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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 Editor.....Mrs. Hertha Benjamin
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Southern Editor.....Mrs. Don Wagner
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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.

NORTHEAST BEGONIAS IN JUNE

By ELDA HARING

June is a hectic time in outdoor gardens in the northeast. Our growing season is short and we must of necessity spend our time planting seed, weeding, watering and coaxing our outdoor plants to grow quickly in order to give us weeks of bloom before frost. In spite of all this activity some of us find time to sow seeds of begonias in June.

While begonias may be grown from seed at any season of the year, the warmth of summer days is so conducive to quick germination and fast growth that it seems a shame not to take advantage of perfect growing conditions. I like to sow seed of semperflorens in June because the young plants are stocky and ready to bloom indoors by September or October. Many varieties of begonias may be grown from seed obtained from the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. Nothing can be more fascinating than growing some of the wonderful varieties thus obtained. One of the first begonias I ever grew from seed was *sutherlandi*, which gives me so much pleasure now many years later when it wakes up from its winter's sleep and blooms so delicately during the summer months.

Really, growing begonias from seed is so very easy, I cannot understand why more begonia enthusiasts do not become fascinated with this pastime.

First, you need a container with bottom drainage. This can be a flower pot, a flat, cottage cheese carton, or an aluminum foil loaf pan. The latter is lightweight and easy to handle.

COVER PICTURE

Begonia x hiemalis 'Emily Clibran' — hybrid of colorful tuberous species combined with the winter-flowering habit of *B. socotrana*; showy double flowers rose-pink, flushed orange; waxy rounded leaves.

—Photo by HERTHA A. BENJAMIN

It will fit a window sill, will take up little room on the fluorescent light shelf, or will fit anywhere in the greenhouse. With a few holes easily punched in the bottom, using an ice pick or a common lead pencil, it is a perfect container.

A proper seedling medium for the fine seed of begonia is important. One of the best is a mixture of ½ milled sphagnum, ¼ perlite and ¼ vermiculite. Vermiculite may be used alone or one of the sterile potting mixes can be used. The container should be filled to within ½ inch of the top, and the mix watered by placing the container in a tub or receptacle containing about two inches of warm water. When the top of the mix is wet you may be sure the medium is thoroughly moistened. Let the container drain before sowing the seed.

If you are going to use seed taken from your own plants, crush the pod in a fine tea strainer held over a piece of plain white bond paper. The chaff will remain in the strainer and give you nice clean seed to sow. Hold the paper containing the seed carefully over the seedling mix and allow the seeds to roll off onto the mix. Press the seed *very lightly* with finger tips to make good contact with the mix. Be sure to label each variety sown as well as making a note of the date of sowing. Place the container in a plastic bag, making sure the bag does not rest on the seedling medium, and leaving one end of the bag open. Excess humidity in June could cause mold to form on the seedling mix.

Place the container where it gets strong light but no sun. Under fluorescent lights, best results are had by placing the container six to eight inches away from the lights. Watch the seed pan carefully to be sure the top of the medium never dries out. Water the container by placing in a

(Continued on Page 112)

THE LONGWOOD GARDENS METHOD OF PROPAGATING WINTER-FLOWERING BEGONIAS

By GERARDUS DE STOPPELAR AND RICHARD W. LIGHTY

During the late summer and autumn months, when the winter-flowering begonias are at their peak display at Longwood Gardens, visitors frequently inquire into our cultural techniques for growing these outstanding but temperamental plants. Since our methods of propagation and growing differ somewhat from the customary procedures, and since many inquiries have been received, it is felt that these should be recorded for possible use by others.

The usual method of propagation is by tip-cuttings taken in the spring, or, less commonly, by leaf-cuttings taken in the autumn. At Longwood Gardens we have found that these methods produce consistently inferior plants when compared to our method, which we call leaf-cortex cuttings. Briefly, a leaf-cortex cutting differs from a straight leaf cutting in that a small part of the stem is included with the cutting rather than confining it to strictly petiolar material* (Text-fig. 1). It is our contention that the inclusion of this small piece of stem cortex is of the utmost importance for the future development of the plant.

To explain this, we must look to the anatomy of the stem at the point of divergence of the petiole (Text-fig. 1). We find that the stem is com-

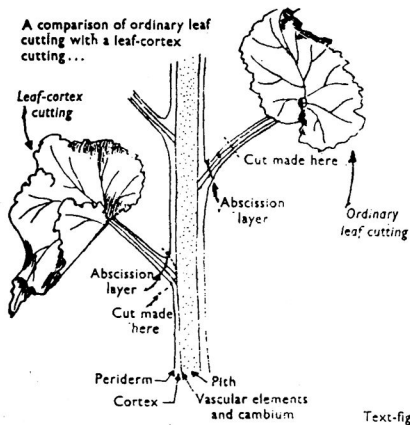
prised of four general regions, the periderm, the cortex, the vascular tissue, and the pith. The periderm is the outer layer and consists largely of cells modified for protection of the plant from desiccation and injury. The cortex is, by and large, made up of parenchyma cells which are undifferentiated and rich in stored food. The vascular tissue is made up of two layers of highly modified cells used in food and water transport with a very thin layer of tissue, called the cambium, sandwiched between. The cambium is the tissue which is responsible for production of new vascular tissue and hence is capable of active growth by division. The last layer of tissue, found at the center of the stem, is the pith. This layer is not greatly modified, but due to the generally large size of the cells, is incapable of much further growth and division. This, basically, is the structure of a stem, and the petiole of the leaf is not too dissimilar.

