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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 no-
menclature of begonias; to gather and publish in-
formation 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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★ ★ ★

Views expressed in this magazine are not
necessarily those of the Editor, the Society, or
its officers.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Remember we have two important events coming along, they are:

THE EASTERN REGIONAL CONVENTION AND FLOWER SHOW to be held at HOLIDAY INN, NEW KENSINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA, JULY 29 and 30.

Next on the Calendar: THE NATIONAL CONVENTION AND FLOWER SHOW to be held at the LOS ANGELES STATE AND COUNTY ARBORETUM, 301 N. BALDWIN AVE., ARCADIA, CALIFORNIA, SEPTEMBER 3-4-5.

With these two Flower Shows and Conventions, ALL members can participate in some way.

Take pictures, groom your begonias, plan your arrangements, prepare your projects, etc., and enter them.

Remember the dates and plan your vacations JULY 29-30 EASTERN, SEPTEMBER 3-4-5, WESTERN.

MURIEL PERZ
Your President

BEGONIA IDENTIFICATION

"Help! Help!" pleads the identification garden chairman.

A request of the whereabouts of Begonia 'Suretta' is sought by a member. This is not exactly in my department. However, it is interesting to note that A. D. Robinson did not list this begonia in his catalog of the '20's, but Helen K. Krauss listed it in her book as a Robinson creation (cultivar) of 1934.

Anyone knowing of the whereabouts of this begonia is urged to contact me.

A request to identify — sight unseen — a creeping rhizomatous begonia that produces bulbils in the leaf axels has me stumped. Do any of you know about such a begonia? If you do, let me hear from you.

It's these curves that make this task interesting.

—DOROTHY S. BEHREND, S.
Identification Garden Director

RESEARCH REPORT

The Research Department has chosen the *Begonia Semperflorens* group as its feature this month and thus will begin the report with a few recent developments and findings.

Recent literature: The greatest contribution to the literature and knowledge of this group appeared in *Euphytica* 11, (1962). This report was prepared by A. E. Zeilinga of the Institute of Horticultural Plant Breeding, Wageningen, Holland. It includes a concise history of the group and a minute study of all the cultivated types available at that time commercially around the world. The difference between a *B. semperflorens* and a *B. semperflorens gracilis* is explained. A complete list of chromosome number and other cytological details is included. A copy of "Cytological Investigation of Hybrid Varieties of *Begonia Semperflorens*" should be a valuable part of every hybridist's library.

A New Variety: Jack N. Clark of the Clark Nursery in Charlotte, North Carolina, announced recently that they are offering a fine new semperflorens, *B. 'Sweet Theresa'*. This is a sport of *B. semp. 'Lady Francis'* and has extremely dark pink flowers. This fine new double flowering begonia promises to be a popular plant in the years to come.

Test Gardens: I wish to thank A. Manniche of L. Daehnfeldt, Ltd., Odense, Denmark, for the gift of semperflorens seed. This seed is now being raised by members of the Research Committee and a complete report will appear in this column soon.

Feature Request: Mrs. Ruth Pease of Los Angeles has sent a request that *B. listida* be researched for a
(Continued on Page 97)

COVER PICTURE

Begonia 'Gigi Fleetham' — grown by Mrs. Ernesta D. Ballard, Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania.

—Photo by HERTHA A. BENJAMIN

NEW SEMPERFLORENS FROM DENMARK

By ROBERT L. SHATZER
A.B.S. Research Director

The following article is from Mr. A. Manniche of the firm of L. Daehnfeldt, Ltd. of Odense, Denmark.

Mr. Manniche kindly gave the Research Committee generous samples of his *semperflorens* seeds to try in our test gardens. Most of these varieties had never been grown in America before, and this was the world-wide introduction for some of them.

A follow-up report will appear in a later issue giving the results of their growing in widely scattered parts of the United States.

The *Begonia semperflorens* has become more and more popular among flower growers all over the world because of its many fine qualities. It is — as the name *semperflorens* indicates — everblooming, and is therefore used extensively for planting in groups both in private gardens and in parks. In addition, it is being used as a pot plant because it is very frugal and produces a multitude of flowers.

It is no wonder, therefore, that many seed firms have seen the great possibilities in this plant from a breeding point of view and have taken interest in the creation of new varieties.

If you examine the flowers of *Begonia semperflorens* closely, you may find both male and female flowers on each plant (monoecious). This fact caused the breeders to investigate the possibility of producing F.1 seeds also from *Begonia semperflorens*, especially because there are many instances of varieties — i. g. corn, tomato, cucumber, and onion — which, when grown on F.1 basis, are more hardy, vigorous and rich-blooming than varieties grown on common seed-constant types.

This work was started by the German seed firm Benary, and the first F.1 begonia was put on the market by this firm in 1909-1910 under the name *Begonia heterosis* 'Primadonna'.

Benary continued this work with the raising of F.1 begonias and since then has introduced a whole series of varieties, of which the best known probably are 'Weisse Tausendschon', 'Rosa Tausendschon', and 'Rote Tausendschon'.

Also other German firms have been occupied with the F.1 breeding of *Begonia semperflorens*.

During the Second World War, this breeding work came to a standstill. The old flower seed center, Erfurt, fell into the hands of the Russians and became situated in the East Zone. Several old German flower seed firms moved to the West Zone with the rest of their staffs, and what was left of the parent material for their strains, but much valuable material was lost.

After 1945, L. Daehnfeldt, Odense, Denmark, started a breeding work with *Begonia semperflorens*, and it soon became evident that the cool and rainy Danish climate was exceptionally well suited for this breeding work. It was possible to eliminate all not-resistant and non-rainproof types very quickly, and the result has been a series of exceedingly hardy and rich-blooming varieties which are very resistant to poor weather.

