

The BEGONIAN



Devoted to the Sheltered Garden

Merry Christmas

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GENERAL OFFICES

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

CHRISTMAS LEGENDS LIVE IN PLANTS



With Holly and ivy
So green and so gay,
We deck up our houses
As fresh as the day.
With bays and rosemary
And lawrel compleat
And everyone now
Is a King in conceit.

Poor Robin's Almanac, 1695

What has the palm tree, the evergreen trees, mistletoe, holly, the Christmas rose and other plants got to do with the Christmas legends? Most of them date far back in antiquity. The old Norsemen decked their halls with evergreen boughs to provide a refuge for the spirits of the woods to escape the cold of the outdoors. The palm was used in the feasting and rites at the winter Solstice by the Egyptians. The palm was supposed to produce a frond a month signifying life everlasting. In December at Saturnalia, celebrated by the old Romans in honor of Saturn, God of Agriculture, the Romans decorated their houses with laurel and green boughs. They lit candles and exchanged presents. The Roman Legions carried with them throughout the then known world, such customs and it is thought perhaps, the modern Christmas tree dates from old Roman times.

Another legend has the Christmas tree associated with Martin Luther

over four hundred years ago. It is said that as he was walking home one Christmas eve he was so struck by the beauty of the stars shining through a fir tree that he cut a small one to take home and decorate with lights. However, Henry VIII of England, who was a "Stout Defender of the Faith", had a Christmas tree and would not have considered adopting a custom invented by Martin Luther. The custom was generally adopted in England over a century ago due to the influence of Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria. The custom was brought to this country by the Hessian soldiers during Revolutionary times. Nowadays the custom has developed into a \$10,000,000 dollar industry using the Douglas fir, spruce, cedar and balsam.

Mistletoe was credited by the Druids with supernatural powers. The Druids were Celtic Priests of Great Britian and constituted a priestly upper class. Their religious ceremonies were performed in groves of oak trees. The oak and the mistletoe that grew on the oak was held sacred. At their mid-winter festival the chief Druid cut the mistletoe with a golden knife and caught it in his robe so that it might not lose it's virtue by touching earth. Then it was distributed to the people to be a general heal all. Our

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY, INC.

The purpose of this Society shall be: To stimulate and promote interest in Begonias and other shade-loving plants; To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants; To standardize the nomenclature of Begonias; To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation and culture of Begonias and companion plants; To issue a bulletin which will be mailed to all members of the Society; and To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow Begonias.

Christmas Legends (Continued)

American mistletoe is of a different type, found on various kinds of trees. In Europe it is found on apple trees and sometimes on oak. Where the modern custom of enticing a member of the opposite sex under a sprig of mistletoe for the purpose of stealing a kiss originated, is not german to the subject of Christmas legends. However, it is a most delightful one and probably will continue long after the Druids are forgotten by all except historians.

The holly used during the holiday season signifies a Christian symbolism. It is said to recall the crown of thorns with the red berries representing the drops of the Saviour's blood. The European holly is *ilex aquifolium* and our native holly is *ilex opaca*. They are both grown here now for the Christmas market.

One plant of the Americas is particularly associated with the Christmas season. The beautiful poinsettia, *euphorbia pulcherrina*, named for Joel R. Poinsett, who was U.S. Minister to Mexico in John Quincy Adams administration. It was considered a weed in Mexico. Mr. Poinsett sent it back to the United States for cultivation. It is called Noche Buena in Mexico and the story connected with it concerns a poor little girl who was crying one night because she had no flower to take to church when an angel appeared and told her to gather a weed from the roadside, which then blossomed into the scarlet loveliness of the poinsettia.

The Christmas rose, *belleborus niger*, was thought a substitute for the mystic rose once sacred to Venus, later to the Virgin Mary. A legend of the one bright star shining over

the small stable and shepherd's offerings of olives, honey and other small gifts they had to offer and a little girl crying because she had no gift to offer, concerns the Christmas rose. It seems that an angel heard her crying and inquired the reason.

"Because I have no gift", replied the small child.

The angel then brushed the earth with her wing and where the child's tears had fallen grew a beautiful white flower. The child gathered a few and took them into the manger where she laid them at the Christ Child's feet. A tiny toe touched them and a faint pink blush spread across the petals. Thus was the Christmas rose knit into the sacred legends of Christmas time.

Sacred symbolism has given the name Crown of Thorns to a succulent, *euphorbia splendens*, a native of Madagascar. It is a tall branching plant with long spines and bright red bracts.

Another plant connected to Christianity is Our Lady's Bedstraw, *galum verum*, the identical plant said to have been used in the Bethlehem manger.

There are many more plants associated with the holiday season and in time the origin of these legends may be forgotten but never the fragrance of the fir, spruce, cedar and balsam trees.

A. M. A.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

To All of You From Your President

Vera L. Naumann

BEGONIAS, MANHATTAN STYLE

by Ron Dean Taffel

Reprinted from the Bulletin of *The Horticultural Society of New York*

With a little bit of care, *Begonias* can be ideal rooftop, terrace, or backyard plantings for city gardeners. They will withstand dryness, city air pollution, and high wind conditions prevalent on penthouse terraces relatively well.

