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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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members:

As my term of President of the American Begonia Society is coming to an end, I would like to express my thoughts, feelings, and thanks to each and every member of this Great Society.

As you know, I attended the Eastern Regional A.B.S. Convention. It was a huge success, and in speaking at the Saturday evening dinner, I extolled my thoughts and told of the wonderful achievements we have attained this year and my hopes for the coming year.

The accomplishments of the year are:

1—The Research Director, Robert Shatzer, and his committee have contacted knowledgeable people around the world, and through these contacts have brought to the attention of those researching on the begonia that the A.B.S. is working for the begonia and all members. Gerald Sausaman is the artist that gives the descriptive drawings each month.

2—Round Robin Director Carrie Karegeannes has done an outstanding job in obtaining new Robins.

3—Judges Course Director Sylvia Leatherman and her committee have presented the members of this society with a begonia judging course that is outstanding in its thoroughness.

4—Identification Director Dorothy Behrends, there have been more begonias identified this year, and with the article on how to obtain this information published in the August *Begonian*, she will be a busy member.

5—Nomenclature Director Rudolf Zieshenne has had many registrations this year and, with the help of Alva Graham, is compiling a list of new introductions of the year, to be published soon.

6—The Award Committee Director, Margaret Lee, had so much correspondence this year and, with the cooperation of her committee, has been able to decide to whom the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award and the Alfred

D. Robinson Memorial Medal were to be presented.

7—Our publicity has been tremendous this year under the supervision of Daisy Austin and Pearl Benell.

8—Question and Answer Director Murray D. Morrison has done an outstanding job this year.

9—Public Relations Director Vera Naumann was slowed somewhat because of illness, but was on the job at all times and has some people interested in starting new Branches.

10—Our Slide Librarian, Maynette Hodgins, has been handicapped in the extent that we do not have enough slides to present a complete begonia program.

11—Our Book Librarian, Adeline Patterson, is to be praised very highly on her promptness in getting books to the members. Also, she has indexed every *Begonian* in the library (there are thousands). She has assembled a book on begonias.

12—Our Historian, Ruth Pease, has written a report each month.

13—Our Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Director, Florence Gee, certainly should receive a medal for the hours she gives, the many letters she writes getting the seed, the many letters she receives requesting seeds. The description each month of the seed she has is invaluable. It is like an encyclopedia.

14—All members should observe the work done by the Membership Secretary, Daisy Austin, and the hours given to *The Begonian*. It is a tedious task.

Thanking each and every member for all you have done to make this a successful year, when you read this I shall be the Past President of the A.B.S. and wishing the new officers all the success and cooperation I know they will receive.

Begoniawise,
MURIEL PERZ

COVER PICTURE

Begonia hemsleyana

—Photo by KARI BERGRAV

THE DORMANCY PERIOD IN REXES

By MALCOLM RICH,
Inglewood Branch A.B.S.

Rex begonias are a "man-made" species of rhizomatous begonia that is characterized by having colorful leaves in a multitude of color combinations, leaf forms and leaf sizes. This type of begonia differs from other types of rhizomatous begonias in that it has an annual life cycle beginning in early spring and ending in late fall, followed by a dormant period of from six to eight weeks.

Most of the trouble experienced by begonia growers in raising rex begonias is caused by the failure to recognize the *importance* of this dormancy period in rex begonia culture and by the improper treatment of the plant during this dormancy period.

The dormant period in rex begonias is more closely related to the dormancy period in the tuberous and bulbous types of begonias than to that of other types of begonias. The tuberous and bulbous types of begonias require a complete rest for a period of six to eight weeks and a thorough drying out during dormancy. *So do the rex begonias.*

This is not too surprising when one stops to consider that the rex begonias of today, with their wide variety in color combinations, leaf sizes, and leaf shapes, are all descendants of one chance seedling plant discovered about 100 years ago in a greenhouse in England. From this one plant hybridists all over the world, by crossing with other begonia species, selecting, cross-breeding, and breeding back again and again, have developed the modern day rex species.

During this hybridizing development period some crosses were made that introduced into the original rex structure the dormancy characteristics of the bulbous and tuberous begonias. It is possible, also, that the original rex plant contained this dormancy characteristic. At all events, to be successful in raising rex begonias one

must first recognize this dormancy characteristic and then adapt the cultural conditions used to comply with its requirements.

The requirements for rex begonias to get them into, through, and out of dormancy appear to be substantially as follows:

(1) In the normal course of events, the annual life cycle of a rex begonia commences in early spring and ends in late fall after blooming and seed formation occur. Roughly, this life cycle is from March through December. On or about January first rex begonias are *ready* to rest and go dormant.

(2) To go dormant *naturally* the plant must be subjected to a favorable combination of falling temperatures, shortened days, and lessened moisture conditions.

(3) To come out of dormancy *naturally* the rhizome must be subjected to a favorable combination of increasing temperatures, lengthening days, and increased moisture conditions.

Just what combinations of temperature, light, and moisture conditions are "favorable" to produce good results in requirements (1) and (2) is a matter of some variation as nature itself is widely variable and adaptable.

The conditions under which the plants are being grown must be adapted to produce the desired result. To illustrate: here in California in the southwestern Los Angeles area, rex begonias can be grown out-of-doors under a lath or tube roof the year 'round. The temperature seldom falls below 45°F and seldom goes above 85°F. In the late fall the temperature range is 50° to 70°F. In the winter the range may be from 45° to 60°F. In the early spring, the fall temperature range returns with gradual increase in the maximum temperature to 70° to 80° by June. July, August,

and September usually provide some warm days above 90°F but not too many. The nights are always cool. Under these outdoor conditions the rex begonias have a hard time going dormant and a harder time staying dormant and a still harder time coming out of dormancy.