The first result of this breeding work was *Begonia* 'Bella', which was introduced in 1953. This begonia has not been surpassed by any other rose begonia.

During the breeding work it became apparent that the begonias could be divided into two groups, viz. a *Begonia semperflorens* group and a *Begonia semperflorens gracilis* group.

The first group is distinguished by having comparatively few but big flowers, and by being diploid. The latter group has smaller flowers, is very rich-blooming and is tetraploid.

'Albert Martin', 'Firesea', and 'Paris Market' are examples of diploid *Be-*



House with father plants



House with mother plants of F.1 begonia for seed production.



Close-up of hand pollination

gonia semperflorens types, whereas Begonia 'Luminosa Compacta' and 'Boix de Vaux' are examples of tetraploid *Begonia semperflorens gracilis* types.

By means of different crossings it was discovered that the best results regarding hardy, rich-blooming and large-flowering types were obtained by producing triploid types. This is achieved by using inbred tetraploid lines for mothers and pure raised diploid types for fathers. This crossing is sterile and cannot be reproduced. At the same time, it has proved that the combination tetraploid x diploid is a rather poor seeder and must therefore be expensive, but inasmuch as these triploid varieties are superior to the old begonia varieties in regard to both beauty and hardiness, and taking into consideration the fact that one gram contains 50,000 to 75,000 seeds, the price should be of secondary importance.

Our continuous breeding work resulted in the variety 'Gracia' in 1958. This variety represented a pink color which, at that time, did not exist in the assortment.

In 1960 came the scarlet counterpart to 'Bella'. We called it 'Scarletta'.

In 1962 we introduced 'Linda'. It is slightly lower and more rich-blooming than 'Bella'. The color is salmon-rose whereas 'Bella' is vivid rose. 'Linda' will probably become a severe competitor to the old variety 'Rosa Tausendschon' on account of its hardiness and profusion of flowers.

Through crossing of many different inbred lines, and after testing these combinations, this extensive work finally in 1965 resulted in the following varieties:

'Viva' is pure white, low, and compact and, in our opinion, beats all other existing white varieties of this type.

'Rosalia' is a delightful, warm-pink rose color. It is low and compact, very uniform and rich-flowering, and will

(Continued on Page 96)

GROWING BEGONIAS IN THREE-INCH POTS

By LILY C. FINE

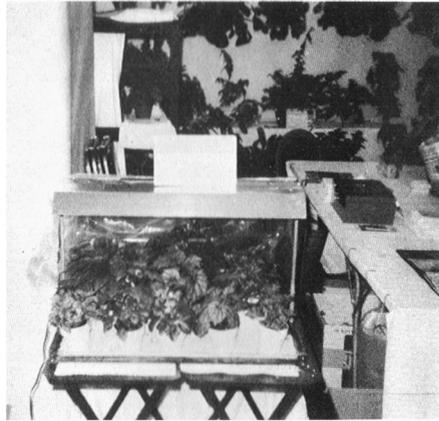
As a member of the Knickerbocker Branch of the A.B.S., I was fortunate to participate in the 1966 International Flower Show in New York City. Since I am an apartment grower with limited space and facilities, most of my plants are grown under lights, confined, as far as possible, to three-inch pots.

The majority of plants exhibited by our top-notch growers are huge, beautiful, greenhouse-grown specimens. Naturally, I could not enter my own comparatively minuscule pets in competition with those. However, my beloved friend, the sage and resourceful Belva Kusler, suggested that I enter a group of begonias in three-inch pots as a special educational exhibit. This I did, selecting eleven plants, representative of every type I grow.

The plants, all in pristine white plastic pots, were arranged in three rows under a 2-light 20-watt fixture with Gro-Lux lamps, as follows (a printed sign atop the fixture identified them by name):

1. Back — 'Lawrence H. Fewkes', 'Sophie Cecile', 'Sachsen'.
2. Center — 'Philippine Islands', 'Rex American Beauty', 'Scharffi'.
3. Front — 'Dancing Girl', 'Weltoniensis', Semp. 'Tausendschoen', 'It', 'Cleopatra'.

The exhibit was set up adjoining our information booth and the response of the viewing public was very gratifying, as indicated by the many questions asked about sources of plants and light-fixture, culture of the individual plants, and the like. The reason for the interest shown was apparent. Although the large plants were viewed in awe and admiration, the viewers realized that such achievements were beyond their resources. But anyone with a mere two square feet of table space could attempt to



Educational Exhibit in 1966 International Flower Show in New York.

duplicate the small set-up. Since most of us here in the city are apartment dwellers, with space at a premium, and with sill-less windows, the yearning to grow plants is frequently unappeased. Here, then, was the ideal solution, and if we have succeeded in "showing the light" to even a few, our efforts will not have been in vain.

Following are the methods used to keep the plants within bounds:

1. Pinch rooted cuttings and young plants when three to four inches tall to promote stocky, bushy growth.
2. Continue to pinch and prune to keep plants symmetrical and compact, as growth progresses.
3. Root-prune when the root mass can no longer be contained in the three-inch pot. Prune top growth to balance.
4. Pot in *lean* soil or planting mix and feed very lightly, keeping plants on the dry side.
5. Keep in smallest pots as long as possible.
6. For immediate effect, plant several small rooted cuttings in one pot.
7. Select varieties with interesting foliage, since frequent pinching and pruning tend to delay flowering.
8. Root new cuttings frequently to replace old, overgrown plants.

PLANT HUNTER'S PARADISE

By ROBERT C. THOMAS

Uruapan, Michoacan, Mexico

While Mexico is blessed with many areas which abound in exotic plants growing wild in their natural habitat, many of these require that the hunter have a rugged constitution and make much preparation to get at them. However, I have found the "Mesa Tarascan" the one place that is easily accessible and with a year 'round climate which is never too hot or too cold. With its many springs and subsequent streams, most begonias survive even during the dry season.