In the process of taking a regular leaf-cutting, the cut is made across the petiole at a right angle to its length. This exposes only a small area of the tissues capable of producing callus; that is, the cambium and the cortex. The pith is open and readily accessible to bacterial or fungal rots which often plague those propagating by this method. With the leaf-cortex cutting, the situation is quite different. The cut is made through the stem cortex below the abscission layer of the petiole, and therefore exposes mainly cortical tissue to the medium. Since the cortex is capable of producing the unorganized type of growth we call callus, this type of cutting provides a larger surface from which such growth can take place. Additionally, the leaf-cortex cutting exposes no pith to possible invasion of

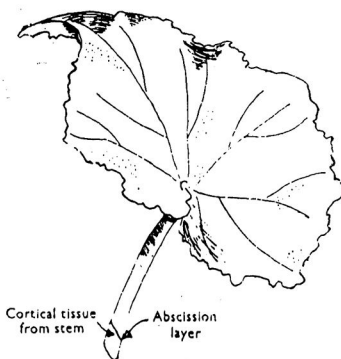
This article appeared originally in the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* for March, 1963, and was reprinted in *The Professional Gardener* published by the National Association of Gardeners. Through the efforts of Mrs. Ruth P. Merry, former Eastern Editor of *The Begonian*, and Mrs. Hertha A. Benjamin, present Eastern Editor, we have been granted permission to reprint, from The Royal Horticultural Society, Longwood Gardens, The National Association of Gardeners, and the authors.

*Editor's Note: This appears to be the type of cutting usually known in this country as a "cutting with a heel".

A comparison of ordinary leaf cutting with a leaf-cortex cutting...

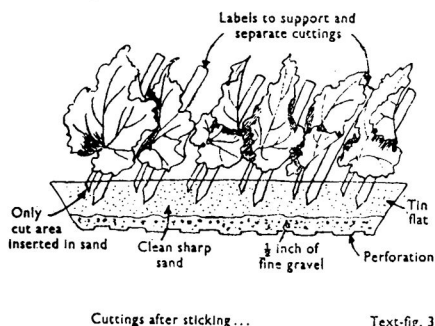


Text-fig. 1



A correctly made leaf-cortex cutting...

Text-fig. 2

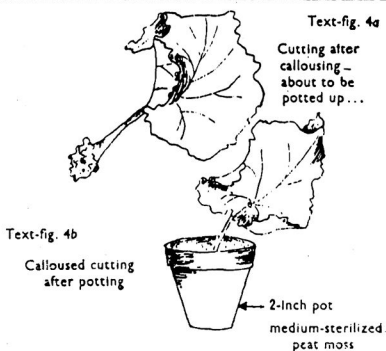


Cuttings after sticking...

Text-fig. 3

Text-fig. 4a

Cutting after callousing - about to be potted up...



Text-fig. 4b

Calloused cutting after potting

2-Inch pot medium-sterilized peat moss

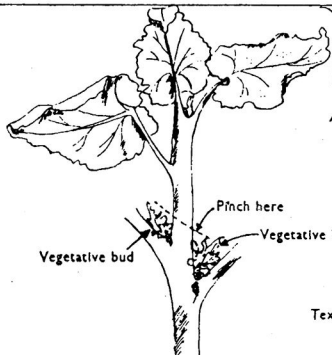
Text-fig. 5a



Text-fig. 5b



4-Inch pot



Text-fig. 6

L. M. OTT

rot organisms, and the possibility of failure from this cause is thereby reduced. Actual observation has confirmed these two points.

One other point is worthy of mention before a detailed description of the method is given. The timing of starting the cuttings is of great importance, particularly where outstand-

ing specimens are desired. This is not by reason of variation in ease of rooting, but for purposes of building, through pinching, a tall compact plant. The longer the plant can be grown before it is allowed to flower, the better the final result. For this reason leaf cuttings or leaf-cortex cuttings taken in the fall, though suffer-

ing a greater mortality, always produce a superior plant to tip-cuttings taken in the spring. The greater loss can easily be compensated for by taking an initially larger group of cuttings, since there are many more leaves to choose from than tips.

Let us now start with the stock plant from which we cut the propagating material in early November. Plants used for these purposes must, of course, be as free from rots and leaf-lesions as possible. The number of cuttings taken should be several times the number of finished plants desired. The ease of rooting varies considerably with the cultivar used, the white clones tending to be more difficult than the yellows, pinks or reds. The leaves used should be fully expanded and mature, but in good condition. The cut should be made below the abscission layer (which appears as a thin line around the base of the petiole), starting in the axil of the petiole and curving slightly towards the center of the stem, and then outwards, so as to come out below the small petiolar swelling in the stem at the base of the petiole (Text-fig. 1). Care must be taken not to include any bud that might be in the axil of the petiole. Any thin strips of tissue or long tapering points must be trimmed off, since they will never produce callosus, and offer a point for rots to start (Text-fig. 2). The knife is dipped in alcohol after each cut.

The leaves are allowed to remain in the open air for about an hour after they are severed from the plant, so as to dry the cut surfaces and further reduce the chance of rots. The cuttings are then dipped in a fungicide and placed in the callusing medium in suitably clean tin flats. The type of flats used are approximately 3 inches deep and have perforated bottoms for quick drainage. The drainage is further augmented by placing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of fine gravel on the bottom. Sharp sand is used as the callusing medium on top of the gravel. All these materials are made as ster-

ile and clean as possible to prevent rots from starting. The leaves are stuck in the sand to a depth of about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch and are supported by wooden stakes. The stakes serve not only to hold the leaves in position, but to promote air circulation around the cuttings and thus reduce the possibility of fungal rot (Text-fig. 3). The flats are then placed in a heavily shaded house with high humidity and a temperature of 75°F ., plus supplemental heat from the bottom. The cuttings are watered well after being stuck in the sand, and then are allowed to dry quite a bit before another watering. It is essential that the cuttings be watered well as needed, and allowed to become quite dry before the next watering. In about seven weeks the callosus should be well formed, and the cuttings ready for potting. At this time there is as yet no root or shoot growth evident (Text-fig. 4).

