love plants.

To begin with, one must understand a few main principles governing plant growth.

Light - Heat - Humidity - Fertilizing

Each of these four factors are reciprocally dependent. In other words, the adjustment of any of these factors effecting a plant depends always to a great degree upon the relative amount or intensity of the remaining factors. *Deficiency* or *excess* of one or more is harmful, upsetting the balance. *Example:* Light is frequently *deficient* during the winter, therefore plants should be kept *cool* and receive *less* fertilizer and water to counterbalance the lack of light by slower growth. You must control these factors if you wish to grow good plants at home. (*Note, deficiency of light can be overcome by fluorescent light. Incandescent light can help but is too hot to be ideal.*)

-LIGHT-

Where full sun is available, the best exposure for begonias is a window facing east, as begonias and many other plants prefer the strong but cooler morning sun. Next best would be a south window. The safest begonia for full south sun is *Begonia semperflorens*.

Remember, begonias like the growing condition of their natural habitat, and this is filtered sun light, to reduce the heat of the midday sun. It helps to place them between plants

such as ferns or ivy to give part shade, or you may use a net curtain, plastic or split-bamboo screening, between the window pane and the plants, for the same purpose. A few of the types of begonias that should do well under such conditions are: *Begonia cubensis*, *B. Richmondensis*, *B. schmidtiana*, *B. Medora* and *B. Erythrophylla* (an early bloomer.)

Turn your plants occasionally in order that all sides receive the light to encourage a good symmetrical shape.

Rex begonias do not grow as well in the house but a north window, away from the full sun, seems better than other exposures. If they lose leaves in the fall, do not be alarmed, as they like to rest in the winter. Give them water sparingly, in winter. When and if they show new leaf buds in the spring, place them in the east window or under artificial light.

The grower, who has no east or south window with full sun, can place begonias in a north or west window and add artificial light. You may have to experiment with the locations for your plants to find out what is best suited at a particular time of the year for each of them.

-HEAT-

Begonias prefer a temperature of 65°-75° during the day. That means they like it warm. At night the temperature should be from 55°-65° or 10° lower. If a radiator is directly beneath the window, try to lower the heat or turn it off, to keep the temperature down. If the heat is essential, place asbestos insulation between the pipes and the window shelf, and let the heat from the radiator deviate into the room. Make the shelf flush with the wall and wider than the radiator so that rising heat doesn't touch leaves. *Example:* Our bedroom has two windows with southern exposure (full sun, no obstruction). One is arranged with plants on three tiers of glass-shelves attached to the window frame, and on the sill is a 24"

wide planter shelf. The window is kept open constantly. The radiator is to the right of the open window. While the heat is on and reflects into the room, *fresh air* always circulates through the room and the plants receive moderate temperature, but will not get any draft.

—HUMIDITY—

Like human beings, plants are healthier with moist air. The air in all apartments suffers from excessive dryness in winter. A good method to produce moisture around your plants in the window is to place a shallow pan or saucer filled with gravel or coarse pebbles, no smaller than peas in size whose interspaces are filled with perlite. Place the pots on the pebbles. If the pan or saucer is kept filled with water, almost covering the topmost pebbles and the pot itself is not in actual contact with the water, the evaporating moisture will help the plant toward a constantly humid atmosphere. On cloudy days, a daily watering of the pebbles may be enough. On sunny days, when humidity is low, it may be wise to add water oftener. No matter how great the temptation, don't fill the trays to the point where the bottoms of the pots are immersed. You can also increase humidity by spraying water on pot (not the leaves). This is especially advisable in the winter months when high temperatures and dry atmosphere of most homes causes rapid loss of water from pot and soil.

If you find this method troublesome, you may install an electrically controlled humidifier. The average humidity should be 40-50%. Finally, the more plants you have grouped together, the more their combined transpiration will raise the humidity around them. If you are interested, there are also some inexpensive humidity indicators on the market.

—FERTILIZING—

Begonias should be fertilized:

- Not when just repotted
- Not when dormant.
- Not when weak and ailing
- Not immediately after flowering

Do fertilize as soon as a plant begins to produce new growth after the resting period and continue to fertilize until flowering is finished. *Never* apply fertilizer to a plant that does not have a healthy root system. As to the question how often to fertilize begonias, the experienced grower applies at least once a month fertilizer when the growing season starts. This can be increased to once every two weeks, or once a week before the flowering starts.