One need only to stroll through these open pine and oak forests to marvel at the ruggedness of this plant which is able to thrive clinging to a bare rock with no visible means of support. In fact, the ardent flower lover finds so many distractions viewing not only the begonias, but the ferns, lilies, orchids, and bromelias, that he is always delayed in reaching his destination.

After a brief period of glory during the advent of volcano Paracutin, the area around Uruapan has again relapsed into obscurity. This, in spite of the fact that it is easily accessible by auto, train or plane. Uruapan itself (5,000 ft. altitude) still retains many of its old mansions with their two or three hidden patios ablaze in flowering potted plants, although the trend in new construction is modern, cracker-box style of housing. In the market one finds many choice little plants brought down from the surrounding high mountains (7,500 to 9,000 ft. alt.).

Here at our Hacienda de Zirimicuaro just seven miles distant one drops 1,000 ft. approaching it. The name "Zirimicuaro" in Tarascan language is supposed to mean "where the hot climate meets the cold" since immediately beyond, the land drops to the coastal plain with an altitude of 1,000 ft. We are blessed with an

average temperature of 68 degrees with an occasional winter low of 53 degrees, and the highest temperature recorded was 84 degrees in the shade. In short, with cool summers and mild winters we can grow all of these plants out-of-doors with great success.

At Zirimicuaro we have a unique area called the "malpais", which is the remnant of a long extinct volcano and consists of many rocks from packing-box size to that of an automobile, distributed as if a child had tossed his building blocks in a pile. Since the area abounds with many cold water springs, over the centuries a type of vegetation has grown up completely different from the surrounding countryside. One wonders where these plants originated and there must certainly be many rare mutations which have developed distinct varieties of their own.

One must see a tiny 'angel-wing' begonia clinging to a rock while below at its feet grows a huge purple-leaved begonia of another type, to appreciate their ruggedness. Many of these appear to go dormant and die down during the winter. During the rainy season they are at the height of their glory. July and August are the best months for the would-be explorer. Then again, a trip high in the mountains of the pine forests will disclose other, equally interesting types. One can combine plant hunting with archeology since there are numerous unexplored pre-Tarascan temples which the natives shun out of superstition.

Recently a number of American families have moved to Uruapan but most of these are fugitives from the high prices and fast living that our compatriots are rapidly making untenable, in such more publicized spots as Cuernavaca, Taxco, and Mexico

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MOVING HOUSEPLANTS IN WINTER STORM?

Here Is One Way

By BARBARA WALKER

We had a time moving — including some 400 pots — from Illinois to Indiana in a mid-winter snowstorm! The movers threatened to strike and were sent two days early. We had to stay at a motel two extra days. But we had very good luck moving most of my plants. Here is how we did it.

For a couple of months I took cuttings of most of the big plants and rooted them in two-and-a-half-inch pots. I gave the big plants away to neighbors and friends, except for a few that are very slow growers or take many years to bloom.

The moving company supplied us (at a price) with boxes that are usually used for packing books, and with a large roll of rippled corrugated stripping. My husband, Bob, wrapped each plant in the corrugated stripping and stapled it closed, then packed plants tightly, standing upright in the cartons. He then sealed the cartons airtight with tape. This did an excellent job of protecting plants from icy drafts that rushed in every time we opened the car door.

Bob rented a covered luggage trailer and put the back seat of our car, our luggage, and a few cartons of potted garden perennials into the trailer. He then packed the trunk and back of the car from floor to ceiling with cartons of plants and our tropical fish. We were pretty crowded, and we drove away from the house in a terrific snowstorm. It was 5 above zero.

The only fly in the ointment was that, even with the back seat out, heat would not go into the trunk. We had the back so full of boxes that not enough heat could get in, and I lost most of the plants in the trunk. They were frost-bitten pretty badly.

I can't say enough about the insulating value of the corrugated stripping and the way the plants were packed, for those in the car proper were just

fine; those that were blooming were still blooming when they were unpacked. A few big buckets of plants were just put in loosely, not boxed, and they were badly stung by drafts.

My greatest loss was begonias and fuchsias. I didn't lose one gesneriad or any of my other houseplants, since none happened to be in boxes in the trunk. I lost almost all the species seedlings that were doing so well — but I have more seed, so I'll replace them soon.

All in all, I managed to get about 400 pots here all right, most of them two-and-a-half-inch pots — and about 200 different kinds of begonias made it. I am very thankful.

In Memoriam

The Foothill Branch was saddened by the death of two of its charter members. A. B. (Scotty) Clarke passed away on December 15; his wife, Gladys F. Clarke, followed on January 4. Both were faithful workers in the Begonia Society for many years. Mrs. Clarke, who loved begonias, grew many varieties and fine specimen plants in a beautiful garden at their home in Upland, California.

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The February passing of Miss Fanny McIlvaine, past-president and beloved member of the William Penn Branch, is a loss felt by all who were familiar with her enthusiasm and fine spirit of cooperation. She was a member of this Branch for about ten years. She will be remembered for her warm friendliness, her eager participation in all undertakings, and her skill in rooting cuttings in all classes.

Patronize Our Advertisers



Educational Exhibit staged by the Elsa Fort Branch, A.B.S., in the Spring Flower Show, sponsored by The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in Philadelphia, March 12-17.

1966 Awards Nominations

It is the time of year to be thinking about the two big awards that the American Begonia Society presents annually.

The first award is the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award, to be presented to a *person* who has done an outstanding literary job on the subject of begonias, or an outstanding job in the matter of creating or sustaining good will among persons interested in begonias.