The callused cuttings are potted in 2-inch pots in sterilized peat moss, and moved to a house with a constant temperature of 72°F ., where high humidity and heavy shading are maintained. The environmental requirements remain constant for the rest of the growing period. When the new shoot growth reaches about 3 inches in height, the plants are potted on into 4-inch pots (Text-fig. 5). A medium of $\frac{1}{3}$ soil, $\frac{1}{3}$ sand, and $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mixture of cow manure, peat moss and a liberal quantity of charcoal, is used for this step. The fertilization program is begun at this stage and consists of feeding the plants with a soluble fertilizer with an analysis of 20-20-20 every two weeks at a concentration of $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful per gallon. An additional feeding of fish emulsion is given once every four weeks. From the time the cuttings are taken until they are placed on display, they are sprayed with Captan every week.

When the plants in 4-inch pots become pot-bound, they are placed in 7-inch pots. At this time, around the middle of June, they should have

reached a height of 8 inches. The medium used from this point on consists of 60 per cent soil, 15 per cent oak leaves, 10 per cent sand, 10 per cent charcoal, and 5 per cent well-rotted cow manure. All ingredients are sterilized before use. The feeding program continues as described above for the 4-inch pot stage. It is essential that the watering be well controlled at this stage, and that changes in light intensity be compensated for by more frequent or less frequent watering.

At the time the plants are planted into 7-inch pots, the pinching is begun. This is perhaps the most important single part in the growing process for these plants. In spite of the fact that cuttings taken in the manner indicated above seem to throw more shoots from the bottom than those done in other ways, it is still essential to control the rate of upward growth and the compactness of the plant through pinching. The procedure followed is, in spite of its importance, relatively simple. When a given shoot is from 3 to 6 inches long, breaks appear in the axils of the lower leaves. In most cases these will be vegetative shoots and the tip of that branch will then be pinched back below the third visible leaf. If the breaks are of a floral nature, the main shoot is allowed to grow until vegetative breaks appear. In effect, this procedure increases the number of vegetative shoots and adds to the compactness of the plant (Text-fig. 6). The important thing at this point is to build up a pyramid of basic branches from which the later flowering shoots will emerge. The fact that a great deal more time is available under this method than when tip cuttings are used is a major factor in the production of large, compact plants. Other items of importance are the initial production of a large callus from which several basal shoots may be produced, and the correct schedule of fertilization and spraying.

Generally the plants become pot-

bound around the middle of July and are transferred to 10-inch pots. The intensity of pinching is increased until late August, after which only the flower buds are removed. Staking is very necessary during this period and we prefer to stake each major branch individually. Some care must be exercised in tying as the shoots are brittle and easily broken.

If the procedures outlined above are followed closely, the resultant plants will be approximately 3½ to 4 feet in height when allowed to flower in late September. The compactness depends on the pinching, while the condition of the foliage is dependent on the correct use of fungicides. The over-all size of the plant is a function of the time the cutting is taken and the type of cutting used. The percentage of cuttings resulting in mature plants is also dependent on the type of cutting; the leaf-cortex type being the most successful of the leaf cuttings.

The personal satisfaction of the grower with the superior appearance of plants produced as well as the enhanced display value of that plant, make the additional time and attention involved in its production well worth the effort. Production of winter-flowering begonias by this method is a job for the specialist, but the product is recognizedly superior to all other methods tried at Longwood Gardens.

BUXTON CHECK LIST OF BEGONIAS

A reference book for identification and origin of begonias.

An aid to hybridizers to check on previously registered names.

Price \$6.00 (In Calif. add 24¢ sales tax)

Order from:

**TERRY OLMSTED, Librarian
1926 E. Mission Road
Fallbrook, Calif. 92028**

TALLY OF KUSLER HYBRIDS

By BELVA NELSON KUSLER

In response to requests for publication of a list of the hybrids and cultivars which I have released for distribution, I'm submitting what I hope will be a clarification of some of the confusion which exists. Numerous people have written to me requesting just such a listing in order to help correctly identify the begonias they are raising as Kusler hybrids. A few days

ago I received a call from New York asking me to verify the authenticity of a list of forty hybrids attributed to me. I would wish that I had produced such a number of successful and distinctive plants, but it would perhaps require another lifetime to bring to that figure the total of begonias I would consider registering.

A list of my hybrids and cultivars and their parentage follows:

'Anna Christine'	<i>salmon rubra</i> x <i>dichroa</i>
'Crispie'	<i>dregei</i> x <i>crispula</i>
'Delphine Fosmo'	<i>dregei</i> x 'Laura Engelbert'
'Dorothy Barton'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>dregei</i>
'Frances Lyons'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>dregei</i>
'Gigi Fleetham'	'Lenore Olivier' selfed
'Gwen Lowell'	<i>vellozoana</i> x <i>obscura</i>
'Jean Herr'	<i>deliciosa</i> x <i>kenworthyi</i>
'Jeanne Fleetham'	'Lenore Olivier' selfed
'Jill Adair'	African species x <i>vellozoana</i>
'Laura Engelbert'	<i>dichroa</i> x 'Elaine'
'Lenore Olivier'	<i>dichroa</i> x 'Elaine'
'Margaret Stevens'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>goegoensis</i>
'Nancy Gail'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>dregei</i>
'Peggy Stevens'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>goegoensis</i>
'Sophie Cecile'	<i>sceptrum</i> x 'Lenore Olivier'
'Victoria Kartack'	<i>sutherland</i> x <i>vellozoana</i>