Beginners are inclined to over-fertilize. Therefore it is better to use half-strength and repeat sooner if needed, or one quarter strength every week. There are many good fertilizers on the market. Read the direction on the label and reduce amounts as just suggested. Commercial fertilizer is generally numbered. The first number stands for Nitrogen, second for Phosphorous and third for Potash. It is good to choose for begonias a fertilizer that has a higher amount of phosphorus.

Never fertilize a plant when it is dry, always water the plant before and sparingly after fertilizing, this will allow an even distribution, or you may mix your fertilizer in water, let it stand overnight, and stir it before application.

—OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS— —ROOT DEVELOPMENT—

There is no better indicator of the general health of a plant than its root system. This should be inspected first of all, especially if a plant does not progress. If there is an abundance of healthy roots, the plant may need nourishment and should receive regular fertilizer. If the roots are dead or poorly developed on one side of the pot, while they are strong and healthy on the other side, cold drafts from a window surface or uneven watering or drainage may be the cause. If the roots appear to be inactive or partly dead, the plant may be entering only a rest period, (see notes on light, rex begonias).

In this case the plant should be left alone but watering must be diminished. The roots may have also been

damaged by irregular watering, sometimes in excess, and at other times too sparingly. If the soil is in good condition this can be corrected by being less neglectful in the future.

You may discover that the lower part of the potted earth is completely dry while only the upper portion is moist. In such a case the pot should be submerged to its rim in a pail of lukewarm water and left there for *not over 15 minutes*. One way in which roots can be hurt, is by applying very cold water directly from the tap. This, naturally, is most dangerous in the winter, and one should take care to adjust the temperature of the water to that of the room by the addition of a little hot water.

—WATERING—

Watering, indeed, is the most important factor in the treatment of all plants in the home and requires close and constant attention. Many begonia amateurs water their plants too often. Remember that the roots do not need water alone, they need one very important element and that is *air*. If you give too much water, you shut off the air supply and drown the roots of your beautiful plants, killing them with kindness.

There is no rule how often begonias need water.

The best test is, if you touch your plant and if the soil feels dry you water it, *thoroughly*. If you see water running out at the bottom it suggests that then the root system is amply supplied. Begonias prefer to have roots pot-bound to a certain extent. With a good porous soil, a begonia whose roots fill the pot, is less likely to be over watered. A clay pot will dry out faster than a plastic pot and in a warm house, plants will use more water. If the room temperature is very high, use a fine atomizer and spray the pots around the plant, this will be safer than watering too often. Though morning is best, you may water in the afternoon but do not wet the leaves.

—DRAFTS

Plants close to the window for the sake of light are naturally exposed to cold air from windowglass. This may

be of help if the room is too hot, or it may hurt, depending on degree, or condition by frost or by a large drop in temperature, even though not freezing. Few realize that the most sensitive parts of a plant are its growing root tips. They, usually being located on the outside of the ball of earth, close to the pot itself, are dangerously exposed to sudden cooling. (see note on root development). The porous flower pots of baked clay, used by most people, aggravate this danger since they cool quickly. The danger caused in this manner is of a very insidious character since often its effects do not become apparent for several days or weeks.

If the roots or their functions have been injured only on one side of the pot, the rest of the roots will continue to function but, being unable to supply the whole plant, some leaves commence to turn yellow and drop off. Flowers may drop off too, and the plant can decline in health. Glazed flower pots offer a certain protection against such injury, but must be watered less often than porous clay pots. Glazed or plastic pots are helpful when large enough to permit setting the porous clay pots inside them and leaving a space in between, which may be filled with damp (not wet) moss and pebbles on the bottom.

This will not only provide an insulation against cold drafts but also against overheating. It will also assist in preventing the soil in the pot from drying out too fast or unevenly. If the latter does not have a drainage hole, before watering the porous pot should be taken out of the glazed container, and no water must be allowed to accumulate at the bottom of the glazed container. I find that several sheets of newspaper laid between the window pane and your flower pots on cold winter nights gives some protection against drafts.

—PESTS AND DISEASES—

Begonias are not especially susceptible to insects and diseases. With proper care you can keep your plants free of pests and in a healthy disease resistant condition. *Rules*: Pick up old

leaves around the plants and cut off old, decaying growth. Isolate all infected or new plants and check to assure that the begonias have proper drainage.

Do not wet any leaves in the afternoon, unless they have a chance to dry quickly. A wet leaf will help diseases to grow faster over night. When you buy a begonia, be sure that it is healthy and pest free, especially if a gift from a friend.