To be eligible for this award it is not necessary for the nominee to be a member of the American Begonia Society.

The second award is the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Medal to be presented for a begonia cultivar — a *plant*.

To be eligible for this award the plant must be registered with the American Begonia Society—the plant's originator must be a member of the American Begonia Society — and the plant must have been available to the public for at least five years. Any plant meeting all of these require-

ments is eligible to compete for the Alfred D. Robinson Memorial Medal.

Please send your nominations for these two awards to the Awards Committee as soon as possible.

The Awards Committee for 1966 consists of:

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STARTING CUTTINGS OF THE SOCOTRANA HYBRIDS (OR CHRISTMAS BEGONIAS)

By MRS. WILLIAM C. HEGINBOTHAM
Saxonburg, Pennsylvania

If you have winter bloomers that have bloomed and have no more flowers but seem to be resting, keep them watered so that they do not dry out. If they get dry, they will die.

Toward spring, when days get longer and warmer, the old stems will start to look fresh and green, showing signs of starting to grow. Cut off some of these old stems that have nice leaves (those that are not pale or yellow). Cut these stems between leaves with one leaf attached to each piece of stem. Dip stems in Rootone and plant them in vermiculite one and one-half to two inches deep. Always keep them damp but not soggy, and never allow them to get too dry.

The cuttings will root and sprout where the leaf attaches to the stem. Little plants will grow from this point. Keep them growing in the rooting medium until little plants are about one or two inches high, or when roots are about an inch long. They are then ready to be potted in soil suitable for begonias. Let what rooting medium that clings to the roots stay on them.

I started about 25 or more plants this way last summer (1965). I started these leaves in a plastic pan about six or eight inches wide and two and one-half feet long and six or seven inches deep, filled with damp vermiculite. Nearly all of these produced plants. The leaves which I planted without the piece of stem attached did not do very well and about half of them rotted. The ones that did grow took far longer to produce a strong plant.

If you want to keep the old plant, it will grow again after resting. Do not cut it off too closely to the ground for cuttings because it may die. I think it is better not to take off too many starts at one time if you want to keep the old plant.

The plants will be warmer and thus root faster placed upstairs out of drafts, especially when you do not have a greenhouse available. When I took those plants upstairs that had not been growing very well in the winter, they started to grow much faster and got buds in a very short time. I have decided that these plants do better in upstairs windows because the one parent, *B. socotrana*, is a native of the Socotra Island. This area is a small, hot, sandy island in the Pacific Ocean east of Africa and south of Arabia near the Gulf of Aden.

This has been my experience with these *B. socotrana* hybrids. I hope that other Begonians will write of their experiences with these plants.

HAWTHORNE GARDEN CLUB

presents its

Annual Flower Show

"FLOWER WONDERLAND"

Saturday and Sunday

June 11 and 12

HAWTHORNE MEMORIAL CENTER

3901 El Segundo Boulevard
Hawthorne, California

featuring

Arrangements — Cut Flowers — Specimen Blooms — Potted Plants — Baskets — Wall Pockets — Begonias — Ferns — Fuchsias — Geraniums — A Variety of Flowers — Fruits and Vegetables

*There will be plants for sale.
Refreshments will be served.*

Everett Wright — Show Chairman

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND FLIGHT

No. 1 — *B. sudjanae*-Jans. —

Thick, short stem, more or less creeping. The petioles are erect or suberect, 10-18 cm long, round, densely pilose (shaggy). The entirely light green leaves are unsymmetrically peltate, ovate and acuminate to cuspidate. Both the leaf surfaces are covered with still hairs, below more concentrated to the nerves. Further, the lamina is concentrically wrinkled round the navel, from which the nerves extend in all directions and reach the margin in distinct teeth somewhat bent downwards.

The white and rather small flowers are arranged in cymes and have a varying number of petals, from two to four petals in male flowers, and from two to three petals in female flowers. The yellow stamens of the male flowers are united in one group by conation of their filaments.

As already mentioned, *B. subjanae* belongs to the section *reichenheimia*. Though well separated from *B. goegoensis* N. Br. of the same section, in many respects it shows near-relationship with this species. It does not require especially humid conditions and shows a good growth and flowering in ordinary central-heated rooms.

For best results, grow it in a rather shaded condition. Exposed to intense sunshine, the leaves show clear signs of chlorosis. *B. sudjanae* is beautifully shaped and attractive, though it is not of the same decorative quality as *B. goegoensis*.

The man who discovered this begonia has sent a fair amount of seed. Although he has many places for his seed, he always remembers the Seed Fund. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. vellozoana* —

Brazil. Sensational species rivaling *B. masoniana* in beauty and popularity. Dark green taffeta leaves are accented by light veins and ethereal pink tinges. White flowers, hairy outside, on tall spikes. Rhizomes creep and will root at stipules. One of the

easiest begonias from seed. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. rex* sp —

Himalaya. Seed came to us from India via a friend of long standing who resides in Germany. Unfortunately, we do not read German, and can only guess that seeds are from all types of *rex* that grow in the Himalaya mountains of India. \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 4 — *B. deliciosa* —

Syn. *B. Bhotan* sp. Borneo. Upright, branched, with untypical rhizome-like stem which hides beneath the soil surface. Leaves are deeply palmately lobed, dark olive-green heavily gray-spotted, red beneath. Very large flowers, soft pink, usually in two-flowered inflorescences. Many fresh, hand-pollinated seeds. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. villipetiola* —

Panama. Medium; rhizomes pro-cumbent, very thick. Petioles long and hairy, leaves ovate-pointed, margins red-flushed, toothed, and ciliate. Flowers white in cymose clusters. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. sparsipila* —

Central America. Upright type, completely covered with a coat of fine felt. Pink flowers. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 7 — *B. 'Leo Rowan'* —

A hybrid by Ruby Budd of Los Angeles. Leaf a shallow star, 8 inches by 11 inches in size, with a petiole 16 to 18 inches long, which is sparsely scaled and shows a large collar of three rows of scales. The leaves are smooth, medium green, undersides flushed red. The small, pale pink flowers are in clusters on 10 to 16 inch peduncles in the leaf axils, and bloom in early spring. This plant should be useful in a hanging basket or a wall pocket. 35 cents per pkt.