One of the most difficult features of hybridizing is the decision as to whether or not a hybrid is good enough to be distributed. I generally submit my tentative choices (out of tens of thousands of seedlings throughout the years) to a test by friends upon whose judgment I can rely. They live in widely separated parts of the country and the hybrids are grown under varying conditions — in greenhouses, out-of-doors, in

houses, and under fluorescent lights. Because of this, there are hybrids that have been introduced on the urging of others, even if I considered them second best. I sanctioned the release of these choices without my name attached, as collectors' items, but now that there is general confusion in the nomenclature it appears that it would be helpful for me to identify them as mine. They are as follows:

'Freda Stevens'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>goegoensis</i>
'Grace Lucas'	'Tingley Mallet' x 'Laura Engelbert'
'Miyo Berger'	'Tingley Mallet' x 'Lenore Olivier'
'Raquel Wood'	'Bow-Nigra' x <i>manicata aureo-maculata</i>
'Rosalie Wahl'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>goegoensis</i>
'Swirly Top'	'Lenore Olivier' x <i>kenworthyi</i>

The plants in this Collector's List are better than average, with characteristics which particularly appealed to those who tested them. They came into distribution because these people felt they were too good to be lost to cultivation. Of these, 'Raquel Wood' is a small rhizomatous; 'Grace Lucas' and 'Miyo Berger' are progeny of 'Tingley Mallet' (of which there are few), though they have not inherited her profusion and beauty of blossoms; 'Rosalie Wahl' is a sister seedling of the 'Stevens Sisters', a profuse bloomer but a rangy grower; 'Swirly Top' is a small fibrous plant of dark, curled, and fluted leaves, which has never bloomed for me but whose neat habit of growth and shining leaves are distinctive, fitting its name; 'Freda Stevens' is a plant which some very discriminating growers felt should be introduced, a sister seedling of 'Peggy' and 'Margaret Stevens' (Mabel Corwin calls them the "Big Reds"),

Another hybrid, *dichroa x delicosa*, that I had given to several people to grow under the label 'Kusler #4', has turned up in circulation. No doubt I inadvertently gave the go-ahead sign for release to someone who was testing it along with other begonias of mine. I had saved it for a number of years as it is a rather good plant, but that it was too much like 'Anna Christine' in appearance to be introduced, though one parent is different. I worked with it in hybridizing, crossing it on itself, as well as back-crossing with *delicosa*, and in both cases the resulting plants did not equal the quality of the 'Kusler #4'. I believe, however, that it has some value as a parent for crossing because of its good lineage. I mention it here because it has appeared on some of the exchange lists of begonias and this information should serve to identify it.

It is ever my hope that the plants I introduce are of such quality that no grower will feel disappointment on acquiring and raising them. But I am dependent too upon test growers for their opinions, as sometimes I produce

plants which perform just engagingly under my conditions but magnificently under theirs. For instance, at first I rejected 'Sophie Cecile' because we thought it was too big, 'Swirly Top' and 'Jean Herr' because they didn't bloom for me, 'Crispie' because its blossoms are tiny and not profuse, and 'Rosalie Wahl' because of rangy growth. The responsibility for saving them has rested on the choice of others.

While a hybridizer exercises judgment and as much control as possible, still it is distressing for him to have raised hundreds of seedlings without finding a winner among them. Thus there are on the market today many hybrids which perhaps should not have been introduced. The nomenclature is cluttered with them. But it could be said that after a plant leaves its creator its survival depends on its merit. If it is not attractive, or is lacking in vigor, or is very difficult to grow, the demand for it will decline, ultimately causing its disappearance from cultivation. Sadly, in the meantime it will have been a source of disappointment and frustration to those who have acquired it.

STANFORD -- ATKINSON

U. U. Stanford, a begonia hybridizer of some note, was a member of the Texastar Branch of the American Begonia Society in Houston, Texas. He has registered one begonia and has others soon to be registered.

Mrs. T. J. Atkinson, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was President of the Louisiana Capital Branch for two consecutive years and was Vice-President one year.

Mr. Stanford left Houston and came to Port Arthur to live. Mrs. Atkinson left Baton Rouge and came to Port Arthur to live. Both joined the Lone Star Branch.

With so many interests in common, they were soon married and now hope to work together and do a great work with begonias in the future.

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND FLIGHT

No. 1 — *B. lubbersi* —

Brazil. Unlike any other begonia yet introduced. Silver-splashed, dark, boat-shaped leaves, with the rare look of *Caladium humboldti*. Exotic. Flowers white or pinkish-white, depending on the light; very large blooms producing equally large seed pods. Good begonia. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 2 — *B. domingensis* —

Also called 'Peanut brittle'. Tiny, glossy, crinkled leaves, fleshy yet firm; much growth close to base. Free-flowering pink blossoms. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 3 — *B. limmingheian* Morr. —

A natural species from Brazil. For history and description of plant see *The Begonian* for April. This is a beautiful basket-type plant. Ours has been in bloom for several months and some of the stems are from six to eight feet long, reaching the ground where they form roots and start to grow. We hope you will try it. \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 4 — *B. xanthina* —

Densely bushy plant with yellow-veined green leaves, large orange-yellow flowers. Perfect germination. \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 5 — *B. 'Laila'* —

F₁ hybrid *semperflorens*; salmon-red. This is a color that has never before been seen in a *semperflorens* begonia. The growth is low and compact. Very large flowers; late bloomer. 35 cents per pkt.