Isolate these plants first and see how they develop. To play safe, a good warm water shower or rinse under the kitchen faucet will remove some insects. Cover the pot and soil with a plastic bag tightly, in order that the soil may not fall out. Then, turn the pot upside down to wash the under and top side of the leaves, with a forceful stream. Make sure to wash your pots and keep them free of green mold.

Causes of plant troubles.

Sudden defoliation may be caused by severe change in temperature, dry air, change to or from sun to shade, cold draft or illuminating gas.

Yellowing of all leaves may be due to root rot because of standing in water or of soil which is too dense to contain air. A severe infestation of insects may also bring it about.

Sudden wilting may result from lack of moisture or from root injury. Root-burn from over-fertilizing, is also possible.

Brown leaf tips may be caused by dry, hot air, by objects rubbing against leaves, by improper watering, or by insects.

Brown spots on foliage are usually due to burning by direct sunlight on plants that require shade during late spring and summer. Bacterial leaf spot spread by water on leaves is also a possible cause.

Mildew may get a start during damp weather. A light application of dusting sulfur or a wettable sulfur spray will control it.

An *easy and dependable* method of controlling most insects and disease is to dip a large, artist's camel's hair brush into an "all-purpose" flower or

rose dust. Then apply a *light*, even dusting over all foliage and stem surfaces and into, all joints of leaf stems with branches. Use a dust which is colored black (less visible) because it contains Fermate or Ferbam.

Another method is:

For aphids, plant lice or tiny black flies, or small, white jumping insects, etc. spraying or washing with a solution of Black-leaf (40 (nicotine sulfate) at the rate of one teaspoon nicotine sulfate and two teaspoons soap-flakes to a gallon of water. This material may be applied through a small spray gun such as is used to kill mosquitos. It is most conveniently done by placing the plant in the sink or bathtub where all surplus spray can be washed away.

A small infestation of mealy bugs can be controlled by applying a cotton-tipped toothpick dipped in alcohol to the mealy bugs.

Red spider and mites can be controlled by an application of rotonone.

A number of pressure can sprays are on the market, follow directions on the container, use them about 18" away from the plant, otherwise the foliage will burn.

It is definitely not recommended to use pressure sprays in your bed- or livingroom unless you are well experienced to apply the agent. Use all necessary precautions. *Make sure* you don't inhale (use a mask), or get it on yourself (protect body), wear gloves and wash thoroughly after spraying.

Palos Verdes

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No. 1 — *B. herbacea* Vell. Brazil sp. —

Epyphitic plant found growing from face of boulder in dense shade from near Ubatuba 20 km. north east of Caraguatatuba. One peculiarity of this begonia is the epyphitic habit, there are many climbing begonias and even creeping ones that go up the trees; but this species grows and lives attached to trees, without any contact with earth and can go on living on dead trunks and can be grown admirably on giant tree fern fiber. Another interesting feature of this plant is the symmetrical and lance form leaves and it is evident that we have an uncommon species of *Begonia*, however, a very interesting one of easy culture. If it has a support of fern wood or a pot containing segments of the same material, maintained constantly damp, the results of this care will be the growth of many ramifications of the rhizome. Leaves on this species are green but silver spots have been known to appear when plants are grown in shade. Seeds come directly from Brazil and are few in number. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. purpurea* —

Also sometimes called *B. macdougalii* var. *Brazil*. Seed collected from edge of dense, tropical rain forest km 140 on road to Sao Paulo through Tapirai at 2350 feet elevation. Plants tall with large heads of small white flowers with yellow stamens. Flower heads 12-18 inches across. The collector sent a colored picture of this species and it is gorgeous—also a magnificent picture appeared on cover of *The Begonian*, December 1962. We hope you will try this one for an outstanding plant. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. Brazil* species —

Large bristly 'maple-leaf' type with large green stipules around stem at leaf base. Leaves green top and bottom. Seeds collected from km 145 road

Sao Paulo, Piedade, Tapirai—Jaugia at 2250 feet elevation. Dense tropical forest. Colored picture shows this begonia to be exceptionally beautiful with its large, maple-leaf. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Expect to have identification on above and will report.