I have solved the dormancy problem by arbitrarily placing all the older rex plants in my garage, after watering them thoroughly, and leaving them there to dry out gradually until they go completely dormant. Then I forget them for six to eight weeks. By this time the plants are thoroughly dried out.

As soon as any rhizome shows signs of renewed life, as evidenced by new shoots from the rhizome, the plant (pot and all) is placed in a bucket of luke-warm water covering the rhizome and is allowed to soak for several hours. The soaked pot, after draining off surplus water, is then enclosed in a plastic bag and placed in the lathhouse where the sun can warm it for at least half a day. As the plant grows, larger plastic bags are used until the maximum spring temperatures have settled down to a good average of 60° to 70°F.

This method of bringing the rex begonia into, through, and out of dormancy is very effective. In the first place, it forces all rex plants to go dormant at the same time, which is very convenient. In the second place, all rex plants are subjected to the same dormant conditions of light, temperature, and moisture conditions, which standardizes this phase of rex culture. In the third place, it eliminates variations in pot size or plant size. All rhizomes receive the same treatment.

In bringing the rhizome out of dormancy, the soaking period rehydrates the rhizome and the use of the plastic bag to enclose the rhizome from the atmosphere accomplishes a dual result. First it eliminates the danger of over-watering and, secondly, it provides a humid atmos-

phere for the top of the plant to grow in. By this method it is obvious that the old root system is eliminated from the rhizome and a completely new root system must be formed. An alternative practice would be to remove the rhizome from the pot and to clean it thoroughly before soaking, then plant it in propagating mix to form a new root system.

During the soaking period it is an advantage (but not a necessity) to use a root-forming hormone in the water to accelerate root formation and growth. During the period the plastic bag enclosure is used around the pot, it is necessary at intervals of several days to open the bag and replace the air within the bag. After growth is well started the bag can be opened *at the bottom* to permit air circulation within the bag without much loss of humidity.

Finally, after growth is well started, weekly feedings of weak fertilizer solution can be made advantageously to keep the growth going steadily.

One big word of caution: This method should not be applied to "yearling" plants — only to plants which have gone through *at least one* complete annual growth cycle. Yearling plants are those that have been produced by seed or by rooting leaves or cuttings during the year. These plants must be maintained under optimum growing conditions throughout the winter and the next following annual growing cycle. Then they can be treated as described above.

This method of treating the *older* rex begonias to force them into dormancy, and to bring them out of dormancy, can be varied widely to adapt it for use under all growing conditions. For example, where rex begonias are being grown under greenhouse conditions, the common mistake is to expect them to go dormant without making any change in temperature, light, or moisture conditions to induce dormancy. Accordingly, the rex begonias either do not go dormant at all or else have a poor or very

(Continued on Page 195)

LEAF CUTTINGS – HOW AND HOW LONG?

By CARRIE KAREGEANNES*

Do leaf-stem cuttings from different rhizomatous begonias take different lengths of time to produce plantlets under the same conditions? Do some reproduce better than others from wedge sections?

Are some begonia leaves more prone to rot? Or do they need different methods? Does age or maturity of the leaf make a difference?

Avid collectors depend on rooting leaves to add many beautiful rhizomatous specimens to their benches. Many have become expert, yet occasionally suffer failure. Many questions about rooting may be answered by comparing observations of different growers.

Peculiarities

Some growers have noted that they can obtain more plantlets by cutting a leaf into wedges, with larger veins running to the points inserted into the propagating medium. On the other hand, a leaf-stem cutting may be reused after its first crop—or if the end of the stem should rot on the first try. And some begonias may not take to the wedge method. Rexes seem most easily propagated by wedges; *B. masoniana* may be difficult.

Mabel Corwin, Daisy Austin, Elsa Fort Weber, and Edna Stewart all find that rex wedge cuttings will root readily, but that the plantlets are

weaker than those from the whole, or trimmed, leaf cuttings.

B. sunderbruchi and *B. paulensis* have given some growers great difficulty in rooting. *Masoniana* leaf-stem cuttings may take longer than most, while some rexes show plantlets in a month. One *B. dayi* leaf took four months for one person, but another had a plantlet in two months.

Many note that springtime rooting is easier, and leaves may be more prolific then. Fluorescent light may speed up rooting and simulate long days, but there may be a physiological difference in leaf make-up in the spring.

Mae and Chuck Tagg and Robbie Totino have noted that leaf wedges may seem dead or dying, yet still produce plantlets. A rex plantlet has been known to appear in a propagation box some time after its parent wedge or leaf tip had rooted, died, been removed, and forgotten.

Although many agree that a medium-sized leaf, not too young or too old, is best for propagating—Freda Johannesson has found that even a first, very tiny, leaf on a rex seedling will root if given special care. Usually it will produce a cluster of small plantlets, she says, all different from the parent and usually a little different from each other. Freda cautions that rex leaves may sprout at the sinus as well as at the stem end; she inserts cuttings with almost all the petiole covered, so the sinus can sprout roots too.

Leaves of cane-stem begonias, or angel-wings, usually will root but will not sprout plantlets, Research Director Robert Shatzer explains, unless a cortex (heel) cutting is used. Growers claiming success with cane begonia leaves probably have used hybrids with other kinds of begonias in their ancestry.

Methods

Success in rooting leaf cuttings has been obtained with many methods.