(Seeds of the last two mentioned are very fine and all of the chaff could not be removed without wasting seed. Please excuse it.)

No. 8 — *B. 'Bessie Buxton'* —

Upright-growing form of the "pond-

lily" begonia, with similar leaves, pink flowers. Likes to grow dry. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 9 – B. 'Verschaffelti' –

(*manicata* x *carolineafolia*). Handsome, stately, large, with ascending rhizome. Thick, wavy, round leaves slightly cut to six points. Clear pink flowers. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 10 – B. 'Angie' –

No description available. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 11 – B. 'Red Dash' –

No description available. 25 cents per pkt.

No. 12 – B. Mixed –

Today we received a huge package from the East, labeled "begonia seed" – nothing else. You may want to try these seeds, but we have no idea what they will produce, maybe something different that you don't have, or perhaps *semperflorens*. 25 cents per pkt.

GREENHOUSE PLANTS

***Catasetum fimbriatum* –**

Orchidaceae. Brazil. Epiphyte with pseudobulbs bearing several lanceolate, ribbed leaves. Fragrant, fleshy flowers in semi-erect to pendant racemes, yellowish-green with reddish spots, the lip fan-like, yellowish and fringed. Sow seeds on *Osmunda* fiber or shredded fern wood. Keep them warm and moist. 35 cents per pkt.

***Lucopodium microphyllum* –**

Brazil. Unusual climbing fern with thin, hard leaves; sporangia form a fringe on the edges, giving an ostrich-feather-like appearance. Very beautiful and rare. 35 cents per pkt.

***Streptocarpus rexi* –**

Small, fibrous-rooted, stemless plant with long, narrow, quilted, and pubescent leaves in a rosette hugging the ground; and several flower stalks bearing trumpets of pale lavender lined with purple in the throat. 35 cents per pkt.

***Platynerium willinckii* –**

A distinct epiphyte with uneven, forked basal leaves and densely silvery-pubescent fertile fronds, erect at first, completely pendant later, very

narrow and several times forked into long, slender lobes. sporangia bearing at the tips. Beautiful and exotic. 50 cents per pkt.

***Platynerium alcicorne* of 'Wilhelmina Regina' –**

Distinct from *bifurcatum* in having the fertile fronds shorter, more rigidly erect, and bright green, widening to short forks, 2-3 lobed, lightly recurving, thinly hairy, sori borne on last forks and on an area below their sinus. The young basal fronds are rounded, becoming somewhat crenulate with age, prolonged above with a few finger-like lobes. 50 cents per pkt.

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Seed Fund Administrator
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ROUND ROBIN NEWS

Spring fever has touched the robins! Seedlings are sprouting all over, in both general and specialty flights. Ruth Zeman of Charlotte, North Carolina, delights in the adventure of buying seed from the seed fund, "which some missionary found growing wild in Brazil or Africa," and watching it grow in her own garden.

Seed Vitality: Garna Brooks of Renton, Washington, refrigerates seed two or three days; the treatment seems to have licked the damp-off problem and seeds seem to germinate more quickly. Grant McGregor of Ottawa, Canada, finds that holding seed over in the refrigerator, in corked bottles, works excellently. He was surprised this spring at the vitality of *semperflorens* seed he collected in 1963. Grant believes that seedlings are more successful than cuttings because cuttings may carry diseases from parents. He uses warm white and Gro-Lux lights mixed, with seed pans of fine vermiculite close to the tubes.

More on Sowing: Len Harris of Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, reports that, while first germination from rex seed comes in a week or ten days, seedlings will continue to poke up for ten to twelve months. He sows on vermiculite rubbed fine between the palms, first soaked from the bottom in hot water and drained an hour. Small pans are covered with plastic and set two or three inches from fluorescent lights. He does not use bottom heat, but has "pretty prompt" germination with most.

Mae and Chuck Tagg of Fullerton, California, use a flat with a thermostatically controlled heating cable covered by two inches of sawdust, then hardware cloth. Seeds are sown on fine-screened peat in smaller flats or pots, set on the hardware cloth, and the whole is covered by an old bed-sheet, to allow ventilation to prevent fungus. Set in the sunlight, the flat is protected from too much sun but has enough light for seedlings to grow. The Taggs use the same flat,

without bottom heat and with perlite and peat right in it, for cuttings.

Marie Moriarty of Houston, Texas, and Maxine Brodie of Jacksonville, North Carolina, use sphagnum moss for seed, giving a weak fertilizer solution for each watering. Elizabeth Decroo of Tarentum, Pennsylvania, likes fine river sand, not sterilized, with two inches of vermiculite sifted on top, in pint jars covered with plastic. When watering (maybe not needed for a month at a time), she uses a weak fish oil solution, one teaspoon to a quart of water. She has success with fern spore this way also.

Miniatures: A frequent quest is for names of miniature begonias. Edna Stewart of Tarentum, Pennsylvania, thinks the prettiest is *B. rex* 'Baby Rainbow' and that *B. 'Richard Robinson'* is truly beautiful with its silver and green jagged leaf, pink along the veins, although it may go dormant after blooming. She also likes *B. 'It'*, silver and green with pink flowers; *B. boweri nigra-marga*, described in the August 1965 *Begonian* (every little piece taken as cuttings grew); *B. 'Dew Drop'*, miniature rex with pearly leaves tinted pink; and *B. boweri* and the *boweri* hybrids.

