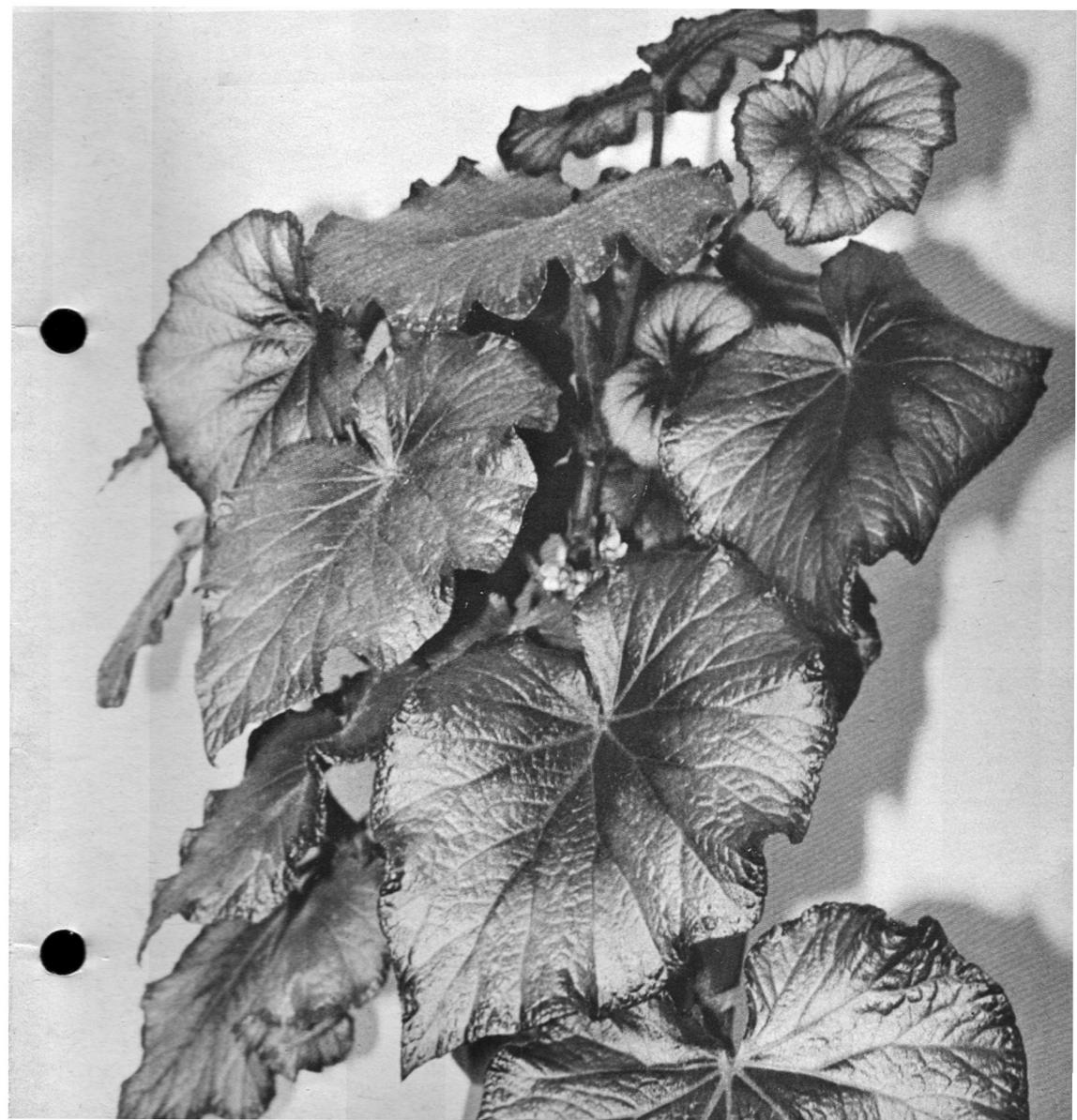


The BEGONIAN

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Pearl Benell, Membership Secretary
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Editor.....N. Trumond Peterson
1641 West 125th St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90047
Eastern EditorMrs. Hertha Benjamin
1927 University Ave., New York, N.Y. 10453
Southern EditorMrs. Don Wagner
3074 Seeland St., Baton Rouge, La. 70808
Northwestern Editor.....Richard Hammond
9401 26th Ave. S.W., Seattle, Wash. 98108
Advertising ManagerAnne L. Rose
14036 E. Ramona Dr., Whittier, Calif. 90605

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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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PhotographerRalph Corwin
4825 Willard Ave., Rosemead, Calif. 91770
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Seed Fund Admin.Mrs. Florence Gee
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★ ★ ★

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



Enjoying installation banquet of the San Francisco Branch of A. B. S. are (from left): Isadore Gold; Alice McGrath Gold, new Branch President; Bert Slatter, installing officer; Mrs. Minn Slatter.

THESE ARE BEGONIAS

Picture a plant hanging down the wall of a dark and barren Mexican cave. It is three inches high, with flat green leaves saw-toothed on the edge, and china-white flowers. It grows from a small, lima-bean-shaped tuber wedged in a soil-less chink between the rocks.