No. 6 — *B. 'Linda'* —

Low-growing, rich-blooming, flowers salmon-rose. Hardy plant that will produce a profusion of flowers 35 cents per pkt.

No. 7 — *B. 'Dwarf Carmen'* —

Small, compact *semperflorens* with light pink flowers 35 cents per pkt.

No. 8 — *B. 'Jewelite'* —

Scarlet-red to pink shades, bronze foliage. Seventy-five per cent double, semi-double, and crested blooms. 50 cents per pkt.

The *semperflorens* begonias listed above have been requested by some

Seed Fund patrons who like to grow them for their masses of beautiful blooms, both for pots and bedding. F₁ hybrids will grow in sun or shade and provide color for many months with very little care.

No. 9 — *B. bradei* —

Brazil. Fairly new. Dainty, slim, soft-hairy, green leaves lined with red. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 10 — *B. Philippine* sp. —

Easy culture; rapid grower. Leaves short-hairy, narrow serrated deep green. Flowers are of medium size, clear pink, abundantly produce, steady bloomer. There is some variation in color of this plant; some seedlings have lighter green leaves with paler flowers; others deep green with reddish tones on stems and deep pink flowers. This condition evidently came about while the plant was growing in its natural state in the wilds. 50 cents per pkt.

No. 11 — *B. coccinea* —

Brazil. Bright green leaves, unbroken by spots or splashes. Large clusters of red or pink flowers. Parent of many illustrious hybrids. Tall growing. A friend living in Kenya sent seed to the Seed Fund. 25 cents per pkt.

GREENHOUSE PLANTS

Stephanotis floribunda —

Madagascar Jasmine. Clusters of waxy, long-lasting, two-inch tubular, very fragrant flowers on a twining vine with thick, shining, green leaves. Two seeds for 25 cents.

Schlumbergera — bridgesii —

Well known favorite. Umbrella-shaped plant, bearing hundreds of flowers. Color varies. 35 cents per pkt.

Pentas —

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THIS IS YOUR MAGAZINE

We would like to express our thanks to the Editor of *The Begonian* for the fine job he is doing. However, it is difficult for him to do his job unless he is supplied with enough good articles to fill the pages.

Articles are needed to supply information for beginners and advanced growers, information from basic growing to hybridization.

There are many tips and ideas every begonia grower could pass on to other growers — the plant you found to be so easy to grow when it was supposed to be a problem. Let others in on your secret of overcoming weather and climatic problems, how beautiful plants can be grown without a greenhouse, or how a shelter or greenhouse was built on a shoestring.

If you have any questions or problems, send them, too, and maybe another reader has found the answer or solved the problem.

Remember, *this is your magazine*, and the only way it can serve you is if you let us know what you want and send us articles which interest you.

VERA L. NAUMANN
Public Relations Director
IRIS S. DELAMETER
Co-chairman

RESEARCH FUND GROWS

A check for \$50.00 from the Knickerbocker Branch of the A.B.S. has been received by President Everett Wright, to help repay the money advanced by the American Begonia Society for the Dr. Creighton Research Fund.

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CANE-STEMMED BEGONIAS FROM LEAF-STEM CUTTINGS

By MRS. P. C. THURMAN
Homer, Louisiana

My experience with rooting leaf-stem cuttings of cane-stemmed begonias has been very successful in producing more plants. I make my cuttings in the manner shown on the accompanying sketch. After placing Rootone on the fresh cuttings, I insert them in perlite.

At the present time I have a large number of cane-stemmed leaf cuttings growing in this manner. Begonia 'Corallina de Lucerna', B. 'Orange Rubra', and B. 'President Carnot', as well as many others, have been rooted successfully in this manner. B. 'Alzasco' is sometime difficult to propagate by many growers; however, it has done well for me with this method.



Take a cutting from your stock plant with as many as five leaves and make the cutting as I have illustrated in my sketch. Cut the leaf from the stem, but let a small portion of the stem remain on the base of the leaf. Use a hormone powder if you prefer and place the cutting in your favorite rooting medium. In a short time you will have a healthy, fresh, new plant ready to pot and grow into a lovely specimen. Try it.

EVER-MOIST HANGING BASKET

Hanging baskets — lovely for many begonias and gesneriads — permit use of the air space above if window sills or benches are crowded. But rapid drying and the necessity for frequent watering is a problem.

Mamie Claggett of Houston, Texas, shared with members of Round Robin 3 a demonstration given in her Branch showing how to make a hanging basket that will not dry out.

The basket is first lined with plastic net and then with a two-inch layer of sphagnum moss. A four-inch flower pot, corked to hold water, is placed in the center of the basket. Plants are held in position while potting mix is filled in around them, between pot and sphagnum. Keeping the pot filled with water is simple and keeps moisture even and constant in the basket.

BEGONIAS IN JUNE . . .

(Continued from Page 103)

pan of warm water and letting moisture soak up from the bottom so as not to disturb the tiny seeds. Some begonias will germinate in ten days others will take three weeks or longer.

As soon as germination is evident remove the plastic cover, but continue to water from below. When seedlings are about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in size, they may be fed, using a water-soluble fertilizer using $\frac{1}{4}$ the recommended strength. Feed the plants every ten days until they are large enough to be removed with the tip of a teaspoon, and plant them in a light potting soil mix. A bulb pot or another aluminum foil loaf pan can be used at this point. Plant the seedlings one inch apart and when their leaves are touching, they then may be planted to individual two-inch pots, shifting to larger size as they grow. By this time, most varieties of begonias can take an hour or two of morning sun, or they may be grown on to maturity under fluorescent lights or in shaded greenhouses.