Phyllis Wright of Seattle adds 'Baby Fingers', 'White Robe', *aridicaulis*, 'Little Pet', 'Silver Sweet', 'Stitch Leaf', 'Leo Turner', 'Silver Skeezer', and 'Tedro'. Two semi-miniature canes for under lights are *albo-picta* and 'Spotted Medora'—the last "a stinker to grow," but she won a blue ribbon on it, so will keep trying. These two go dormant, so she keeps rooted cuttings. 'Baby Fingers', semi-miniature hybrid by Susie Zug, loves sphagnum moss, is "a darling plant".

Everblooming Tuberhybrida: Evelyn Hurley of Lexington, Massachusetts, has two hanging tuberous begonias with at least one blossom from May to Lincoln's Birthday. She was wondering if they will go full cycle. Joan Lee of Roy, Utah, has kept multiflora 'Helen Harms' in bloom for more than eight months—in the house,

outside, and back inside. She wishes she had tried to see if it would bloom continually under lights. Eight inches tall, it bloomed all the time from seven or eight growth points, double yellow against dark foliage, with no mildew outside.

Problem Plants: When Phyllis Wright finds a sick plant, she dumps it from the pot, washes soil off the roots, and places it in damp sphagnum for a few days. Lily Fine of Brooklyn, New York, thinks she has the problem of *serratipetala* licked. It is thriving in a cool spot, near a window but about eight inches from Gro-Lux tubes. She waters it when it is bone dry. Temperature is 68° to 70° days, in 50's nights.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Responses to March's Q & A page were the most heartening so far, and we hope it is an omen of things to come and that more and more will want to use this sounding-board for problems and aids to others. That is our function, and we want to accomplish it to its broadest potentials.

Question: Mrs. Hope Parshall of Woodland Hills, California, writes that she has been completely unsuccessful growing tuberous begonias under lights, and says she wishes "someone would write an article on the art of raising flowers indoors under lights. We cliff dwellers who have no outdoor garden to dig in need to have some outlet for gardening."

Answer: Although I have heard people say they have grown tuberous begonias under lights successfully, I have never seen the results. For myself, I have managed to flower a miserable-looking female flower, but nothing more. They are essentially garden or window-box plants, so why expend time, money, and energy on them under lights when there are hundreds of begonias that do appreciate such treatment, and grow and bloom readily? There have been many articles and books written on phytoillumination, and your local library should have at least one on its shelves. (If not, force them to get some volumes!)

Question: Mrs. Ruth Stanley of Bellefontaine, Ohio, asks why her begonias and episcias curl.

Answer: This appears to be a case of mites, and several other letters indicate it is one of the most common attacks on our plants. Particularly if there are African violets around, no grower should attempt growing, in my opinion, without being fortified with a good miticide, always handy. Whether or not your plants already show the symptoms of an attack, **SPRAY!** I believe much more in preventive measures than curative. I prefer systemic treatment of mites to a spray, and any product containing

sodium selenate will give you almost 100% protection. But remember that sodium selenate is one of the deadliest poisons, and **EXTREME CARE** must be used when handling plants that have been treated with it. **NEVER** put your fingers to your mouth after touching such a plant without a through washing of the hands first. No warning can be too strong on this matter. **SEL-KAPS** are good, but with caution, please!

Question: From Mrs. June Hodgson, Britannia Beach, B.C., Canada: "Could you identify a begonia I have, about four feet tall, pink flower clusters, smooth, spotted leaves?"

Answer: This description could be accurate for so many varieties of begonias that the accuracy or any attempt to identify it would be almost impossible. I suggest you go to your local library and ask if they have a copy of *EXOTICA III* which pictures a great many varieties of begonias, among which it is most likely you will find one that duplicates your own. While rather expensive for most pocketbooks, *EXOTICA* is a book with which we should all become more acquainted, not only for identifying the begonias in our collection but for a broader acquaintanceship with the hundreds of known varieties of this family.

Question: From Mrs. Rose Sport, Marshall, Texas: "My begonia is eight feet tall, 2½ years old, sends up new shoots all the time — but has never bloomed. I feed it a 12-6-6 food at proper intervals."

Answer: They certainly do grow everything big in Texas, don't they? It is apparent that such a healthy plant is getting almost everything it desires. I believe that the ratio of your food is the indication as to why your plant will not bloom. The first number, representing nitrogen, reveals that you are feeding the leaves double the amount you give of phosphate, which is the mineral that encourages blooming. I would suggest that you switch, for a while at any rate, to a

food having at least a 1-2-1 proportion; i.e., 10-20-10, 15-30-15, etc.

Question: Can you identify my plant's ailment from the enclosed leaf?

Answer: The leaf arrived in such a deathly state it was impossible to believe it had ever been alive, let alone that it had died. Can readers give suggestions on how best to send leaves and cuttings through the mail and have them arrive in decent condition? We will compile replies and mention the best in a later page. I believe it should prove of value to all of us.

Texastar: As this was my own question, receiving replies from Mrs. Elaine Wilkerson and Mrs. Mary Puckett was extremely gratifying. This superb variety was created by Mr. U. U. Stanford and named in honor of the A.B.S. Branch of which Mrs. Puckett is now President. Developed only three years ago, 'Texastar' is a favorite among many in the Texas area, and only one of several outstanding varieties created by this fine hybridizer. It is sad to learn that about a year ago Mr. Stanford suffered a severe heart attack and has had to abandon his greenhouse business. I wish there were some way we could convey to him how grateful we are for what he has done and shared with us!