Or imagine looking up thirteen feet to the top of a Colombian plant to see showers of dainty white, fragrant flowers. Waving from a stem trunk ten inches in diameter are great lobed leaves measuring more than two feet any way, shining green on top and rusty-fuzzy beneath.

Now think of a bushy little window-sill plant with crisp, waxy foliage as bouffant as a little girl's petticoat.

These plants are all begonias . . .

From *All About Begonias*
By BERNICE BRILMAYER



Dr. H. B. Creighton, who will do research on begonias for the Society, discusses project with Everett Wright, President of A. B. S.

COVER PICTURE

Begonia-rex-'Fireflush', grown by M. Carlton L'Hommedieu.

—Photo by HERTHA A. BENJAMIN,
Eastern Editor

B. 'ADRIAN SCHMIDT' AND SEEDLINGS

By MRS. DON L. WAGNER
Southern Editor

One of our hardiest rex begonias and the parent of many lovely new rex hybrids today was produced in Lyons, France, in 1888. It was named Begonia 'Adrian Schmidt'.

The shallowly lobed leaves are green on the underside, with every vein, large and small, in a deep red. The inner zone and outer margin is also flushed red. The upper leaf surface is in shades of green, almost a black green near the sinus and outer margin, with a bright green middle zone, overlaid with large silver splotches. All veins are quite pronounced.

The large leaves, 9 by 12 inches on a plant 18 inches high and 24 inches across, are held high on red semi-hairy petioles 9 to 12 inches long. The plant holds its leaves well, losing old leaves when the new ones come on.

The flowers, clear rose pink and fragrant, are borne in sprays with alternate male and female (usually twelve buds per spray) on the same stalk. It is one of the few rexes that could be grown for its beautiful flowers. The velvet-like, slightly twisted, moss-green stigma contrasts sharply with the pink petals to give a striking effect. The ovary, too, is quite unusual, being light green with one large extended wing on the back. It blooms in late summer.

There are over seventy-five different rexes in my greenhouse, but none compare to B. 'Adrian Schmidt'. It is now three years old. For the first two years it was known as the West Virginia begonia. This is where my home is and on a visit I got a cutting from my mother in Alma, West Virginia. The original has been passed from one neighbor to another for years. I discovered the correct name when I saw the picture in Bessie Buxton's book *Begonias*.

Mrs. Mary Gillingwaters used this plant extensively to achieve new hybrids, since it is an excellent seed parent. I have crossed B. 'Joel Gillingwaters' on one female and B. 'Fire Opal' on another; both have taken and now there is the long wait to see if the seeds will be fertile.

I will describe four of the best known B. 'Adrian Schmidt' hybrids registered by Mrs. Gillingwaters. I give my vote of thanks for such lovely and hardy rexes.

In 1951 Mrs. Gillingwaters crossed B. 'Adrian Schmidt' with an unnamed Susie Zug rex creation. The results varied in many respects, as to size, coloring, and stamina. She pricked many of the seedlings out of the original seed pan and transplanted them periodically.

Many grew to be huge specimens, but one refused to grow and remained small. She decided it was a miniature and registered it as B. 'Pequena'.

B. 'Pequena' has an entire silver leaf surface with the center zone being more sparsely silver over a deep rosy-lavender. The outer zone has a flushed-lavender surface. The margin is serrate, sparsely ciliate, and measures approximately 3 by 5 inches on a plant 8 inches high and 12 inches across.

B. 'Vigorosa' has the same parentage, but has large spiral leaves approximately 9 by 12 inches on a plant 18 inches high and 24 inches across. The leaves are heavily silvered between the veins, with dark green areas surrounding the veins. The leaves are silver and green only, not flushed. The plant holds its leaves well in the winter.

B. 'Lakewood' also is an 'Adrian Schmidt-Sue Zug' spiraled hybrid rex cross and is a very vigorous spiraled leaf rex that grows well and never really goes dormant. The 10 inch to

(Continued on Page 37)

IN BEGONIA BETTINAE COUNTRY

By T. MAC DOUGALL

Some of the most picturesque and interesting of the rapidly disappearing primitive forests of Mexico are to be found in the high Sierra Madre of Chiapas.

This is also begonia country. From Finca Prusia, at three thousand feet altitude, and practically along one trail, to El Triunfo, seven thousand feet up in the Sierra Madre, there are at least a dozen species, including, of course, *B. Bettinae* (Zies.)

I presume that this species is not yet in general cultivation. Mr. Zieshenne compares *B. Bettinae* with *B. lobulata*. Horticulturally, I think *B. Bettinae* will be found much more dwarfed and more shrubby.

In the wild, *B. lobulata* is at its best in full sun, whereas *B. Bettinae* seems to prefer rather heavy shade.



Identified as *B. fusca*, this is surely one of the giants of rhizomatous begonias. A leaf blade measured over 2½ feet and an inflorescence topped 6½ feet.



Tall *Cyathea* tree ferns give a lacy effect to the forest canopy.



Quercus corrugata (oak) — one of the large trees of El Triunfo.

Editor's Note: A botanical description of *Begonia bettinae* (Ziesenhenné) was published in the November, 1965,

issue of *The Begonian*. See also *Begonia Boweri and Its Country* by T. MacDougall in January, 1960, issue.