*With contributions from Anita Sickmon of Cheney, Kansas. Also observations from Mabel Allen of Coronado, California; Pat Burdick of Savage, Minnesota; Geraldine Daly of Coventry, Rhode Island; Lily Fine of Brooklyn, New York; Bill Hitschler of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Freda Johannesson of Winnipeg, Canada; Lynn Milam of Tampa, Florida; Bob Shatzer of Albright, West Virginia; Hazel Shear of Beaumont, Texas; Edna Stewart of Tarentum, Pennsylvania; Ida Storm of Denison, Iowa; Mae and Chuck Tagg of Fullerton, California; Robbie Totino of Mountlake Terrace, Washington; Barbara Walker of Bloomington, Indiana; Herb Warwick of Seattle, Washington; and Ruth Wille of Jackson, Mississippi.

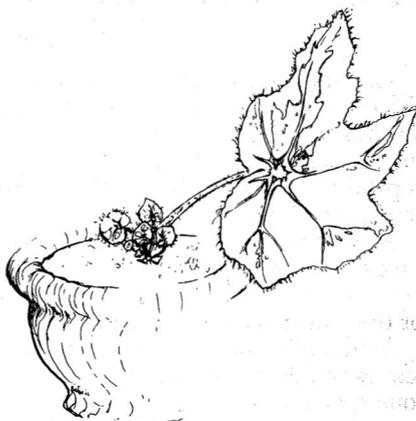


Rex leaf-stem cutting in water with plantlets at sinus and at base of stem

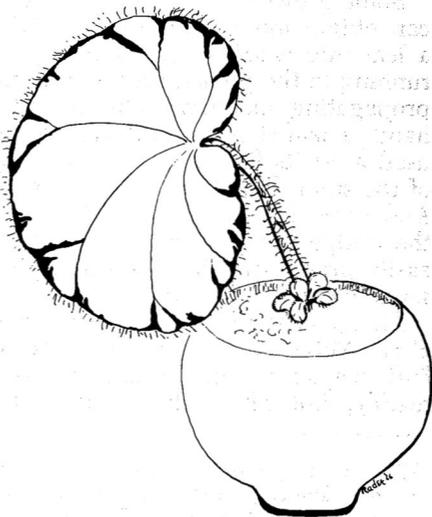
Some growers insert the stem or wedge into perlite, vermiculite, or sphagnum moss, or perhaps into a mixture of vermiculite, milled sphagnum, and a little soil. Some cover cuttings with plastic or use a plastic box; others do not. Humidity and temperature undoubtedly make a difference, and some begonias do need more humidity and warmth than others.

Bernice Brilmayer, in her book *All About Begonias*, says to cut firm, healthy leaves with one or two inches of stem. Some varieties root easily with stem in water, the leaf resting on the rim of a glass. Others need a prop box, with stem inserted half in the mix and leaf at an angle. Roots should start in one or two weeks. Within six weeks or two months, new plants should appear. Occasionally a leaf will make roots but no plantlets. Then a leaf cutting with a "heel" (sliver of the branch from which it grew) may work.

Edna Stewart reports that even in warm weather cuttings root more readily for her on a heating cable. She divided and potted plantlets from a leaf of B. 'Kumwha' on the cable long before cuttings on the greenhouse bench showed progress. Robbie Totino uses a cake pan or pyrex dish set



B. 'Bow Nigra' leaf-stem cutting in mix



B. 'Chantilly Lace' leaf-stem cutting in mix
—Drawings by Millicent Rader Harris

on a wooden table over a heat register.

Hazel Shear has good luck rooting leaves in water, leaving them until plantlets have grown an inch or so, before transplanting to a light mix in peat pots to fit. She places roots carefully in a hole in the wet mix and covers them, leaving the mother leaf

attached for awhile. If the original leaf is in good condition, it may be cut off and rerooted. Hazel has had as many as three rootings from one leaf. Barbara Walker also has good success in water, with a piece of charcoal added.

Anita Sickman believes that following the days of the Almanac makes a difference in rooting cuttings. She likes a plastic shoe box with holes drilled in the bottom, spread with two inches of sphagnum moss. For large begonias, Anita nails triangular ends onto grocery boxes (twelve by eighteen inches), to support plastic wrap

from the dry cleaner. She also uses plastic bags over pots, blown full and fastened with a rubber band. Anita inserts an inch of stem into her medium, propping leaves fairly straight. Others prefer slanting the stems, one-half inch in the medium. Some have obtained plantlets along part of a stem horizontally buried.

The Seattle Begonia Society's *Begonia Chatter* in April reported Herbert Warrick's rooting of B. 'Pet' in a plastic bag, kept at 70° and under fluorescent light sixteen hours a day. Roots formed along the three-inch petiole, with new leaves at the sinus.

OBSERVATIONS

The following observations on specific begonias, collected from a number of A.B.S. members, may answer some questions on leaf-stem cuttings.

<i>Begonia and Season</i>		<i>Propagating Time and Comments</i>
B. <i>acida</i> March		Plantlets in a <i>little over two months</i> , coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse. minimum temperature 55°-60°.
B. 'Bell of Ireland' March		Rooted but no plantlets in two months, coarse sphagnum, in greenhouse in plastic-covered box, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
B. 'Black Magic' October		Rooted in water within three weeks under cool white fluorescent light. Cuttings—both those started in water and then potted and those started in light potting mix—showed leaflets in <i>two months</i> , base of stem. Very tiny leaflets appeared along stems of leaves when humidity high, but difficult to grow large enough to use.
B. 'Bow-Nigra' November		In water under Gro-Lux light, plantlets in <i>one and a half months</i> . In light potting mix under Gro-Lux, uncovered, plantlets in <i>two months</i> . Leaves, in water or mix, easy and prolific, at any season, under lights or at window. Rhizome tips root easily.
B. <i>boweri</i>		Does not root easily without bottom heat (report from a number of years' experience).
B. <i>boweri major</i>		Very slow from leaves.
B. 'Brown Lake' March		Plantlets in about <i>two months</i> , coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°; five inches high in four months.
B. 'Chantilly Lace'		Leaf cuttings and rhizome tips root easily. Leaf-stem in light, peaty mix under clear cake cover at Gro-Lux light showed leaflet clusters in <i>one month</i> , twice from same leaf.
B. <i>davi</i> March	(1)	Small plantlet from leaf-stem cutting <i>within two months</i> , coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
October	(2)	Trimmed leaf showed plantlets in <i>four months</i> . Wedge trimmed off leaf rooted readily, but gave no plantlets in six months. In peaty mix, prop box. seven inches