No. 4 — *B. Brazil* sp. —

Unusual, leafy begonia two to four feet tall with thin, tiny leaves almost like a maiden hair fern. Single small flowers at the ends of each tiny branch. Found near the coast 10 km south west of Sao Selastiao, mostly in drier soil in dense forest. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. maculata-Raddi* - syn *B. argyrostigma* —

Erect, cane type, leaves silver spotted, long-ovate, pointed, basal lobe squared rather than rounded. Flowers large, pendulous, soft pink. Found in moist gully in dense forest at 300 feet elevation. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. Brazil* sp. —

Six inch oblique, acuminate, glossy, dark green leaves. From steep banks in dense forest at 1000 ft. elevation south of Sao Sebastiao, near the coast. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 7 — *B. Brazil* sp. —

Described as being like *B. egregia* but has a pendant cluster of large flowers under the arching stem. Found 10 km south west of Sao Sebastiao in dense forest at 300-800 ft. elevation. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 8 — *B. Brazil* sp. —

Large, white flowers, oblique, shiny acuminate leaves to six inches wide, red on back. From dense forest on steep creek banks at 800-1200 ft. elevation, near the coast 10 km south west of Sao Sebastiao. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 9 — *B. Brazil* sp. —

Type unknown, from Cantareira ridge 10 km north of Sao Paulo. Price 25 cents per pkt.

No. 10 — B. Brazil sp. —

Bushy plant to eighteen inches tall with dark glossy, leaves covered with reddish-brown felt underneath. From wet rock cliff at km 349 on the road from Sao Paulo to Ribeira. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 11 — B. pariles—Brazil sp. —

Stems and branches soft-hairy, leaves velvet like in texture, olive-green, red at the margins, red flushed beneath; flowers pink or white. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Soon it will be the winter season in Brazil and we can not expect any more seed for a while. The Seed Fund is very appreciative of all the wonderful Brazil species that have come to us in the past few months. Only a true lover of Begonias would take the time and risks involved to collect and send seed to us, we are very grateful for this and hope every one who has gotten seeds will grow and enjoy something different. We hope to have most of them properly identified as some one is growing them with this in mind.

No. 12 — B. rotundifolia—

Haiti. Also called 'Pennyworth begonia'—Pygmy creeper stays terrarium-size almost indefinitely. Penny-shaped leaves, yellowish-green; flowers, pink. Price 25 cents per pkt.

No. 13 — B. 'China Boy' —

Fairly new, very pretty, smallish plant with white flowers. Price 25 cents per pkt.

No. 14 — B. hydrocotylifolia —

Mexico. Also called 'miniature pond lily begonia'. Terrarium-type creeper with round leaves, glossy and vein-shadowed. Flowers, pink in mid-winter. Price 25 cents per pkt.

No. 15 — B. sunderbruchi —

Old time favorite star begonia. Seven to nine fingered leaves are large, bronze-green, strikingly marked with light green veins and splotches, mottled red and green beneath. Two pealed pink flowers. Price 25 cents per pkt.

No. 16 — B. molecaulis syn. subvillosa —

Brazil. Velvety, oval leaves, green over and under; stems succulent.

Flowers white or pink. Price 25 cents

No. 17 — B. lubbersi —

Dark green, heavily silver-spotted leaves pointed at both ends, joined to petiole near the center of leaf. Large pink flowers. Price \$1.00 per pkt. Comment: We have seedlings of lubbersi grown from seed offered a few months ago; they are exactly like the description given here. They do not show their true form until they have grown about the fifth or sixth set of leaves, this is also true of B. luxurians and some of the other palmate types from Brazil. We have seen lubbersi seedlings grown by several people in this area and they are all alike with their boat-shaped, silver spotted leaves. Please do not condemn the seed until you have given them a fair chance.

Comment: Seedlings we are growing from the x-rayed semperflorens seeds are fabulous. The most interesting feature is that the shades of red all came very double, medium sized plants with all green leaves. Very bushy, compact with many double flowers with yellow stamens. A few pink shades came double but only one calla lily type appeared out of about fifty plants. We are watching the red doubles with a great deal of anticipation as there are many seed pods but the bees have been very active so anything can happen. It would be interesting to know if the second generation will produce so many doubles.

Greenhouse plants —

Crossandra infundibuliformis —

Glossy, Gardenia-like foliage, and flower spikes of overlapping clear salmon florets. Flowers in 7-8 months. Use rich, well drained soil and minimum of 65 degrees for best growth. Five seeds for 25 cents.

Platyserium grande —

Magnificent epiphyte with a regal crown of up-right spreading sterile fronds of glossy vivid green, the upper lobes doubly forked and staghorn like with dark venation, pendulous, forked pairs of fertile fronds appear with age, holding between them the wedge-shaped disk bearing the sporangia. Price 25 cents per pkt.