EXPERIMENTS IN HYBRIDIZING

By M. L. MACINTYRE
Liverpool, England

When I first became interested in growing begonias, the only book on the subject I could find which was worth reading was *Successful Begonia Culture*, by F. J. Bedson. I read with interest about all the famous hybridists and decided I must try my hand at hybridizing.

The main difficulties seemed to be what to cross with what and how to make sure that insects had not been at the flowers before me. I was fortunate in regard to the latter as, for some reason unknown to me, insects do not frequent the small greenhouse I decided to use.

In 1964, without having any definite plan in mind, I decided to try crossing Begonia 'Norah Bedson' (*B. boweri* x *B. daedalea*) and B. 'Clifton' (*B. boweri* x *B. mazaе*). The cross was a success and in about six weeks the seed was ripe. Germination with such fresh seed was very rapid and almost 100 per cent complete.

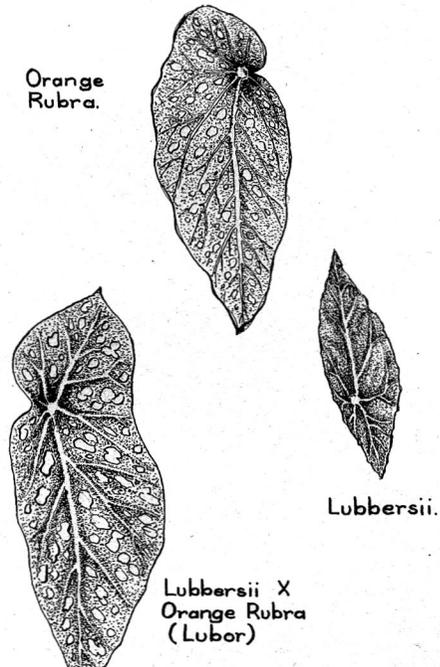
I kept twenty-four seedlings and gave the rest away, many of them to the head gardener at Jodrell Bank of radio telescope fame. All my plants were different. Some looked like *B. boweri* but with flowers ranging from pale pink to almost red; others were varying combinations of the parents and the three grand-parents. One had a spider web pattern in brown on a green leaf. Another was a miniature, no more than four inches high, with small leaves and a compact habit.

After this initial experiment, I thought I should be a little more scientific in my next one; so I decided to use *B. albo-picta* and *B. lubbersii* as females and *B. 'Orange Rubra'* as male. With the former I hoped to get plants with the spotted leaves of *B. albo-picta* and perhaps orange flowers, and with the latter I was hoping for plants with peltate leaves and large orange flowers.

I was successful in obtaining fertile seed from both crosses, but because of a lack of space, I could grow only seven plants of each.

All plants from the *B. albo-picta* cross had leaves like the female parent, but much larger, and the flowers varied from pure white to deep pink. This year (1966) I have crossed some of these back into B. 'Orange Rubra' in a further attempt to obtain orange flowers.

The *B. lubbersii* x B. 'Orange Rubra' cross resulted in some remarkable plants, which I called 'Lubor' 1-7. All had the peltate leaves I had hoped for and all leaves were larger than those of either parent, one measuring ten inches in length and three inches in width. The most remarkable feature was the leaf shape, as the sketch indicates.



Drawings by DEREK HAYES

HYBRIDIZING TRICKS

By JO BURGOS

Perhaps a few hybridizing tricks of my own will help other members in making begonia crosses they may be planning.

All seven of these plants are now in flower with colors ranging from salmon-pink to red, but no orange. On the most outstanding of these, the male flowers are at least three inches across and the female flowers are proportionately large, with the ovaries measuring over two inches in length, both flowers being much larger than the flowers of either parent. I have crossed this one back onto 'Orange Rubra' and also onto one of the other 'Lubor' plants to try for orange flowers. All my re-crossings of the 'Lubor' plants have taken and one I have harvested and sown.

Several times I have used B. 'Orange Rubra' as the female parent and each time I have obtained fertile-looking seed which refused to germinate. These results were disappointing and I was beginning to wonder if the females of this plant were sterile. However, I have tried once again this year by crossing B. 'Orange Rubra' with *B. glaucophylla* and again I obtained beautiful seed. I planted the seed on the same day I harvested it and this time it germinated. The seedlings are now planted out but it is too early to say what the results will be.

I crossed *B. glaucophylla* (*limminghei*) x 'Orange Rubra' last year and have some quite large plants which have not flowered so far. All are similar to *B. glaucophylla* in appearance, but are upright in growth even without staking. One plant over twelve inches high has all its leaves pointing downward, parallel with the stem, which gives it quite an odd effect.

I have had many failures and I expect to have many more. It is very disappointing to find a seed pod lying on the staging when it seemed that in a couple of weeks or so it would be ripe. But, having produced plants which are different from all others and worth keeping, I am inspired to continue. In fact, I do not think I could stop experiments in hybridizing now.

For example, you may be trying to develop certain new characteristics in a *semperflorens* begonia — perhaps a new dark-leaved one. For the mother plant in such a cross, select a double-flowered, dark-leaved, vigorous semp that is easy to grow. Choose one that produces female flowers more often than male, and frequently, like B. 'Red Camelia', B. 'Jewellite', or B. 'Curly Locks'. The male (double) flowers will have no pollen, and you will avoid self-pollination and lost work and time on the wrong seed.