- from Gro-Lux. (In same time and conditions, other leaves took one and two months. Too mature a leaf?) Leaf gave three plantlets, first higher on stem and with adult leaf, other two with leaves more like those of seedlings.
- B. 'Enchantment'
October
Plantlets in *six weeks*, transplanted in four or five months.
- B. 'Erythophylla'
('Feasti')
August
(1) Two leaves near window, no direct sun—one in water till rooted and then in vermiculite, the other in sand and leafmold from beginning; both rooted in two weeks and both showed plantlet tips in slightly over *one month, three weeks*.
- October
(2) Leaf cut loose from sand-leafmold, above, and re-inserted, under cool white fluorescent, showed three tiny leaves in *one month, three weeks*.
- B. 'Freddie'
April
Summer
(1) Three tiny leaf tips, *three months*, peaty soilless mix, under plastic bag, close to Gro-Lux tube.
- (2) Leaf put down in late summer had plantlets only one and a half inches high in March (while a 'Red Dash' leaf's offspring were twelve to fifteen inches high and had set seed by that time).
- B. 'Joe Hayden'
March
Two plantlets *within two months*, one leaf, in vermiculite-perlite-coarse sphagnum mix, plastic-covered box, no fluorescent light or bottom heat, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
- B. 'Maphil'
March
Small plantlet *within two months*, coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
- B. *masoniana*
(Iron Cross)
(1) Two leaves, one kept as leaf-stem cutting and the other cut into wedges, peaty soilless mix under cake cover, at edge of Gro-Lux light. Rooted readily. Leaf gave plants in *one month, three weeks*. Wedges, though rooted, did not show plantlets, finally dried up.
- October
January
(2) Same leaf cut loose and re-inserted in same pot saucer showed leaflet in *two months*, followed by cluster.
- April
(3) Same leaf cut loose and re-inserted but not covered, moved close to Gro-Lux, rooted but dried up.
- November
(4) Another leaf (and another grower) had mass of roots but no plantlets in four months.
- (5) Plain water with lump of charcoal in opaque glass, plastic bag over it—"roots leaves every time," in *ten to twelve weeks*.
- (6) One member says it requires longer to root than many, produces larger root mass, and plants usually need four-inch pots when transplanted. (Member giving notes (1), (2), and (3) transplants to smaller pots, but wonders if this one needs more feeding.)
- (7) Another member warns not to get water on leaf cuttings; pebbled surface holds water, even from spray, and leaf rots. Easy to root, but slow. Tiny plantlets will not resemble parent for some time, but will eventually.
- B. 'Botanical Garden'
April
March
(1) Two leaf tips from one leaf in *two months, one week*, peaty soil mix under Gro-Lux, covered part of time with plastic bag.
- Plantlet *within two months*, coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.

- B. 'Norah Bedson'
March Ten to twelve plantlets to each leaf in *little over two months*, coarse sphagnum in plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°. Easy.
- B. *paulensis* (1) Will grow from leaf, but difficult and slow. No moisture must touch leaf or it will rot. Don't mist; likes it dry. However, cuttings seem to root best in closed jars in warm place. (Very easy from seed.)
- March (2) No roots in four months, brown edges on leaf, coarse sphagnum in plastic-covered box, greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
- (3) Airlayering with sphagnum moss successful.
- B. 'Persian Brocade'
March Plantlets in *two months*, vermiculite-perlite-coarse sphagnum mix in plastic-covered box, minimum temperature 60°, no fluorescent light or bottom heat.
- B. 'Red Dash'
March (1) Plantlet *within two months*, although leaf rotted (stem all right), coarse sphagnum in plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
- April (2) Leaflet in *one month, three weeks*, commercial mix. mostly sphagnum, covered with plastic, under Gro-Lux.
- B. 'Red Leaf Ricinifolia'
March Two small plantlets in *two months*, coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°.
- B. *rex* hybrids (1) Two small plants in *one month, three weeks*, from leaf wedges in light soil mix, dish in plastic bag, no fluorescent light or bottom heat. Six plantlets in *two months*.
- October (2) Two plantlets in *two months* from three wedges of another plant, peat and sand, under plastic.
- November (3) Three or four plantlets in water, at base of trimmed leaf-stem cutting, *one month, two weeks*, under cool white fluorescent. Top half was trimmed off, stem put in water, showed nub of root in eleven days, leaf sheathes under water in one month, one week.
- October (3) Three or four plantlets in water, at base of trimmed leaf-stem cutting, *one month, two weeks*, under cool white fluorescent. Top half was trimmed off, stem put in water, showed nub of root in eleven days, leaf sheathes under water in one month, one week.
- November (4) Leaf with stem in water under cool white fluorescent started cluster of leaflets at sinus before roots showed at stem end, developed three plantlets which rooted when stem was inserted in mix with leaf sinus touching mix.
- Autumn (5) Rex leaf-stem cutting and wedges from another plant gave plantlets in *one month* in peaty soilless mix in prop box close to Gro-Lux tube. Leaf-stem cutting re-used, gave plantlet again in *one month*.
- B. *rotundifolia*
May Leaflet showed in *one month*, peaty soilless mix in prop box close to Gro-Lux tube.
- B. 'Stitch Leaf'
(*mazae viridis* *Stitched Leaf*) (1) Tiny leaflet in *one and a half months*, sphagnum moss (roots, three weeks). Bunch of leaflets in two months (stitches showed on leaves later). Both leaf-stem and thin rhizome tip cutting root easily in water or mix.
- May (2) Plantlets in about 10 weeks.
- B. 'Sir Percy'
October Plantlets in *one month, one week*, from both leaf-stem cutting and wedges, peaty soilless mix, covered with plastic bag, one foot from Gro-Lux tube. One wedge had three plantlets, varied on others. Leaf-stem cuttings has leaves trimmed quite close, to yield wedges.
- B. *sunderbruchi* (1) All efforts by one person, leaves from two different plants in different years, rotted:

- in sand and peat, not covered
- in soil mix, not covered
- both stem and wedge cuttings in soilless mix, loosely covered with plastic and at edge of Gro-Lux tube.

(2) Another person tried leaves from one of these plants, also without success.

B. 'Tamo'
March

Small plantlet within *two months*, coarse sphagnum, plastic-covered box in greenhouse, minimum temperature 55°-60°; five inches high in four months.

B. 'Verde Grande'
April

Leaf rotted, but stem rooted and gave plantlets in about *two months*, vermiculite-perlite-coarse sphagnum mix in plastic-covered box, no fluorescent or bottom heat, minimum temperature 60°.

DORMANCY . . .

(Continued from Page 189)

short dormant period. Hence, these plants make a poor showing the following growing cycle and many die out. Some way should be found to force the rexes to go dormant by drying them out under relatively cool (50-60°F) dry conditions in subdued light.

Those who have been having trouble raising rex begonias should give the above-described method a good try. The vigor or growth in a well rested rex begonia will amaze you. Rex begonias appear to grow best within the temperature range of 55° to 65°F, although higher temperatures up to 80° to 90°F do no harm as long as plenty of humidity is provided *without* over-watering. In fact, rex begonias grow best when allowed to dry out between waterings where the humidity remains high.

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INDOOR GREENHOUSE

By RUBY MAE BUDD

I really don't know just what to call this idea that we had. Could it be called household hints, garden hints, or just plain growing pains?

When you get to the point that there isn't any more room outside to expand for your shade loving plants, begonias, fuchsias, ferns, and anything else that you take a fancy to, well — something has to be done, especially when you like to play around with growing from seeds and cuttings.

We had a broom closet on our service porch which was nothing but a catch-all, so we converted it into a little Gro-Lux greenhouse. My husband put in two plywood shelves, eighteen inches apart, and installed the lights under each shelf. Now I have a perfect place where I can keep a better watch on my plants than if they were in the tube house or the greenhouse.

I am passing this little idea to the members of the American Begonia Society, hoping that they, too, will get a little benefit out of this.

—Reprinted from the National Fuchsia Fan.



Indoor closet greenhouse



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THANK YOU--FROM YOUR SOUTHERN EDITOR

First I want to express my whole-hearted appreciation and thanks for all the nice letters received from all parts of the United States, complimenting me on my articles and on our special project at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital.

The Greater Baton Rouge Branch celebrated its first birthday in July and I am really proud to be a part of such a wonderful group. Our biggest project was the Carville Patients' Garden Club and introducing them to the begonia world.

I also want to thank all the Branches and individuals who pitched in to help us make the project a success. It has given me a chance to make many friends at Carville and with those who extended a helping hand from all over the U.S. A special thanks to Mr. Dick Tarpenning of Nebraska for the many hours spent in helping me.

My heart is full of gratitude for the wonderful help and support so many of you have given, and with your continued help and co-operation we can continue the work at Carville with the leprosy patients. One Branch cannot do it alone, so I am asking again for your contributions and time. The Foothill Branch has also taken this as their project and donates \$5.00 a month to the Patients' Garden Club.

Here is an excerpt from a letter I received from the Patients' Garden Club this spring:

"You know, Mrs. Wagner, it is often hard to find people like you and your husband, who are willing to give a helping hand to those like us who need help. You also know the traditional circumstances that prevail with us, which we are restricted to circulate much under the law, but your often visit with us is very appreciated and gives us morale and the will to live. So with this thought we thank you for all these and what's to come in the future."

What more reward could a person ask for, after receiving an expression



Mrs. Don L. Wagner, Southern Editor

of appreciation such as this? I feel the American Begonia Society has much to be proud of for the work we have done this past year.

Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope and I will gladly send you pamphlets on Hansen's disease. Again, I want to thank all of you for your co-operation, letters, contributions, and support, with the hope we will continue this project.

MRS. DON L. WAGNER
3074 Zeeland St.
Baton Rouge, La. 70808

TEXAS BRANCH REORGANIZED

The American Begonia Society is very pleased to have this Branch active once more. This was the first Branch to organize in the great state of Texas.

Their new officers are: Mr. E. Weaver, president; Miss Virginia Wilson, vice-president; Mrs. R. J. Wilson, secretary; Mrs. E. Weaver, treasurer; and Mrs. T. J. Aikinson, rept. director.

Their meetings will be held the fourth Thursday of each month, in the Sabine National Bank Building, Port Arthur, Texas.