Round Robin News

HERB WARRICK, ROBIN DIRECTOR
6543 26TH AVENUE, N. E., SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98115

Our first specialty Flight is now on its way. As we approach the coming fall and winter we must look ahead to taking care of all of the wonderful plants that we have acquired during the summer. For those members who have chosen plants that rest during the winter the problems may seem relatively simple. However, 'resting' does not always mean complete freedom from temperature, moisture and light problems. Any rexes that rest, must be watched for proper temperature, moisture and light or their roots may die and in the spring they are very difficult to get started again. Most mature fuchsia plants must also be kept above freezing temperatures, have ample moisture and minimum light. If these plants are kept growing during the winter there are other special problems. Those folks who store begonia tubers during the winter may seem to have the easiest time of all. This is not actually true because the tubers must also be watched carefully or in the spring, dried up or rotted tubers will be the result. Apparently we always have problems with all types of plants. These problems merely shift with the seasons, depending on our locality and the types of our chosen plants.

In recent years there have been major improvements for members who have chosen the non-resting plants or those without definite dormant period. Many of us have limited areas in which we can grow the plants that will grow continuously. Add our problems of inadequate lighting to this and we are immediately in need of artificial or phytoillumination. Fluorescent lighting is making a major contribution in this field. We now have a Round Robin Flight for members who

wish to discuss plant culture under such lighting. Flight #25 with Rufus C. Neas of Greenville, S.C. as chairman is the first of these. The members of this Flight are all in the northern hemisphere with the same winter season. ABS members in the southern hemisphere may eventually want a Flight of this kind for their plants which are six months out of phase with the northern folks. Of course, if the growing space is in your basement or other indoor areas with limited lighting then fluorescent or incandescent lighting becomes a major requirement and a Round Robin Flight will permit you to compare notes with other members having similar conditions.

Another interesting news item this month concerns a fine story about Mrs. Edna Stewart, who is in Flight #20 and lives in Tarentum, Penn. Edna didn't hesitate to provide information, about Begonias, to the reporter of her local 'Valley Daily News'. They printed a fine 6" x 7" picture of Edna and 47" of news column. This is a fine example for all of us. Please take advantage of every opportunity to publicize begonias and other shade loving plants.

In Flight #15, Mrs. Freda Johansson of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, gave us an excellent story of her method of harvesting begonia seed which is relatively free of debris and chaff. Essentially, her method avoids the need of opening the seed pods. She trims off the three wings on each pod and then uses a small needle to insert into the open slot of the seed chambers to assist in dislodging any remaining seed without pulling out any internal chaff. However, in case she does break out any pieces of chaff she uses the moistened tip of a

toothpick to lift these pieces out of the seed. This is very clever. We are sorry that we do not have space this time for discussing seed testing or microscopically examining the seed to determine its maturity and germinating characteristics.

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Tuberous Begonia Report

By Gordon Baker Lloyd

(From a coming report to be given at the 2nd Annual Northern California Spring Garden Conference, February, 1966).

Home gardeners, various growers, contributed to this report on the growing of tuberous begonias in the three Western coastal states. Many questions were asked, and from these questions comes an up-to-the-minute report on what's "new" in the growing tuberous begonias.

Where should they be planted? Being very spectacular in bloom, everyone agreed they belong in masses by themselves for the best effect. If they are to be used with other shade lovers they should always be foremost in the plan, with other plants taking a back seat, so to speak. *Begonias with shrubs?* Yes if the soil is well prepared to avoid competition with shrub roots. Backgrounds of green shrubbery are wonderful to show off tuberous begonias. Such could be camellias, holly, myrtle and so on. In the northwest huge beds of tuberous begonias are frequently used against green backgrounds of well clipped hedges softening the formal effect of the hedge.

Begonias in beds or in triple rows, or in mass plantings, can be foregrounded with low growing flowers such as violas, the blue and white ones mak-

ing a very unusual color effect. The plantings, as edgings will vary of course depending upon the weather conditions. Try for a low annual or perennial that will bloom during tuberous time. If begonias are growing under trees, be sure the branches are high enough to let in light for good flowers. This is one of the popular places for growing begonias and often one of greatest failures due to lack of light for bloom production. Shallow roots of many trees take all the nourishment out of "under tree" production. If the only filtered sun spot is under a high branched tree, it is advisable to use begonias in pots. Home gardeners don't seem to realize that begonias do not grow under full shade but in light shade—"half shade" as it is called.