HYBRIDIZING REGISTRATION

By DR. W. GRANT MCGREGOR
and CHARLES E. TAGG

The American Begonia Society has reestablished the Hybridizing Registration Committee, of which the authors are the co-chairmen. It is important that the membership of the ABS realize that this committee is not established to duplicate the efforts of the Nomenclature Director. The purpose of the committee is not to record the crosses being introduced, but to gather hybridizing information which will assist those interested in pursuing the fascinating hobby of hybridization of begonias.

The records to be kept will provide information concerning the dominance of inheritable traits; growth behavior, disease-resistance, appearance of leaves, stems, and flowers, etc. It is also important to record crosses which were not successful. (Summaries of such information will be released through *The Begonian* as large enough collections of data are received to produce meaningful results.

Hybridization of begonias began more than one hundred thirty years ago. By 1847 gardeners' magazines began reporting on the results of various crosses. In the intervening years an increasing number of new types and varieties continued to be introduced each year. We have only to peruse *The Begonian*, seed catalogues, or treatises on begonias to realize the extent of this work. Both professional and amateurs have participated and, as the education of each generation reaches a higher standard, better trained amateurs become interested and take part.

As we study this work it is evident that hundreds of varieties and species combinations have been studied but little information is available other than the resulting cultivar which has been introduced to the trade. This cultivar usually has been selected because it is unusual and therefore is *not* indicative of the dominant traits

of the parents. These crosses yield only limited information for that reason. In *B. semperflorens* we know that in crosses of unrelated types that single, red-flowering, dark foliage, upright plants will predominate in the progeny. However, among the other types of begonias, little data is available. Much has been done without being recorded.

The American Begonia Society can perform a very useful function through the cooperative effort of its members who are interested in hybridizing by collecting and recording this data. Much time can be lost on a new project repeating work which has already been done. This is a loss of effort which might better be expended on the hundreds of species and varieties still available for study.

Forms are now available to simplify the job of those who are ready to contribute information. These forms may be obtained by writing to either of the co-chairmen: Dr. W. Grant McGregor, 630 Westview Ave., Ottawa 3, Ont., Canada; or Mr. Charles E. Tagg, 2133 W. West Ave., Fullerton, Calif. 92633.

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ROUND ROBIN NOTES

What interests you? Besides many round robins on general begonia culture, we have openings in specialties on greenhouse growing, seed, rexes, hybridizing, gesneriads, miniatures, terrariums, lights, — and in Florida and Canada groups. Waiting to start are semperflorens and tuberous begonia flights and a second fern flight. When we fill these, we will start new ones!

Recent flights circulated outline drawings of leaves for comparison and identification. Pat Burdick of Savage, Minnesota, shared a water color of her own hybrid, 'Indian Scout'. Others share color slides and seed packets. A new hybridizing flight is making begonia family trees and charting bloom times. At Chairman Ruth Pease's suggestion.

Hybridizing: Muriel Perz of Long Beach, California, wants to try crossing reportedly sterile *phyllomaniaca*, because "there are times when Mother Nature plays tricks". Mac MacIntyre of Liverpool, England, thinks both *tomentosa* and *schmidtiana* characteristics are dominant and that their hybrids are likely to look so much like these parents as to give the impression that they are variations of the species. Barbara Walker of Bloomington, Indiana, cited apparent dominance of traits in other species: *boweri's* small size and dark stitching, *manicata's* red collar, *imperialis's* sanded leaf texture, *sceptrum's* foliage. Chester Nave spoke at the National Convention of crossing *leptotricha* with semperflorens varieties and nearly always getting large-leaved semps.

Mutations: Vernia Routh of Louisville, Mississippi, reported an African violet from a leaf of 'Pat's Pet' with blooms close to pure yellow, with green edge and prominent yellow stamens, not at all like its mother. She wonders why she has mutations on plants from leaf cuttings, while a friend seven miles away, rooting leaves from the same plants, has none.

Vernia uses Blue Whale and Sturdy; her friend uses Plant Marvel. Soil differs some, as she mixes her own. Both grow under lights.

'Maphil' vs. 'Cleopatra': Noting the controversy over whether these are two names for one hybrid or are two separate but similar begonias, Vernia placed plants of each name in her benches, with the same light and care. 'Cleopatra' made a much larger and darker plant (more brown) than 'Maphil' — on several plants of the same age. She concludes they are not identical. [*Exotica* 3 lists 'Cleopatra' as the offspring of 'Maphil' x 'Black Beauty', and 'Maphil' as a *boweri* seedling, although other references give them as synonyms. 'Maphil' was introduced as a chance *boweri* seedling by Mable Walker in the October 1952 *Begonian*.]

From Seed: Mary Enfinger of Jefferson, Maryland, recommends Sinnigia 'Dollbaby' from seed, to any beginner. "Nothing like them to give you that green-thumb feeling." Her seed germinated, grew like weeds, and bloomed in three to four months. A few inches from the fluorescent tube, they bloomed profusely.

Lucille Mearns of Louisville, Illinois, had several seedlings of *Chirita micromusa* up in a few days. Nothing came from B. 'Preussen', however, on any sowing she tried. Lucille wonders if perlite used as a drainage layer in seedpans reduces transmittal of heat to the medium.

Let *dregei* seedlings grow to fair size before transplanting, advises Bob Shatzer of Albright, West Virginia; and do not overwater when you transplant. Semituberous begonias like water but not too much at a time, and dislike waterlogged roots. Also, water these very little when they are resting.

Year-old seedlings of *B. kehworthyi* were blooming in March for Arline Peck of Pascoag, Rhode Island. These are slow growers, and she finds it difficult to keep leaves on the lower rhizomes. Arline notes that seedlings

of star-leaved begonias do not take on their correct colors and shapes right away — finds it fun to watch them develop. Pat Burdick quoted Florence Knock's advice to grow seed plants quite dry to avoid seed loss.