Next, for the pollen parent, select a single-flowered semp with the special trait you wish to introduce in a new plant. Plant these two begonias, mother and father (seed and pollen plants), together in the same flower pot. Keep them in a place far from any other single-flowered *semperflorens* begonias, unless you wish to keep the seed-flowers covered with plastic to avoid pollination you did not plan.

I have learned that plants growing in the same pot bloom at the same time more frequently and that plants that have been growing in the same pot for some time cross more easily—and sometimes cross naturally if they are of the same type.

Be very gentle when you brush the pollen-laden flowers upon the centers of the females; they are more delicate than those of single-flowered semps. Wait till the female flowers, identified by the ovaries behind their petals, tilt up a little bit; for then they are ready to be pollinated. Sometimes I don't apply the pollen by hand, but just set the male flower very close to the female flower, and let Nature do the work.

If petals drop but the ovary remains and begins to swell, I expect seed, which will be ready when the stem attached to the seed pod is dry.



ELDA HARING

BEGONIAS IN FEBRUARY

By ELDA HARING

By February in the northeast the days are growing much longer and the warmth of the sun has increased. There will still be many snows and cold weather for weeks before welcome spring arrives.

If a regular watering and feeding schedule has not been instituted as suggested for January, delay no longer. The late winter and early spring bloomers will be greatly benefited by such treatment. Most all begonias start to show active growth at this time.

Those grown for their flowers as well as their foliage need as much light as possible at this time of year. Reflected light from the snow might prove to be too strong, making it imperative that you keep a close eye on the plants to see that leaf edges are not scorching. If this be the case, use a thin, filmy curtain between the plants and the window, or move them a little away from the window yet keeping them where they will re-

ceive slanted sunlight. For eight or ten weeks longer it will be necessary to take precautions against cold drafts caused by high winds and cold.

This is an excellent time to look over your collection of plants and decide which ones you might wish to exhibit in local flower shows in the spring or the following fall. Except for those nearing their blooming season, shorten shoots which are too long and take off rhizomes protruding too far from the rims of the pots. Use these for cuttings if you like. To be sure the plants will be symmetrical and well shaped by spring show time, which in our area is usually in April, turn them once or twice a week. Instead of the one-quarter turn suggested by some authorities, I prefer to give mine a full turn whenever I am watering or examining the plants. Giving a full turn frequently ensures a fine plant which never leans toward the window with a one-sided effect.

At least three weeks before show time, give the plants which you intend to exhibit a good shower, taking off dead leaves and flowers. At this time it is a good plan to spray with one-half strength liquid fertilizer. A Windex bottle is excellent for this purpose, as it is necessary to drench every leaf, both underside as well as top-side. This foliar feeding will make the entire plant look fresh and perky.

A day before the show make sure pots and rims are well scrubbed and washed clean of algae and fertilizer salts. Protect the plants when transporting them, as the outside air is usually very chilly in April, and it has been my experience that begonias are slightly damaged if allowed to sit where temperatures might drop to below fifty degrees.

PUBLICATION NOTICE

All material for publication — articles, notices, photographs — should be sent to the Editor, preferably five weeks before date of publication. Deadline is the first of the month preceding month of publication.

Advertising copy and inquiries should be sent to the Advertising Manager.

DORMANCY OF REX BEGONIAS

By C. FLOYD JENSEN

After growing all types of begonias for about twenty years, and spending many months on research and observations, I find the growing and blooming habits of rexes are much different from those of the tuberous begonias, which bloom all through the growing cycle.

If we examine the natural habitat of the rex begonias, they are found growing on slopes and in the valleys of the tropical sections of the earth where humidity is high and the amount of rainfall is highest during the days of less light.

Let us recognize the fact that any plant that does not rely wholly on its reproduction by the seed it bears has a dormant period. This will vary from semi-dormancy, when a plant's growth just stands still, to complete dormancy, when it loses all signs of foliage and growth. I have always recognized this fact. They do have a semi-dormant period, but this is not as cut-and-dried a process as that of the tuberous begonias.

The rex begonias do not start blooming until late in the summer or at the end of the season. December and January are two resting months for the rexes; during this time they should not be kept too wet. However, they do not require tuberous begonia treatment, which would be to let them become completely dried and remain dry for several weeks or longer.

My rex begonias are grown in a glass-house where they stay all year. In winter they are provided enough heat to prevent freezing. No extra light hours are used to lengthen the light day. Some growers in Northern California grow rex begonias under conditions of fourteen hours of light and 65 to 70 degrees of temperature during the winter months. These rex begonias that have been grown to three feet in diameter are grown in

small tubs and are ready for the Oakland Spring Garden Show in April and May.

During the dormant period, December and January, my rex begonias are losing the leaves that have grown to nourish and build a good healthy root-stock. Many of the newer leaves will remain on all through this period. Also, the leaves that will be dropping are now growing new plants on the surface of the leaf. These appear along the ribs or stem branches of the leaf. They will make good plants early in the year, which would be lost if my rex were forced into dormancy. If rex begonias are too wet or too dry for an extended period the result is the same, loss of the root system. I have found, when this occurs, the best method is to treat the remaining part as if starting a cutting of the rhizome.

In conclusion, I always suggest if you like the results of your methods do not change because some one else follows a different formula. If yours fails, then try another.