If the soils are heavy, as found in such areas as central California, they are better planted in raised beds, which applies to other shade plants as camellias, and azaleas. These raised areas need only be two brick high, ne redwood tie high, or in other words from 8 to 10 in. This area then can be filled with one of the popular outdoor planting mixes. In the use of used brick or natural brick, the red is pick-

(Continued on Page 212)

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BY BEE OLSON, 13715 CORDARY AVENUE
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Barbara Walker of Niles, Illinois—Flight 15 tells us about a “delayed development” experiment made with sphagnum moss. “On September 20th of 1964 I planted a large package of mixed begonia seed in a 1½ quart Pyrex glass casserole with a glass cover. There was about ½” of charcoal in the bottom, and 1” of milled sphagnum moss on top of that. I have been removing seedlings at my convenience for the last 9 months and have found no appreciable difference in the vigor or quality of the seedlings removed last week from those removed 9 months ago. Although I know much has been written about sphagnum’s qualities in this respect, I personally was much amazed at this extent of time, and I still have over 50 seedlings in the container. I intend to continue the experiment for a full year. The container has been 6” below Gro-Lux lamps for the 9 months and was only watered about once every 6 weeks with a weak Hyponex solution. One surprising note is that although I have had, on occasion, much difficulty with green algae and moss growing on sphagnum, when I have used plastic as a covering, I had none at all in this glass covered container in 9 months.”

★ ★ ★

Following up the above mention of growing under Gro-Lux lamps this report from Joanne Fosselman of Newport, Penn. Flight 17 is of interest: “I was at Penn State last week and visited their greenhouses. They do not grow begonias (shall I complain to the Governor?). They do research for the commercial greenhouse industry and concentrate most of their work on geraniums. I talked with the professor in charge about Gro-Lamps. They have one room of them. It costs them \$8,000.00 a year. He says home growers do not use enough bulbs. They

have theirs practically touching each other and run them from 16 to 18 hours a day. He says that mature plants do not do well because they get too much light on the leaves but not enough on the roots. They also use a plastic curtain, white on the inside, to reflect light back on the plants.”

★ ★ ★

Evelyn Franklin of Flight 6 found the following notes from the September '58 Begonian and passed them along for you: “Mrs. Sam Payne, Oklahoma writes of an interesting ‘new fertilizer’. In the margin of a house plant book originally owned by the late Febe Kellenberger, Mrs. Payne noted something that indicates that Kellenberger fed her African violets once a month with one-half teaspoon of baking powder mixed in a quart of tepid water. Mrs. Payne says ‘This was new to me, but remembering the specimen plants she grew, I got my can of Calumet. The ingredients are listed—inert baking soda and corn starch; chemical ingredients; sodium sulphate, calcium sulphate and calcium acid phosphate.’ I mixed a batch of this in a gallon jar and let it set until the corn starch and soda settled to the bottom. Then with a cup ladle I dipped the liquid off the top and gave some backward leaf cuttings a treatment. They have made rapid rich green growth, apparent in three weeks’ time. This is not wishful thinking either.” Another suggestion that Mrs. Kellenberger notated in her book was to dust succulent cuttings with charcoal dust, and to let them cure a few days before potting them in dry builders’ sand.

★

Norma Darragh Flight No. 6 advises: “Six years ago I grew tuberous begonias for the first time,

knowing nothing about the culture. I took 6" pots and filled them with garden soil, cow manure, charcoal, rough sand and rotted leaves—made a hole in the center of this mix, inserted the tuber, just letting the very top stay uncovered. Then I placed my pots in old wash tubs which had holes in the bottoms and placed these under a 4 ft. high shelter of boards outside against the south side of a shed. They got morning and afternoon sun but were sheltered from rain. I planted these in February and can say I had show plants until June when the heat rose to the 80's and daily rain started. When they started blooming I put them under a pear tree where they got only afternoon sun. I had to stake them for the plants could not hold the weight of the blossoms. Needless to say, when I have tried to grow the plants in a more correct manner according to the books, and all I wind up with is rotted tubers. I am going to try again this year with my old method and see if I can repeat my success. "Norma lives in Covington, La.

★ ★ ★

What experiments have proved successful for you? Share them with us please.

As a closing thought I would like to share with you the following poem included in a robin by our good member Rufus Neas of Greenville, S.C.:

WHY FLOWERS WERE MADE

Martha Corrine Love

God might have made this lovely earth

Without a flower at all . . .

He had a wealth of other things,

Enough for great and small.

But He made them with His own hands

and dyed them with rainbow light,

That they in modest grace could be

Upspringing day and night;

Through the cycles of the seasons

To bloom on the lowland plain,

And high upon the green

mountains,

Refreshed by dew and rain.

Our daily life requires them not,

Then why were they given birth?

God meant them to delight mankind

and beautify His earth . . .

To please the eye, to ease the heart,

To give hope when faith grows dim,

Knowing those that cared for

flowers

Would care much more for Him!