Cuttings: Try rooting hairy cuttings in vermiculite, wetting it well at the beginning and then not watering again till it is dry, suggests Jane Neal of Worthing, England. Usually cuttings will begin to root before you need to rewater. Hirsutes are the only ones she does not give extra humidity while rooting. For *luxurians*, Jane warns to take basal or side shoots; tip cuttings may kill the parent plant. She gives *luxurians* a free root run, and hers is about five feet and branching.

B. malabarica does not root easily for Anita Sickmon of Cheney, Kansas; it does not rot, but drops all except the top leaves. A *manicata aureo-maculata* leaf cutting, its petiole inserted in a four-inch pot of sphagnum, stood on the light bench from early April until late July before a plantlet appeared for Bob Shatzer. A large leaf of 'Madame Queen', received in September and handled the same way, sent up plantlets by early March.

B. lubbersi: Bob finds that *lubbersi* wants to grow like a palm, tall with a leafless trunk except for a tuft at the top. It resents having cuttings taken, may collapse if tipped. Also, cuttings usually drop all leaves, but will leaf out again after sitting a while. He finds that plants tend to lose their spots as they get older. Bob would like to try a hybrid of *lubbersi*, 'Helen Nicholson', which has the same large flowers, but pink.

Kusler Hybrids: Anita Sickmon finds 'Anna Christine' needs to be kept rather dry, but propagates readily. She believes that some of Belva Kusler's hybrids do better in the home than in the greenhouse. 'Sophie Cecile', 'Lenore Olivier', 'Anna Christine', 'Otto Hacker', and 'Gwen Lowell' are growing well in the kitchen window.

B. circumlobata: This species propagates easily for Anita, grows best on the dry side.

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(2) *Neoregelia zonata*. Olive-green leaves, blotched and banded with maroon-red. Flowers blue in cup.

(3) *Aechmea 'Foster's Favorite'*. Wine-red leaves. Pendant inflorescence of dark blue flowers, followed by dark berries which last for months.

(4) *Aechmea calyculata*. Medium size plant with upright, stiff leaves. Cone-shaped flower head, with yellow flowers.

(5) *Billbergia pyramidalis*. Easily grown. Light green leaves. Erect flower spikes. Brilliant color of red and blue.

(6) *Tillandsia bulbosa*. Brilliant red at flowering time.

FERNS — (1) *Cyrtomium falcatum* 'Rockfordianum' (Holly fern).

(2) *Nephrolepis exaltata* 'Whitmanii'.

(3) *Tectaria heracleifolia*. Bright green, bold-looking fronds. Small, but quite rare.

(4) *Diplazium esculentum*. Semi-dwarf tree fern from Burma.

(5) *Polypodium phyllitidis*. Florida strap fern.

(6) *Rumohra adiantiformis*. Used with cut flowers for flower arranging. Long lasting when cut.

PALMS — Small palm seedlings:

(1) *Veitchia merrillii*.

(2) *Chamaedorea elegans*.

(3) *Chamaedorea erumpens*.

(4) *Chamaedorea seifritzii*.

ORCHIDS — Small starts of species orchids, mounted on tree fern slaps.

VINES — (1) *Hoya carnosa variegata*. Variegated wax plant. Dark green leaves bordered with cream. Sometimes pink leaves.

(2) *Hoya compacta*. Thick green leaves that twist and curl.

(3) *Hoya exotica*. Waxy leaves, variegated two shades of green, and some pink.

(4) *Hoya longifolia*. Unusual wiry climber. Fleshy, long, thin leaves.

(5) *Philodendrons* and other climbing aroids. Three-tip cuttings, as one.

(6) *Chlorophytum*. Sometimes called 'Spider plant'. All green or green and white.

FOLIAGE PLANTS — (1) *Aralia seiboldii*. Star-shaped, glossy green leaves.

(2) *Rooted Croton* cuttings. Colorful foliage.

(3) *Dracaena sanderiana*. Narrow green leaves, with marginal bands of white.

(4) *Dieffenbachia*. Three different kinds. (Our choice.)

(5) *Euphorbia splendens*. 'Crown of Thorns'. Upright plant with small red bracts (flowers). Can be trained on wire.

(6) *Carissa grandiflora*. Dwarf natal plum. White flowers. Red fruit.

(7) *Maranta kerchoveana*. 'Prayer plant'. Oval green leaves with dark blotches.

(8) *Schefflera*. Shining green leaves. Makes lovely house or pot plant.

(9) *Scidapsis* (Pothos). 'Marble queen'. Broad ovate green leaves, marbled with white. New leaves sometimes all white.

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EASTERN CONFERENCE AUGUST 4-5

The annual conference of all members of the eastern Branches of the American Begonia Society will be held under the auspices of the Bessie Raymond Buxton Branch, at the Lexington Motor Inn, Lexington, Massachusetts, on August 4 and 5.

The program will include a flower show, in which all are invited to participate, with a special conference trophy, a trip to see the famous Glass Flowers and Gray Herbarium at Harvard University, a workshop, a luncheon, a dinner, and a banquet at which Daniel J. Foley, author and personal friend of the late Mrs. Buxton, will be the master of ceremonies, with a featured speaker.

Michael Kartuz and Mrs. Harold Scholberg are co-chairmen.

Registration before July 1 is \$22.00; after July 1, \$25.00. Registration chairman is Mrs. Lester Fox, 170 Marsh Hill Road, Dracut, Massachusetts, 01826.

All members of the Society are welcome and it is hoped that some of our western friends will come east. Early room registrations at Lexington Motor Inn are advised, since this will be the tourist season.