APHIDS RESEARCH

The Madras Christian College in India received a five-year grant of \$26,367 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to study the habits of aphids in India. The research is expected to be of great value in helping U.S. entomologists prevent entry of disease-transmitting species into the United States.

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute at New Delhi also received a five-year grant of \$57,052, to modify virus-detecting techniques so that small amounts of virus can be detected in seeds. This accomplishment would be useful to the U.S. when introducing plant seeds from other countries.

The grants will be paid for with foreign currency obtained by the United States from sales of farm products abroad under Public Law 480. This money cannot be converted into dollars for use in the United States.

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND FLIGHT

No. 1 — *B. friburgensis* —

Brazil. Beautiful new species. Rhizomatous, red, thick, leathery leaves, shiny and dark green on top, red underneath. New leaves show only red and are folded like cocks-combs. Tall flower stems bear heads of white and pink flowers. Choice begonia. Greenhouse culture. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. odorata* —

Colombia. Patent-leather leaves, slightly cupped. Pink, fragrant flowers. This plant should be pinched back before flower buds appear. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. 'Rubia'* —

(*dichroa seedling*.) Lusty grower, bushy and many-stemmed. Leaves gleaming green, occasionally dotted with silver. Large clusters of soft, pink flowers. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 4 — *B. 'President Carnot'* —

(*B. olbia x coccinea*.) Favorite cane type begonia; a good grower. Satiny, copper-green leaves, crinkled and crisply pointed along the edges, sometimes silver-spotted, reddish below. Flowers red, carmine, or pink, depending on the light and sun. Good bloomer. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. 'Nomo'* —

A hybrid by Chester Nave, in California. Vigorous grower. Calla type; pink flowers. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. Semperflorens* —

Double, mixed colors. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 7 — *B. 'Orange rubra' x X-ray semperflorens* —

A cross made by Elaine Wilkerson, in Louisiana. We have information that this is an outstanding begonia. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 8 — *B. epipsila* type —

The collector in Brazil describes this plant as recently classified. It has red stems, 20-inch leaves, undersides felt-like. White flowers. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 9 — *B. heracleifolia nigricans* —

Brazil. Seed is from Brazil. The collector describes the plant as rhizo-

matous, with beautiful spotted foliage and large heads of lovely pink flowers. This description does not coincide with the begonia we know as *heracleifolia nigricans*, but it is a worth-while and lovely plant. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 10 — *B. laciniata var lutea* —

Recently received from a friend in India. Described as having smallish leaves and yellow flowers. Rhizomatous. 50 cents per pkt.

★ ★ ★

CLOSE-OUT SALE — Offer No. 1:

B. luxurians — Brazil. Leaf palmate, fuzzy, and limp. Flowers white, in large heads.

B. Cane type — Mixed. Several of the best of this type.

B. Calla lily — Mixed colors.

B. evansian — Hardy, pink.

B. giant type — Colombia.

B. fusca — Mexico. Rhizomatous, scalloped leaves, short, green hairs.

B. Philippine Islands — Cane type, pink flowers.

B. sceptrum — Cane type, coral flowers.

B. Brazil species — Gorgeous plant with showy pink flowers.

Colueus — Mixed in all the popular colors.

Price: Ten packets of the above for \$1.00.

★ ★ ★

CLOSE-OUT SALE — Offer No. 2:

B. paranaensis — Brade — New species from Brazil, with medium growth, large leaves, dentate margins. White flowers in the spring.

B. deliciosa — syn. *Photan* sp. — Leaves deeply palmate, dark olive-green, heavily gray-spotted. Flowers large, pink.

B. caragutatubensis — Brazil. Leaves dark red underneath. Leaf petiole has red bristly rings or collars. A good plant.

B. purpurea — also called *B. macdougalli* var. Brazil. Rhizomatous plant, with large heads of white flowers.

B. Rex — many shapes and colors.
Price: Five packets of the above for \$1.00.

Note: Because of the work involved and the postage rates, we can not send out single packets or mix the two close-out offers.

FERN SPORES

Tectaria incisa cv. 'Hirsuta' —

Soft-textured apple-green from two to three feet. Leaflets cut to rachis, irregularly scalloped and toothed. Requires an abundance of water. Price 35 cents per pkt.

Tectaria heracleifolia —

Apple-green fronds to about one foot. Irregular three-lobed leaflets, slightly scalloped and toothed. Requires an abundance of water. 35 cents per pkt.

Adiantum aethiopicum —

Fine, dainty fronds to two feet. Leaflets finely cut. 35 cents per pkt.

Adiantum raddianum cv. 'Weigandii' —

Puerto Rico form. Leaflets deeply cut and overlapping. New fronds reddish veined. To about one foot. 35 cents per pkt.

Microlepia firma —

Also called 'Lace Curtain Fern'. Airy fronds to about three feet. Finely cut. Pattern resembles the old-fashioned lace curtains, 35 cents per pkt.

Onychium japonicum —

Finely cut fronds to two feet. Fronds resemble carrot tops, therefore, the common name 'Carrot Fern'. 35 cents per pkt.

Dropteris erythrosora —

Dark green fronds from one to two feet. Juvenile fronds are pink; mature fruiting fronds are bronzy green. 35 cents per pkt.