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Tuberous Begonia Report . . .

(Continued from Page 209)

ed up beautifully in the begonia stem. Darker building blocks, and even adobe blocks can be used. One home gardener used for many years a slightly curved edging made of cedar shakes driven into the ground.

The most popular container, from cool to hot areas, seemed to be wooden tubs or boxes. They apparently held the moisture the best and fit into the natural feeling of the garden. The longest lasting boxes were made of cedar, some boxes being found in the gold country over 100 years of age!

If your begonia bed seems to be a little "heavy" and needs "lightening" in your own feeling, then use back grounds of medium height ferns. Choose the ones hardy for your area. They lighten the begonia bed very quickly and love the same conditions. Many begonia growers plant begonias in front of camellias, azaleas and rhododendrons as an edging, using clumps of them, to give color in the off season of their backgrounds.

What about soil? In all three of the Western coastal states, begonia planting mixes are found that provide good drainage, hold moisture and release humidity. These are very practical for the gardener who does not want to mix their own. Many begonia growers are using a special fuschia mix found in the California central valleys that work nicely for tuberous begonias. About half of those surveyed plant in the finest of good straight leaf mold, not on the coarse side. Others are using half and half mixes of rotted redwood sawdust and leaf mold. One popular mix is made of redwood leaf mold, redwood rotted and leached sawdust (for one year) and several other ingredients. Areas are dug out of the well drained grounds about 8 inches deep and are filled with this mix.

In any instance, soil must be well drained, or use containers or raised beds. Moisture must pass through easily, and yet enough held for the plant's use. It was observed that in

nearly all instances no soil, as such, was used in the mixes. Some did use from one fourth to one-third proportions of light loam with equal proportions of leaf mold and peat moss. When it all boiled down each one was trying to get a good growing condition for their own particular garden use. Some areas, when peat was used, held too much water because of their weather. Others in very dry areas had to use peat to bring up the water holding quality. It was suggested by everyone to observe what other begonia growers were doing in each given area or "micro-climate."

What about watering? Begonias require no more water than the average shade plant. They hate wet feet! Water merely to keep the soil moist. Set your own schedule by feeling into the soil area. In dry areas humidity must be provided. In inland areas humidity will often get down to ranges of 5 to 15, and begonias like the humidity range of 50 to 60. Humidity can be provided with fine spray, fogging, mulching, and sloshing surrounding areas to raise the moisture content in the air. This is one reason why some of the largest and brightest blooms are found in bay and coastal areas. With the new foggers and fogging equipment, wonderful flowers can be produced in drier areas.

How about feeding? Without exception for the home gardener, use an acid food, if possible in liquid form. Feeding begins on seedlings when 3 to 4 inches high. Begins on tubers when they are well established, and some felt only when buds begin to show. The tuber is somewhat like a potato with plenty of food storage. Begonia needs food only when this storage begins to run out and roots are well established. You can tell when a tuberous begonia needs feeding for the leaves get light green, begin to cup upward. If they are dark green and leaves crimp the other way don't feed any longer. About 5 per cent of those surveyed use dry food but are very careful in its use, and do not suggest that beginners use dry materials. The others used a liquid food which they

felt was easier to apply and gave completely freedom, when used according to directions, from any type of root burn.

All agreed that liquid formulas could be cut in half and used twice as often. If the directions said a tablespoon to the gallon monthly, use half the amount every two weeks. Nearly half of those feeding with liquids were feeding every week to ten days with very small amounts of food. It was also interesting to note that even in Washington where soils are on the acid side a California acid liquid food was giving the best results!

What about blossom drop? Everyone agreed that this can come from overwatering, too much shade, too warm weather without proper humidity. In very warm weather in valley areas they were misted twice daily to cool plants. In some instances just very hot weather regardless of humidity can cause blossom drop.

About pests and diseases: Mildew is the greatest problem. Several commercial names could be mentioned but the best is to check with your dealer on control for powdery mildew. Keep foliage dry by nightfall and this will help to prevent its spread. Warm days with water over night, followed by a warm day brings on mildew in heavy amounts. Dusting with sulphur sometimes is unsightly and sulphur to work also depends on very definite temperatures. It is also not effective when mildew forms. It is better to use on all purpose spray, or specific mildew spray as a preventive rather than a cure.

Some other pests do bother begonias, like in the Northwest, the strawberry weevil is a definite pest. By your own area you should check on the special problems. It is amazing when you get right down to it, how free the tuberous begonias are from bothersome special pests. Look out for snails. The survey showed most folks felt it is better to band a bed rather than put snail control near the plant where it does not do much good. Good snail controls draw snails.