'Texastar' was introduced in the East by Mr. Jim Wyrzten, member of the Knickerbocker Branch, who, while in Texas on business, found his way to Mr. Stanford's greenhouse and came away laden with cuttings and a very favorable impression of this kindly, gentle man. At the International Flower Show (N.Y.C.) both Jim and I exhibited our 'Texastar' specimens. His is grown in sunlight, and is green, whereas mine, grown under lights, is a deep chocolate. Mrs. Wilkerson grows hers in sunlight, and the slide she sent me indicates that hers is also green. I believe there should be the brown cast as one of the parents is B. 'Joe Hayden'; but, as the other parent was a green star-type the green can be accounted for also. Per-

haps because I drew the attention of so many people to the two 'Texastar' plants at the show, there was much enthusiasm shown. I hope it will become one of the popular varieties in our collections as it is worthy of being. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the gentleman who has given this plant to us, Mr. U. U. Stanford — and our sincere wishes for recovery.

MURRAY D. MORRISON
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DENMARK . . .

(Continued from Page 85)

replace 'Gracia', which was too light in color.

'Sheila' is luminous scarlet red and may in the future be preferred to types like 'Rote Perle', 'Rotes Wunder', etc. 'Sheila' is entirely uniform, free from non-blooming male-plants, and of low and compact habit.

'Orania' is bright orange-scarlet, not quite as dark as 'Sheila'. It is early, rich-blooming, and of low compact habit.

'Laila' is salmon-red. This is a color which has never before been seen in the begonia assortment. The growth is low and compact, and the flowers are very big-sized. It is somewhat late-flowering.

All our F.I begonias, which should be able to satisfy any reasonable demand for low, green-leaved begonias, in the future will be listed under the group name BELLA-VISTA SERIES and within this series it should be possible to find all the color shades one can wish for.

We do believe that with these varieties we have created an assortment of *Begonia semperflorens* which will be very difficult to surpass inside the near future.

We have, therefore, concentrated our work on the breeding of a Bella-Vista Series with dark leaves, and we expect to introduce a rose and a scarlet dark-leaved, large-flowering, compact F.I begonia of this type in a few years.

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RESEARCH . . .

(Continued from Page 83)

feature. This should prove to be an interesting project for us as *B. listida* was a popular Clayton B. Kelly Seed Fund offering in the November issue. Mrs. Pease also suggested *B. richii* (seed offered in the September issue) and *B. annulata* (syn. *B. griffithii*) as begonias about which additional information would be helpful. These three have been added to the list to be used and I would appreciate any notes or information that anyone could offer concerning these plants.

Is It Cultivated?: Francis Michelson asks if anyone in the A.B.S. is growing *B. 'Corwalli Nash'*? The Research Department has no information concerning this plant and would appreciate any information that can be found.

Helpful Replies: The Research Department wishes to thank Mrs. May Taft Drew for sending in the following notes: "As to the kinds mentioned in *The Begonian* for December, *B. palmisiana* was evidently distributed as "Lucy Brooks" in 1954, probably seeds. *B. brevicaulis* seed was offered by the Seed Fund in 1953. Of the January list, the Seed Fund distributed seeds of: *B. acutangula*, 1953; *B. arborensis*, 1955; *B. barbana*, 1965; and *B. princeps*, 1958. This, of course, does not mean that any plant of these kinds survive." Mrs. Drew also reports on *B. 'Vedderi'* which she feels is the same plant that Mrs. Krauss called *B. 'Robinson's Vedderi'*. "It is a weak grower, a summer bloomer, not a showy plant at all."

Michael J. Kartuz has advised us that he has *B. acutangula* and that "it is extremely easy to grow. Makes a big, handsome plant quickly, but flowers very rarely."

"*Are They Extinct?*" Mrs. Laura Roland of New Orleans, Maryland, has written to me in an attempt to locate a Richard Robinson hybrid of 1934. This is a pink seedling of *B. 'Lucerna'* called *B. 'Suretta'*. Mrs. Roland has been conducting a very extensive

search for this plant and has not been able to locate it. One commercial firm who listed it in their catalog told her that they have lost their stock plants of this begonia. Can anyone help us?

I would like to mention in relation to the articles appearing on winter bloomers this month that these highly desired plants are all hybrids. Thus, to raise these varieties requires cuttings for vegetative propagation. These hybrid plants can not be obtained true to name and characteristic from seeds.

One other important reminder concerning this group of plants is treatment during the resting period. When flowering stops, remove all old blooms, and move the plant to a cool location (55° to 60°) until later April. Temperature should not be lower than this or damage will occur during the most critical stage. It is also important that the atmosphere be quite humid during this time. Through this cool, damp period, gradually cut back the stock plant until six to twelve inches of old growth remains. Of course, as this slow pruning takes place, the plant will require less water than before. The fleshy bulbous rootstock is unlike the *tuberhybrida* and should never be allowed to "dry-off" completely. Apply no fertilizer and just enough water to prevent drying out.

ROBERT L. SHATZER
Research Director

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REPORT OF A. B. S. BOARD MEETING

March 28, 1966. The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society was called to order by President Perz at 7:35 p.m. in the Southgate Auditorium, South Gate, Calif.

Sec. Evelyn Keaster called the roll with 26 officers, chm. and branch representatives reporting. Minutes approved as read.

Letter of acceptance as ABS representative at the International Horticulture Congress was read from Dr. Lawrence.

Letter from Greenwich Garden Center was read. They were making inquiry about the Begonian for their Library.

Motion by P. Benell, seconded by Earl Hough to send a one year complimentary subscription of the Begonian to the Greenwich Garden Center Library. Motion carried.

Letter of resignation read from Frank Paucker, as show chm.