Humata tyermanni —

One of the so-called footed ferns. Silver, hair-like covered rhizomes, providing the common name 'Silver Toes'. Dark green fronds finely cut. Ideal for baskets or totem poles. 35 cents per pkt.

Davallia fileensis —

'Rabbit's foot fern'. Brown-wooly,

creeping rhizomes, from which rise graceful, durable fronds on wirey stems. 35 cents per pkt.

NOTE: When ordering seed it is essential that you include name, address, and zip code number. This information will insure prompt delivery of your seed. Address all communications to the address given below.

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

HARDY BEGONIAS

Don Stephenson of Paekakariki, New Zealand, offers a list of begonias he considers hardy — at least, they have suffered 40 degrees drop in temperature, cold winds, lack of water, and slight neglect over winter.

He would be interested in knowing if anyone else has had the same luck with these:

'Fuscomaculata', 'Erythrophylla' and its var. 'Helix', 'Richmondensis', 'Perle Lorraine', *pariles*, *fuchsiodes* (red and pink), *boweri nigra-marga* (not *boweri*; it went dormant), *mazzae viridis* (Stitched Leaf), *luxurians*, *fusca*, *fernando-costae*, *richi*, *compta*.

All other canes, rexes, and miscellanea went dormant. 'Fuscomaculata', *pariles*, and *boweri nigra-marga* grew well all winter, and *boweri nigra-marga* (sown October, 1965) was in flower August 30, 1966 (New Zealand springtime).

Anyone who has had interesting experiences with these begonias is invited to write about them and send the story to the editor.

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

I am taking orders now for the new book by Elvin McDonald, *1001 Begonia Questions Answered*, which will be ready in March. The price is \$5.95.

I also have *Using Plants for Fragrance*.

TERRY OLMSTED,
Librarian.

ROUND ROBIN NEWS

In a large, far-spread family of robins, some serious accidents and illnesses do occur, as well as household moves and occasional postal mix-ups. It is important for you to send courtesy cards to chairmen of your flights, to tell when the flight left you. In this way, we can check where a flight was last seen, without writing to every member to ask, whenever a flight is delayed.

Important: If you cannot write a letter within five days—perhaps because of houseguests, perhaps illness—you will help greatly by sending the flight on with a line of explanation, writing your full letter the next round. A robin recently flew in that had taken one month to go around the world—only to sit two months in one state.

Congratulations: Jane Neal of Worthing, England, won the R. H. S. Floral Medal at the London Show this past summer, for a display of begonias other than tuberous.

Edna Stewart of Tarentum, Pennsylvania, is trying pollen from a tuberous blossom on two rex blossoms. She explains that in tuberous begonias the fully double flowers are the males and, after a certain time of blooming, extra petals become anthers, producing pollen for fertilizing. "In our short season, this does not always happen, but I had lots of pollen in the greenhouse".

Sometimes a male rex blossom will not shed its pollen, but Edna finds that if she lays the blossom on a shelf where it will stay dry, the pollen will soon ripen and can be used. 'Thrush', however, is one begonia she has not been able to get to shed pollen on the fingernail test. She cannot set seed on it, either.

A cross of 'Bow-Nigra' x 'Ricini-fovia' two years ago gave Freda Johannesson of Winnipeg, Canada, a blanket-stitched miniature star much like 'Bow-Nigra.' It has remained miniature through feeding and repotting, and bloomed last winter.

Rex Begonias: Freda has found that selfing a bright red, enameled-surface rex gives a predominance of red in the seedlings. She tests seed from each pod separately and, even in the seed pans, can pick out the seedlings by their reddish coloring. She carefully avoids using dark or drab plants, and her seedlings are colored to her liking. Freda also shares seed with the Seed Fund.

B. rex 'Merry Christmas', 'Green Gold', 'Baby Rainbow', 'Queen of Hannover', 'Helen Teupel', and 'American Beauty' do well all the year around for Edna Stewart.

Fern Spore: Aleks Bird of Jamaica, New York, in our new fern specialty flight, has been thrilled to find that he can grow ferns from spores in a city apartment— even the more difficult *Platyserium*. He sows on a rich medium, close to Wide-Spectrum or Optima fluorescent tubes, and is fascinated by the unusual way ferns grow.

Cuttings: Grant McGregor finds his cuttings root better if they are taken before the weather cools. Edna Stewart never uses a knife to take cuttings, preferring to break them, because she thinks they root better if they are brittle enough to snap off.

Hectic Pace? Daisy Austin of Anaheim, California, wonders if plant hobbyists are not subjecting their plants to their own fast, hectic pace of life. "We come home from work, look over our plants, and they haven't made any outstanding advances since last night— so something is wrong with the mix or they need more food. Increase something. Well, a plant needs time to perform its cycle of growth, according to its plan. When you force any phase of growth, you throw the functions of this plant out of balance and it has no choice but to try to correct what you did to it.

"Have you examined a plant that you have pampered, forced into extra, lush growth and bloom? It looks beautiful on the outside and maybe you won ribbons. Was this normal growth for this variety? Something had to give. Was it vitality, repro-

duction (including healthy seeds), or what? Fine for a show, but don't use it for hybridizing or seed raising."