Fifty percent liked pellets, 50 per cent liked meal types. I personally use a non-poisonous meal from the northwest that has a base that rain and watering cannot wash out.

Tuberous begonias? Absolutely! Everyone should grow them — patio, garden, in pots or in the ground!

OCTOBER CALENDAR

October 7 — Whittier Branch. Bingo Party at the Whittier Youth Center, Palm Park, 743 North Palm. Lots of good prizes.

October 7 — Westchester Branch. Lydia Birt will talk on "Flowers of Hawaii".

October 8—San Gabriel Valley Branch — Rudolf Ziesenhenne on "Begonias" This is a rare opportunity to hear one of the leading authorities on all phases of begonia culture.

November Dates

November 4 — Westchester Branch — "Home talent night." Talks by members on their special plants.

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GRACE YERICK, *Show Chairman*

Branch Directory

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT THESE MEETINGS

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

BUXTON, BESSIE RAYMOND BRANCH

3rd Saturday, Homes of Members
Mrs. Percy Merry, Secy.
109 Brookside Rd., Needham 92, 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.

EASTSIDE BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Natural Gas Co. Building
Crossroads Shopping Center, Bellevue, Wash.
Lola C. Donahue, Secy.
2508-108th St. N.E., Bellevue, Wash.

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
Mrs. Isabel A. Hall
358 E. Arrow Highway, Upland, 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
Mildred Radcliffe, Corresponding Secretary
1607 Kenneth, Glendale, 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, Loloita, Calif.
Miss Margaret Smith, Secy.
P.O. Box 635, Ferndale, Calif.

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Business and Professionals Women's Club
820 Java St., Inglewood, Calif.
Mrs. Frances Jean, Secy.
8212 Reading Ave., Los Angeles 45, Calif.

KNICKERBOCKER BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.
Library, Horticultural Society of N.Y.
157 West 58th St., New York
Luis Lopez, Corr. Secy.
421 East 64th St.
New York, N.Y. 10021

LONG BEACH PARENT CHAPTER

3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Social Hall of Community Savings and Loan,
3901 Atlantic
Mrs. Mabel Gage, Secy.
3214 Delmar Ave., Long Beach 7, Calif.

LOUISIANA CAPITAL BRANCH

1st Friday, Sear's Garden Center
6201 Florida St., Baton Rouge
Mrs. Louis Sicard, Secy.
4520 Clark St., Baton Rouge, La. 70811

MIAMI BRANCH

4th Tuesday 8:00 P.M.
Simpson Memorial Garden Center
Miss Rosemond Meriweather, Secy.
1552 Plascentia Ave., Coral Gables, Florida

MISSOURI BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 11 a.m.
Member's Homes
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
Ruby Tessier, Secy.
1625 Appleton
Apt. H Long Beach, Calif. 90802

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Garden Grove Grange Hall, Century and Taft Sts.
Garden Grove, Calif.
Maybelle L. Woods, Secy.
604 S. Helena St.,
Anaheim, California, 92805.

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.
Opal Murray Ahern, Secy.
1304 N. Poinsettia Ave., Manhattan Beach, Calif.

RHODE ISLAND BRANCH

1st Saturday, Homes of Members
Mary E. Tourgee, Secy.
92 Rodman St., Peace Dale, R.I. 02833

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, 12 noon, 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.
Miss Marie E. Smith, Secy.
5218 J St., Sacramento, Calif. 95819

SAN DIEGO BRANCH

4th Monday, Barbour Hall
2717 University Ave., San Diego
Mrs. Nellie Castillo, Secy.
5443 Bonita Dr., San Diego, Calif. 92114

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. Ruth Eppley
 9133 E. Longden Ave., Temple City, Calif.

SAN MIGUEL BRANCH

1st Wednesday, Youth Center, Lemon Grove, Calif.
 Mrs. Irene Cretin, Secy.
 3060 Crane St., Lemon Grove, Calif.

SANTA BARBARA BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
 Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
 2559 Puesta Del Sol
 Mrs. A. D. Yost
 888 La Milpita Rd., Santa Barbara

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. Truman Stearns, Sec.
 230 E. Vince St.
 Ventura, Calif.

SMOKEY VALLEY BRANCH

2nd Monday of each month
 Mrs. Lyle L. Melvin, Secy.
 833 E. Jewell, Salina Kansas 67401

SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
 Lorenzo Manor School
 18250 Bengal Ave., Hayward, Calif.
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