VERA L. NAUMANN
Public Relations Director

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND FLIGHT

No. 1 — *B. paranaensis* — Brade —
Brazil. Plant found growing near Aguas da Prata at an elevation of 2,900 feet. Belongs to the *Pritzelia* subgenus. Medium growth, with thick stems, large leaves with dentate margins. Huge white flower clusters in earliest spring, lasting several weeks. Fruits have one very long wing. This plant has a new stout stem each year, from the ground, but flowers on top of last year's growth. Interesting and new. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. 'illustrata'* —
(*B. 'Speculata'* x *B. imperialis.*) Various described as round or grape-leaved, leaves are many and dainty, rounded to a sharp point, shimmering with a coat of fine white hairs. Pinkish flowers in mid-winter. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. goegoensis* —
Growth bushy, compact, with high creeping rhizomes. Petioles very fleshy, sharply tri-cornered, bare. Leaves almost round to egg-shaped, closed, saucer-like, wavy over the entire surface or rugose; upper side of leaf olive-green with lighter shading, silky gloss, a little lighter at the margins; beneath reddish, both sides bare. Inflorescence sessile, surpassing the leaves very little in height. Flowers medium large, pink. This plant is a treasure for collectors and fanciers of beautiful foliage plant and should be grown in a well regulated greenhouse or similar conditions. \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 4 — *B. vellozoana* — Brade —
Beautiful herbaceous species with large stems, oblique up to 6 cm long; rooting at the stipules; leaves oblique, broadly ovate-suborbicular, cordate, with a closed basal sinus, the apex abruptly shortly acuminate, membranaceous when dry, palmately 8-nerved, 10 to 12 cm long, 12 to 18 cm broad, hispid-pilose on both surfaces with small fimbriate scales on the nerves beneath, green above, with a whitish zone on the veins, paler below and occasionally reddish. Flowers numerous

and white. A beautiful and satisfactory begonia.

We understand that the name *B. vellozoana* has been changed; however, we have no information on the subject. When we have it, look for it in the Seed Fund section of *The Begonian*. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. crispula* —
Unique species with silk-corded, grey-green leaves that hug the ground. Delicate and precious. Water carefully. Do not allow water to stay between the leaves as this will rot them. Water directly on top of the soil. Requires special greenhouse care. \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. heracleifolia nigricans* —
Medium; rhizomes procumbent, thick; leaves long-petioled, to a foot across, handsomely variegated with bright, black-green, 7 to 9 finger-like lobes, taffeta-like in appearance. White flowers in tall panicles. Handsome foliage begonia also favored for its flowers. 50 cents per pkt.

Comment: Seed of the four begonias mentioned above was furnished by a professional seed collector and grower of rare begonias, who lives in a rugged and almost inaccessible section of Brazil. We hope you will grow and enjoy them all.

No. 7 — *B. Calla lily* —
Will produce eighty per cent *Calla* type. *Semperflorens* type that should be grown cool — 65 degrees by day, if possible, and slightly cooler at night. They should not be watered until the soil is completely dried out. Over-watering can be fatal. They like a humid atmosphere to produce good foliage and a plentiful supply of flowers. They do not like to be disturbed. Find a location they like and leave them alone. Protect them from hot sun but give them enough to encourage bloom and good leaf color. Like other *semperflorens* begonias, they should be pruned drastically after flowering. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 8 — B. *White rubra* —

Cane type. Large, wavy, green leaves; green seed pods that remain on the plant for a long time. Large clusters of pure white flowers that stay white in the sun. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 9 — B. 'Di-Anna' —

(*B. dichroa* x *B. 'Annie Laurie'*.) Long, narrow bird's-wing leaves, thickly pleated and ruffled, silver-spotted. Salmon-pink flowers. Cane type plant. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 10 — B. 'Di-Erna' —

Cane type. (*B. dichroa* x *B. rubra*.) Slim, pointed, green leaves. Orange-red flowers. Blooms almost constantly if not over-potted. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 11 — B. 'Pink Shasta' —

Cane type. Handsome variety with long green leaves wing-shaped. Flowers apple-blossom tints. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 12 — B. 'Superba Azella' x B. 'Pink Shasta' —

Cane type. Pink. 35 cents per pkt.

GREENHOUSE PLANTS

***Sinningia* 'Dollbaby' —**

Seed parent is *S. pusilla* and pollen parent is *S. eumorpha*. Grows from a tuber. 50 cents per pkt.

***Pteris cretica* 'Rivertoniana' —**

A bushy, symmetrical form of *wimsettii* and improved *gauthieri*, with stiff, erect, fresh green fronds of firm texture, the brown stems set with 4 to five pairs of lateral pinnae and terminals, the lower ones compound, all deeply cut almost to center, into pointed toothed lobes. 35 cents per pkt.

***Pteris cretica* cv 'Wilsoni' —**

Table fern of low, bushy habit, the fresh green fronds of a young plant spreading, the fertile segments tending to form a fan-shape, and forking toward tips into broad, dense crests. 35 cents per pkt.

OTHER GENERA

Zimbabwe creeper — *Podranea brycei*

From Nairobi, Kenya, S.A. Evergreen with large bunches of shell-pink

trumpet-flowers, dark green leaves, shiny, and divided into small green leaflets. Can withstand some frost but prefers the warmth of a wall facing the sun. Quick growing. Likes rich soil. 25 cents per pkt.