Plant a begonia in a porous, humusy mix; feed it regularly, alternating high-nitrogen and high potash food, with occasional high-phosphorous food. Give temperature, humidity, and light to its liking, and let the begonia take over from there.

Serratipetala: Don Stephenson of Paekakariki, New Zealand, grew two plants in three-inch pots this winter (summer in the U.S.), letting them nearly wilt before rewatering. They did very well till a cloudy week during spring which did not let them dry out quickly enough—so no more plants. Don says that Bob Lowe, a member in Wellington, grows this one in the Botanical Gardens and finds a problem, too—it grows too fast and too big! Last season he had a ten-inch by four-inch area covered by *serratipetala* alone, superb. Don would say warm and humid for this one,

rather than cool as some have found.

Masoniana: Don also would translate Barbara Walker's "cultural lack" as a cause for dormancy in 'Iron Cross' into "lack of temperature and climate control". He has held it over New Zealand winters on his porch, and it has always gone semi-dormant and has always come back to life. He does hold water back severely, as Barbara does.

Scharffi: Elizabeth Decroo of Tarantum, Pennsylvania, was watching buds on her *scharffi* and keeping hands off the water pot so as not to lose the flowers — "They are so touchy about wet feet and soggy soil."

'*White Mountain*': Robert Shatzer of Albright, West Virginia, described this cane as one that does not get huge — one of Mrs. Praetorius' hybrids. She developed the whole Sylvan series, and 'Midnight Melody'.

Echinosepala: A stinker to grow and can be hard to root, Robert observes.

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LET'S GET DOWN TO CASES

By BEE OLSON

Members of the American Begonia Society are seeking information, specific, detailed information, constantly, continuously. This is a statement of fact proven by letters received over a long period of time by every office and every department of the American Begonia Society. These letters come from almost everywhere.

Begonia growers want answers, now, and what cannot be answered today, they surely want tomorrow. I believe we can supply these answers. I believe we should all join in an honest effort to do our part to answer these needs of members of our society.

New begonia members are seeking advice on raising begonias from seed, cuttings, leaves, divisions, on where to buy plants, tubers, seeds, proper potting mixes, fertilizers, pest controls, proper containers, whether to grow out-of-doors, in the lath-house or greenhouse, or on the window sill. Articles covering these questions have appeared in *The Begonian* in past issues and new members should be encouraged to make use of the library to find these answers. Future plans of our Begonian include new articles covering these questions. General questions and general answers.

But our letters are suggesting more specific knowledge about specific begonias, the history of the begonia, whether it is a species or a hybrid, where it came from, when and how to grow it, where to obtain it. These members would like all this information together with a picture of the begonia.

This brings up the question — just which begonia grower should record this information and furnish this picture. There are many qualified growers who could do this, and probably would do this. This would be a terrific task for one or even a committee of growers to tackle. And even then, would they be able to report every little detail about a certain begonia if they had not lived with it daily

over a long period of time? Knowing a begonia is like knowing a person, you have to live with it and love it and have patience with its little idiosyncrasies, provide its requirements, and if you care enough you will be rewarded with a specimen plant.

Who can supply this information? I think I know. Let's see what you as fellow members think of the idea.

At the last begonia show you attended, weren't there specimen plants that thrilled you to behold? Weren't you surprised to see some begonias that you admired grown into such lovely plants? Didn't you enter a plant that brought oh's and ah's from visitors? Weren't you overwhelmed by the questions and comments? The comments made you happy, and the questions were easy to answer, because you knew that begonia, didn't you? Well, there is your answer.

I suggest this — that the Branches of the American Begonia Society have the trophy winners at their shows report on the begonias that won the trophies. The Branch perhaps can provide the pictures. But each grower is the one who can supply in detail the life of that particular begonia and, in most cases, can probably provide the history. If help is needed on the history that can be provided. But if each trophy winner would record the history of that plant from the time he obtained it as a plant, cutting, or seed, to the minute the trophy was awarded, then we would have the right kind of an answer for our searching, seeking begonia growers everywhere.

What do you think? Is this the answer to the case of "How do we grow that begonia?"

If your answer is "yes", then do this: at your next begonia show, take that picture, get that member to record the fact about that begonia, and send the story to your Editor for a future *Begonian* issue.

Patronize Our Advertisers

A. B. S. EXPANSION IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

By RICHARD R. HAMMOND
Northwest Editor

Here in the Puget Sound region of the Pacific Northwest there is a rapidly expanding interest in begonias. The climate is ideal for begonias, and many people have at least a few in their yards. With this great interest, it stands to reason that organized clubs of begonia growers will show an increase in membership.

The Seattle Branch of the American Begonia Society has been in operation for several years. It has had its ups and downs in membership, but for the past four years has averaged more than sixty people present at each meeting. Because members were drawn from the entire metropolitan area, some of them had to drive twenty miles or more to attend meetings. Also, with increased growth, the meeting hall was becoming too small.

These conditions led some members to consider forming a new Branch of the American Begonia Society, and a few who lived on the east side of Lake Washington believed that this area offered the greatest opportunity. Here was a suburban community which included several small incorporated towns. Most of the homes were fairly new and most of the owners were interested in gardening and beautifying their surroundings.