Motion made by Mr. Cocke to accept the resignation with regret. Seconded by Paul Keaster and carried. After much discussion motion was made by Paul Keaster, seconded by Opal Ahern to proceed with regular order of business. Carried.

President asked for the approval of the following persons on the show committee: Chm. Alyn Schlesinger, Co-chm. E. Wright, Sec. Mary Ann Bingenheim, Treas., W. C. Cocke, Pub., Mary A. Bingenheim and Daisy Austin. Conv. Hostess, Lillian Steinhaus.

Motion by Anne Rose, seconded by Celena Nichols to accept these appointments. Carried.

Report from committee to meet with Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Perz read by Mr. Neff.

Motion made by Mr. Barnett, seconded by Ruth Pease to accept the committee report. Mr. Peterson was asked if he would accept the committee recommendations? He replied in the affirmative. Carried.

Motion made by Mr. Barnett, for the Secretary to write a letter to Mr. Joseph asking for a copy (verifax, photostat or otherwise) of the purported contract between the Begonia Society and Mr. Joseph, giving him a two week deadline for delivery of same Carried.

Mr. Barnett, of the San Gabriel branch presented a check for a one-year membership to be awarded to an individual, society, or university doing research work on the begonia.

Treasurer H. Burkett reported a balance of \$1,898.92.

Memb. Sec. Daisy Austin was reported ill. No report.

Adv. Mgr. Anne Rose reported receipts of \$133.65 and accounts receivable of \$57.50.

Research Dir. Shatzers report read. He suggested names of two more research men for complimentary membership.

Judges course Dir. S. Leatherman gave a financial report and recommended the following point system for qualifying judges.

1. Senior Judge qualifies when 50 points are attained.
2. Junior Judge qualifies when 25 points are attained.
3. Soph. Judge qualifies when serving 1 yr. as flower judge. Also any judge that has not earned his 25 points.
4. Fresh. A prospective judge.

POINTS WILL BE CREDITED AS FOLLOWS:

- 2 points for each year of judging
- 1 point for each show judged
- 3 points for completing one year judges course on begonias. Chm. recommends these be accepted and printed in the Begonian.

Motion by M. Lee, seconded by R. Pease this be accepted as standing rules on Judges Course. Carried. Judges Course Dir. suggests persons now holding judges cards write in giving their qualifications. A complete list of qualified judges to be on file with the President and the Secretary at all times.

M. Lee made report on awards committee. She wishes to know if retroactive awards could be given; also she would like to see the E. K. Grey Award given to a literary person. It is to be decided at next meeting regarding the 5 or 10 yr. basis for the A. D. Robinson Award.

Slide Lib. Mynette Hodgins, reported she is badly in need of slides. Mr. Barnett suggested this be reported to the next regular shows and perhaps some show slides would be forthcoming. Also for the ABS photographer to take slides at the shows, including the next germ show, to be held May 21-22, at Pomona Fairgrounds.

Show Chm. A. Schlisenger reported a meeting at the Arboretum on Apr. 16. with all branch Pres. Show Chm. & Sec.

Branches reporting were Foothill, Glendale, Inglewood, Long Beach Parent, N. Long Beach, Orange Co., Redondo Beach,

Riverside, San Gabriel Valley, Whittier, El Monte and Westchester.

Pres. Perz reported it is now time to remove \$500.00 show fund money from the regular treasury and transfer it to the show treasurer. Motion by Anne Rose, seconded by E. Hough for authority be given the treasurer for this transfer. Carried.

M. Cocke, business manager reported he has received some material from Mr. Budd, and that Mrs. Korts will bring all materials from the safety deposit box to the new business manager just as soon as the rental fee has expired.

President appointed the nominating committee composed of the following: Walter Pease, Lillian Steinhaus, Pearl Benell.

Motion by Mr. Barnett, seconded by Paul Keaster to accept these appointments. Carried.

Pres. appointed the following committee to work with the Editor to pre screen the material for him. Mr. C. Naumann, Anne Rose, Gertrude Winsor, and Floyd Neff.

Motion by Pearl Benell, seconded by Celena Nichols, to accept these appointments. Motion carried.

Lillian Steinhaus reported plans are now developing for the show, installation and banquet.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

EVELYN KEASTER
Secretary

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CALENDAR

MAY 11 — INGLEWOOD BRANCH:

Guest speakers will be four students, John Bingenheimer, William Mosses, Dave Dieball, and Forrest Connally, from the Horticultural College in Orange County. They will speak on "Fuchsias, Ferns, Begonias, and Potting Mediums".

MAY 12 — ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH:

Dr. Donald Kaplan, Department of Organismic Biology at the University of California, Irvine, will speak on "The Floral Structure and Development of California Loveliads".

MAY 13 — SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH:

Maria Wilkes will speak on "The Growing and Showing of Shade Plants".

MAY 19 — FOOTHILL BRANCH:

Daisy Austin will speak on the subject, "My Favorite Shade Plant and How I Grow It".

MAY 21-22 — LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL FERN SOCIETY:

Fern and Shade Plant Show, Los Angeles County Fairgrounds, Pomona, California.

JUNE 11-12 — Hawthorne Garden Club Flower Show, Memorial Center, Hawthorne, California.

JULY 29-30-31 — WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH:

Begonia and Flower Show, The Holiday Inn, New Kensington, Pennsylvania.

JULY 30-31 — SEATTLE BRANCH:

Twelfth Annual Show, Loyal Heights Recreation Center.

PARADISE . . .

(Continued from Page 87)

City. The local Government Tourist Bureau here is planning a campaign to attract retired Americans to settle in Uruapan and some of the surrounding smaller communities. Let us hope that among these will be some ardent gardeners who will have and even propagate some of these rarer types of begonias and other exotic plants to be found here. We shall be on hand to welcome you.

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