— RUTH P. MERRY
Publicity Chairman

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A.B.S. CONVENTION AND SHOW

The 35th annual Convention and Show of the American Begonia Society will be held September 2, 3, and 4, at the Hawthorne Memorial Building, El Segundo Blvd. and Prairie Ave., Hawthorne, California.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY SHOW

The San Gabriel Valley Branch of the American Begonia Society will hold its annual Begonia and Shade Plant Show Saturday and Sunday, July 22 and 23, at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, California.

The show will be open on Saturday from 1 to 5:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Admission will be free.

SEATTLE SEAFAIR SHOW

The Seattle Branch of the American Begonia Society will present its 13th annual Seafair Begonia, Fuchsia, and Shade Loving Plant Show on Saturday and Sunday, July 29 and 30, at the Loyal Heights Recreation Center. It will feature the theme: "Seafair Sheltered Gardens."

Hours of the show will be 2 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. Admission will be 35 cents.

FUCHSIAS IN HARMONY

Featuring "Fuchsias in Harmony" as the theme, the California National Fuchsia Society will present its 13th annual Fuchsia and Shade Plant Show on Friday, June 23 (3 to 9 p.m.), Saturday, June 24 (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.), and Sunday, June 25 (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.). The location will be the Orange County Fair Grounds in Costa Mesa, California. Admission will be \$1.00 for adults — 50 cents for children.

REPORT OF A.B.S. BOARD MEETING

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society was held in the Ventura Civic Auditorium in Ventura, California, on Sunday, April 30. The meeting was called to order at 1:20 p.m. by President Everett Wright.

Roll was called with twelve officers and thirteen branches reporting.

President Wright asked Mr. L. Stallings to introduce the officers of the Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch (Ventura).

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$846.52.

The Membership Secretary reported 2647 magazines mailed, and 154 new and renewal members.

The Advertising Manager reported accounts received at \$64.00, and receivables at \$110.00.

The Public Relations Director reported having heard from ten Branches as well as from foreign countries. The charter has been sent to the new South Seattle Branch.

The report of the judging course was \$201.56 balance on hand.

The Historian reported hearing from nine Branches with things for the book.

There was a nice report from the Nomenclature Director.

The Show Chairman, Bert Slatter, reported on the A.B.S. display in the Fern Show to be held May 20 and 21. He also discussed changing the point system from 90 to 80, and the fact that no judge should be permitted to change an entry without first notifying the Show Chairman. He also discussed the possibility of eliminating the novice class.

Bert Slatter made a motion to approve the above items, seconded by Charles Tagg. Rudolf Ziesenhenné suggested that the point system should be at least 85. The motion was amended to make the point system 85, and this carried.

After some discussion on the novice division, Walter Barnett made a motion that we continue to have this division in the show. Seconded by Earl Hough, the motion carried.

It was decided to send \$35.00 worth of trophies to the Eastern Regional Convention, August 5 and 6. Margaret Lee made the motion, seconded by Walter Barnett. Charles Tagg made a motion that we approve their use of the name Eastern Regional Convention, rather than meeting. Seconded by Walter Barnett, the motion carried.

A letter from Charles Tagg to President Wright recommended Mrs. Edna Stewart as "Cultural Advisor". President Wright will hold this appointment open till next meeting.

There was discussion about entering the show of the California National Fuchsia Society June 23, 24, and 25, and the show of the South Coast Botanic Gardens June 16 and 17. Charles Tagg said that the Orange County Branch of the A.B.S. will enter the fuchsia show in the name of the American Begonia Society; and President Wright said that he will put in a booth in the South Coast Botanic Gardens in the name of the American Begonia Society.

The Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch turned over \$40.00 to the American Begonia Society from the sale of plants at this meeting.

— LUCILLE WILLIAMS
Secretary

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CALENDAR

June 1 — Westchester Branch: First pot-luck dinner of the year at 6:30 p.m. Adults 75 cents; children 50 cents. Mrs. Dorothy S. Behrends, noted author and lecturer, will be guest speaker.

June 9 — San Gabriel Valley Branch: Henry O. Zepeda of the Neil A. Maclean Co. will discuss the new controlled-release fertilizer, Magamp.

June 13 — Glendale Branch: David Gilfillan, garden editor of the *Pasadena Independent Star News*, will speak on "Garden Tips for Summer."

June 14 — Inglewood Branch: An informal program put on by members of the Branch who are experts in growing plants. Bring questions to be answered.

June 15 — Foothill Branch. Robert Wilson will talk on "Geraniums and Their Culture."

June 16 — North Long Beach Branch: Pot-luck dinner at 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Sylvia Leatherman, guest speaker, will discuss "Landscaping with Begonias."

July 6 — Whittier Branch: Guest speaker will be Joe Littlefield and he will discuss "Summer Gardening."

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NEW SEATTLE BRANCH

The American Begonia Society welcomes a new member of the family — the South Seattle Branch. Charter officers are:

President: Mrs. Arthur A. Johnson (Teddy)

President-Elect: Mr. Malcolm A. Hanson

Secretary: Mrs. William C. Duby (Elaine)

Treasurer: Mrs. Winthrop G. Scott (Elva)

National Director: Mrs. Bessie Wheaton

Director, 1 year: Mrs. Fred Coleman (La Vaughn)

Director, 2 years: Mr. Winthrop G. Scott

Meetings will be held the fourth Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. at the William E. Moshier Memorial Park, 430 South 156th Street, Seattle, Washington.

—VERA L. NAUMANN

Public Relations Director

NEW LIBRARIAN APPOINTED

Beginning July 1, the A.B.S. Librarian will be:

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