To compile a list of possible members for the new organization, names were taken from the guest book from the Seattle Branch show, and those who lived in this area were contacted by mail in the form of a news bulletin and in person. Other sources of contacts were nurseries and garden stores. Local newspapers gave publicity to the enterprise. Through much work by several persons led by Martin and Nola Emrick, a nucleus was brought together for the first meeting.

From this start, there is now a flourishing Branch of the American Begonia Society — the Eastside Branch, in Bellevue, Washington.

Now groundwork is being laid for a new Branch in the southern part of the Seattle metropolitan area. With help from both established groups, it is hoped that this new Branch can be chartered early in 1967.

What are some of the problems resulting from expansion?

The most noticeable result is the drawing-off of members from the established Branch. While this is not so evident at first as some members hold dual memberships, when renewal time comes, many decide to join the new group when it is closer to their homes. To offset the loss of these members, greater effort must be used to solicit new members.

Another possible problem can be resentment between the Branches — although we have not had that difficulty. There must be no attempt by the older group to try to "run" the new organization. When new Branches are organized, it must be recognized that they must make their own way. Initial help and advice will be welcome, but from then on they should be on their own.

There are a number of advantages to expansion. For one thing, it increases the strength of the American Begonia Society. And there are many things that Branches can cooperate in doing, putting on shows and plant sales, producing culture bulletins, etc. Furthermore, the competition between the various groups should make all strive to do better jobs.

There is a healthy growth here in the Northwest. Hopefully, it will not stop at three Branches of the American Begonia Society.

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ADRIAN SCHMIDT . . .

(Continued from Page 24)

2 inch leaves, often double spiraled, are held high on long, green stems covered with red hair. The center zone of the leaf's underside is red, while the outer zone is apple green bordered with a half-inch red margin. On the upper leaf, very dark green surrounds the sinus while the center zone is light silver gray with irregular bands of dark green covered with silver spots. It is very robust and makes a well-rounded specimen.

B. 'Joel Gillingwaters', from the same seed pod as B. 'Lakewood', is one of my favorites, being a very lovely rex with a plain, long, ovate, pointed leaf lobed one-fourth of its diameter, making a very hardy, full plant which is apparently trouble-free. It holds its leaves through the winter. The upper side of the leaf is mainly grey-green with the vein area pronounced with dark green. The veins are light green, and the leaf is bordered with a green margin. On the underside of the leaf the main area is light green with red veins, surrounded by a wide area of red. A one-half inch border of the same red margins the leaf.

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REPORT OF A.B.S. BOARD MEETING

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society was called to order by President Everett Wright at 2:30 p. m. Sunday, December 3, in the South Gate Auditorium. Roll was called with twelve officers and ten Branches reporting.

President Wright presented the problem for which this special meeting had been called, a discussion of the Dr. Creighton fund.

According to the minutes of the annual meeting September 3, the original amount asked for was \$500.00. The Western Pennsylvania Branch donated \$100.00 to start the project, then the American Begonia Society voted to advance \$200.00, to be replaced as donations are made from members and Branches. To date we have collected \$251.00 and the amount of \$1.49 is still required to fulfill our obligation.

It was emphasized that all money for the Dr. Creighton fund should be sent to the A. B. S. Treasurer.

A letter from Michael Kartuz regarding the Eastern Regional Convention was read. The Board approved holding the convention this year, pending further details, but stipulated that it be called a meeting and not a convention.

Walter Barnett, Treasurer, brought up the business of reproduction of old *Begonians*. Orders and money for these should be sent to the Librarian.

(This report condensed from minutes supplied by the Secretary.)

RUMMAGE SALE IN MARCH

A rummage sale to raise money for the American Begonia Society is planned for March, the exact dates to be announced later. All Branches, please save rummage for this sale.

Alice Martin,
Ways and Means Chairman.

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CALENDAR

Feb. 2 — Westchester Branch: Two members will be speakers. Opal Ahern will tell about growing under lights, and Ruth Pease will tell about hybridizing begonias.

Feb. 8 — Inglewood Branch: Henry Zepeda, representing MagAmp fertilizer, will be guest speaker. He will acquaint members with a type of fertilizer that lasts six months. A member will give a short study on some plant.

Feb. 10 — Philobegonia Branch: Continuing 1967 study of star leaf begonias, this month's program will be on *B. fuscocomaculata*. Meeting will be at noon, at home of Mrs. W. Albert Fox, 18 Gilmore Avenue, Merchantville, New Jersey.

Feb. 10 — San Gabriel Valley Branch: The program will be "Landscaping with Shade Plants" with Mrs. Sylvia Leatherman as guest speaker. A plot plan will be given to each person attending the meeting.

Feb. 16 — Foothill Branch: This will be the first in a series of programs dealing with the propagation, growing, and care of begonias and ferns.

Feb. 17 — North Long Beach Branch: Fifth birthday celebration, with potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m. Guest speaker will be Dorothy Behrends, A. B. S. Identification Garden Director.

Feb. 24 — Redondo Area Branch: Henry Zepeda of the Neil A. Mclean Co. will talk on soil fumigation, MagAmp fertilizer, and pest control.

March 2 — Westchester Branch: Henry Zacharda will speak on "Bromeliads".

March 2 — Whittier Branch: Rudolf Zieshenne, A.B.S. Nomenclature Director, will speak on "Begonias". He will furnish the plant table.

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