MRS. FLORENCE GEE

Seed Fund Administrator

234 Birch Street

Roseville, California 95678

THANKS OVER THE MILES

I wish to express my gratitude to the members of the American Begonia Society who contributed so much enthusiastic support to our National Show. My thanks extend over the miles, to include our international members in England, Japan, Australia, and all corners of the world; and embrace our national members in Texas, Louisiana, Connecticut, Washington, Northern California, and our own Southern California. Your participation was a welcome and successful contribution to a lovely show.

The basic essential to any flower show, of course, is beautiful plants, and we were proud to see so many outstanding entries. We were fortunate to have such fine judges and I thank each one of them for their time and patient consideration. Here, I gratefully note the members who donated their time as clerks, a complex task, and hope that they enjoyed participating as much as I have.

Our thanks, as a Society, are due our President, Muriel Perz, and our President-Elect, Everett Wright; without their help and cooperation, our National Show would not have enjoyed such success.

MRS. ALYNA SCHLESINGER
Your Show Chairman

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BEGONIAS IN OCTOBER

By ELDA HARING

Begonia authorities have long asserted that begonias which bloom in winter and early spring need all possible sunlight from October to March in the northeastern section of the country. This is certainly true—up to a point. In today's modern homes where that are window walls, bow windows and picture windows on the south side, a great many begonias would suffer if exposed to floods of sunlight even in a section where there are many sunless days throughout the winter.

On the coldest day in January, with skies clear and sunny, seated at a south window in my own living room I can feel the heat of the sun. Begonias bloom in my windows which face east and receive four to six hours of morning sunshine. One south window has the sunshine broken by branches of a flowering crabapple tree. In this window 'Skeezar', 'Calla Lily', *cubensis*, 'Maphil', and *sanguinia* bloom, but *heracleifolia*, 'Zee Bowman', and 'Chantilly Lace' do not—evidently they need more sunlight for blooming than they get in this window, although I have found that 'Zee Bowman' needs so much light to bloom that the characteristic silver markings fade out.

In a southwest room with extra high light intensity, on a chest at the window, 'Rosea-Gigantea', 'Calla Lily', 'Digswelliana', *epipsila*, 'Bow-Arriola', and 'Bow-Nigra' bloom very well. On glass shelves on the same window, along with other kinds of miniature plants, 'China Doll', 'Bo-Jo', 'Vir-Bob', and 'Peanut Brittle' bloomed nicely last winter, but had to be removed from the shelves in late March as the sunshine was getting too intense for them. On a chest in front of the west window in this room 'Skeezar', *heracleifolia*, and *schmidtiana* bloomed beautifully.

I have seen begonias in the homes of friends kept too close to sunny windows, with leaf edges scorched and

browned and leaves "pebbly" and turned under in protest to too much light and heat. "Begonians" should try to learn how much light is needed for each variety they are growing and then keep a good watch to determine if more or less sun is needed for that particular plant, or if it needs filtered sunlight as through a glass curtain. If begonias stretch toward the window they may not be getting enough light if the room itself is quite dark, even though they are at a sunny window.

Do not give up growing the winter and spring bloomers if you cannot give them enough light for blooms. They are all attractive and interesting for their beautiful foliage forms.

ROUND ROBIN NEWS

Tips on growing, old problems, new information—there are always many points to discuss among robin friends, whether the conversation is on general begonia culture or a special study, whether among new growers or long-time A.B.S. members. Letters draw members together across the nation, even around the world.

Rooting Rexes: Lily Fine of Brooklyn selects a fairly mature rex leaf with a one-and-a-half-inch stem, cut on a slant, to start new plants. She puts it in a small glass of tepid water, the top resting on the glass, and places it in a light but not sunny spot, at about 70° to 75°. If the air is very dry, the glass is set into a plastic box with the cover partly open. Most varieties root in about three weeks.

When roots are one-half-inch long, Lily puts the stem into vermiculite, with the leaf sitting right on the medium, and keeps it protected until the plantlet which forms has several fairly well developed leaves. When the plantlet is about two inches tall, she cuts away the parent leaf. The new plant can be kept growing in vermiculite, with regular feeding, until it is large enough to need repotting. B. 'Helen Teupel', B. 'Merry Christmas', and B. 'American Beauty' root well and produce good plants this way.

Hybridizing: Lily was growing *B. dregei* to try Florence Gee's suggestion that she cross it with rexes to produce miniature rexes. Her *B. 'American Beauty'* blooms well, but she was wondering if *dregei* would bloom at the same time. (Charles Chevalier says in *Les Begonias* that *dregei* blooms all summer.)

Grant McGregor of Ottawa, in a hybridizing specialty flight, explained why one is not likely to get a dark-foliaged calla *sempervirens*. The dark foliage is a dominant trait and the calla variegation is recessive; therefore, the two are unlikely to combine in one plant. This dominance might be broken in a sport, or mutation, he supposes.

Seedlings of the cross *B. 'Crispa'* by a *semp.*, made by Jo Burgos of Philadelphia, bloomed pink with pale edges, though "disappointingly small". Jo selfed the seedlings and is watching for interesting traits in the second generation.

Seed Germination: Elizabeth Power of Albuquerque, New Mexico, wonders if trying to germinate seeds in mid-winter of species that have a summer blooming cycle is a mistake. Her November and January sowings of *B. socotrana* germinated poorly or not at all, and subsequent growth of the few that did germinate was poor. But an April 15 sowing germinated in 15 days, and about a dozen seedlings were growing second leaves by June. She did not list any changes in conditions for the different sowings.

Fertilizer: Superphosphate should always be used with cow manure in soil mixtures, Edna Stewart of Tarentum, Pennsylvania, notes. The manure should be sterilized, especially for weed seeds. She uses twenty per cent superphosphate with cow manure and soil from an alfalfa field—the manure and soil sterilized in the field with methyl bromide ('Dowfume').

Terrarium Problem: Does anyone have any cures for moss that forms inside a brandy snifter planted with *Sinningia pusilla*?

Manicata 'Aureo-maculata crispa': The begonia is a mutation of a mutation of *manicata*, a species, and is said to come true from seed, Chuck and Mae Tagg of Fullerton, California, explain. They have an eight-inch pot full of it—and love it. *Exotica* describes its leaves as waxy, fresh green blotched yellow and occasionally rose, the margins thickly crested.

B. 'Tea Rose': Rufus Neas of Greenville, South Carolina, has brought 'Tea Rose' into bloom by placing it close to Wide-Spectrum lamps and feeding it regularly with a 15-30-15 house plant food.

Achimenes: Norma Darragh has seen beds of achimenes outdoors in Louisiana, which came up year after year and "were just beautiful", but Lula Roblin of Hazelhurst, Mississippi, says these bloom better and make better tubers in pots. When growing them commercially, she had to make lots of tubers—or no profit. Any soil suitable for begonias will do for achimenes, Lula says. Manure makes a good mulch. Achimenes cannot stand much cold.

MRS. CARRIE KAREGEANNES,
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Mrs. Lester H. Fox, Secy.
170 Marsh Hill Rd., Dracut, Mass.

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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
Mrs. Edmund H. Ellerbusch, Secy.
1051 Ordway, Albany, Calif. 94706

EASTSIDE BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
Natural Gas Co. Building
Crossroads Shopping Center, Bellevue, Wash.
Opal Johnson, Secy.
1532-108th St., N.E., Bellevue, Wash. 98004

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. Christine Kapranos, Secy.
433 W. Philadelphia St., Ontario, Calif. 91762

FORT, ELSA BRANCH

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

GLENDALE BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, 8 p.m.
Tuesday Afternoon Club, 400 N. Central
Mrs. Edna L. Korts, Corr. Secy.
3628 Revere Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90039

GREATER BATON ROUGE BRANCH

Mrs. J. R. Coxe, Secy.
5757 N. Afton Park Way, Baton Rouge, La. 70806

HOUSTON TEXAS BRANCH

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

HUMBOLDT COUNTY BRANCH

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

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

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

4th Friday, 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 Plascencia Ave., Coral Gables, Florida

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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
Kathleen Powers, Secy.
12418 E. 221st St., Artesia, Calif. 90701

ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Garden Grove Grange Hall, Century and Taft Sts.
Garden Grove, Calif.
Mrs. Emma Walker, Secy.
10232 Russell Ave., Garden Grove, Calif 92640

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, Sec'y.
92 Rodman St., Peace Dale, R.I. 02833

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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
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1609 W. Lewis St., San Diego 3, Calif.

SACRAMENTO BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 8:00 p.m., Garden Center
3300 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, Calif.
Alta Soule, Secy.
5831 79th St., Sacramento, Calif. 95824

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
Allen D. Sweet, Secy.
139 Beverly St., San Francisco, Calif. 94132

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.
Miss Sally Harding, Secy.
11632-1st Ave. S., Seattle, Wash. 98168

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Alice Barlett, C.H., 902 E. Main, Ventura, Calif.
Mrs. Truman Stearns, Sec.
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Ventura, Calif.

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

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3rd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.
Lorenzo Manor School
18250 Bengal Ave., Hayward, Calif.
Jack Dunaway, Corresponding Secy.
1650 Plaza Drive, San Leandro, Calif.

TARRANT COUNTY BRANCH

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

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4th Thursday, Sabine National Bank Bldg.
Port Arthur, Texas
Mrs. R. J. Wilson, Secy.
4620 Evergreen St., Port Arthur, Texas

WESTCHESTER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Westchester Women's Club
8020 Alverston St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Mrs. Frances Jean, Secy.
8212 Reading Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90045

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 11:00 a.m., Homes of Members
Mrs. Alfred Slee, Secy.
211 Arlington, Butler, Pa.

WHITTIER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Palm Park Community Center, 1643 Floral Drive
Anne L. Rose, Cor. Secy.
1255 Ramona Drive, Whittier, Calif. 90605

WILLIAM PENN BRANCH

4th Tuesday, Noon, Homes of members
Mrs. Robert E. Waite, Secy.
209 N. Locust Lane, Exton, Pa. 19341

BRANCH SECRETARIES NOTE

If your Branch is not listed properly in this issue, somebody failed to send the proper information to the Editor. Be sure that all changes or corrections are made before the next publication of the Branch Directory, which will be January.

COMING EVENTS

OCT. 6 — WHITTIER BRANCH:
Mrs. Mabel Corwin will speak on "Growing Begonias".

OCT. 6—WESTCHESTER BRANCH:
"Helpful Hints on Begonias" will be the subject for Joe Littlefield, guest speaker.

OCT. 12 — INGLEWOOD BRANCH:
H. B. Criswell, representing Widow Farmer's Products, will talk on "Begonia Plants, Their Pests and Insecticides".

OCT. 14 — SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH: The program will be "Holiday Ideas", a demonstration and lecture by Mrs. Donna Crowley from Allene's in Temple City.

OCT. 14 — FOOTHILL BRANCH:
Wilbur and Bee Olson will talk on "The Life Cycle of The Fern".

OCT. 28 — REDONDO AREA BRANCH: Past-presidents' pot-luck dinner at 6:30 p.m. Branch will furnish the meat. Guest speaker will be Jean Kerlin.

LET'S HAVE IT RIGHT

Have you moved? Be sure the Membership Secretary has your correct address — including the zip code. Don't take chances on missing the next issue of this magazine.

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