Briefly, *Begonias* are grouped into three main categories. Fibrous *Begonias*, including the popular wax-leaf types, make up the largest group, and are often used in garden borders and special design areas. Rhizomatous *Begonias* have thick, creeping root stocks that grow horizontally along the top of the soil. The tuberous *Begonias* have large, fleshy bulbs. For optimum results in growing any of these types, a proper soil mixture should be water retentive, light in texture, and have good drainage. In a natural environment, *Begonias* grow in a rich, loose soil near an ample water supply. In Manhattan, where approximately eight to twelve tons of soot fall per day, and smog, gasoline fumes, and high temperatures are commonplace, the proper soil is even more essential. Equal amounts of humus, loam, sand, and perlite or sphagnum moss, along with a small amount of bone meal is excellent. If available, add one-third by volume wood ash to insure good blossom color. When a new terrace is installed, the soil is usually a good quality, but a small amount of bone meal and wood ash should be added, nevertheless, to meet *Begonia* requirements. If the soil is claylike in texture, add equal amounts of humus and perlite.

In planting *Begonias* on a terrace,

the environmental peculiarities of terrace gardening must be taken into consideration. First, the plants will be growing many stories above the natural ground level, and will therefore, be exposed to considerable temperature fluctuation, high winds, less water and humidity, and an assortment of insects. Every rooftop or terrace garden has its own unique environment. If you live near one of the electrical power stations or other industrial buildings you will have to cope with the additional problem of even greater than usual soot and smog fallout. Consult an established gardening firm knowledgeable about city pollution conditions and follow their recommendations for selection of suitable plant materials. They will be able to best advise you from their own practical experience in raising large numbers of plants in an urban environment. In short, if you want to grow *Begonias* or any other plant on a terrace, you will have to experiment

Planter beds on the terrace are very desirable. Usually, the volume of soil in a planter bed is sufficient to cut down watering to once a day, preferably in the evening; sometimes you will only need to water every other day, depending, of course, on natural rainfall and summer temperatures. If planter beds are not practical, plant your *Begonias* in clay pots large enough so that the roots will not burn. Choice of proper container size is critical. The smallest clay pot I would suggest to anyone who has a tiled terrace floor

BEGONIAS, MANHATTAN STYLE (Continued)

should have a minimum diameter of $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches and be at least 9 inches deep. If no such size is available, sink a 4 inch pot into the next largest one. Peat moss between the two pots will help retain moisture and act as an insulator against the rays of the sun. Bear in mind that several factors are working in combination to rapidly dry out your plants: water evaporation caused by direct sun on the plant and on the clay pot, and reflected heat of the terrace floor. The feeder roots (terminal root hairs) of *Begonias* are very delicate — if these touch the sides of the heated pot for a prolonged period they will burn and die. For example, a *semperflorens Begonia* in a 4-inch pot, set on the terrace at about 10 a.m. and given a thorough watering, will, by 4:30 p.m., be an ideal contribution to your compost pile. The reason? Lack of moisture due to excessive heat.

I do not suggest vermiculite as an insulator for terrace use. If, by chance, some should be washed accidentally into the drain trap it will subsequently expand and, after a period of time, rot the pipe. A clogged drain on a terrace is quite costly to repair. In watering plants from a hose which has been lying around on a terrace floor, be sure to let the water run through the hose for a minute or so, so that it will not be too hot.

Rex and rhizomatous *Begonia* varieties will do very well on a terrace with a northern exposure, or in a shady area of a city backyard. For border types of plantings, or perhaps a highlight of color here and

there, the *semperflorens* (ever-blooming) varieties 'Pistachio', a miniature with dark reddish leaves and single pink blossoms, and 'Curly Locks', with dark leaves and yellow and red flowers are very good. One *Begonia* that truly deserves more credit than the majority of others for terrace planting and is an excellent choice for city gardeners is B. s. c. 'Pink Camellia'. It is a good grower, with dark red foliage and deep pink flowers. Locally you may find it under the name 'Pink Ice'. It will withstand winds, extremes of temperature, and lack of water. If the plants should droop, prompt watering will bring about a remarkable change within two or three hours. I have been using this particular variety for the past eight years, and it has come through wind and hailstorms and severe drought with flying colors.

Angel-wing and tuberous *Begonias* will do well on terraces also, but make certain the plants are already well established when you purchase them. A bright daylight site (not extensive sun, however), ample water, and good air circulation are important. It is best not to transplant *Begonias* from a pot to a planting bed; rather sink them into a second pot and then set both in as one. In this way you can take them indoors for the fall and winter months without disturbing the root systems. (If you prefer, you can take cuttings at this time from your larger plants and grow these on in smaller clay containers or in peat pots.) Angel-wing, *Begonias* can also make stunning hanging baskets. *Begonia* B. 'Richmondensis' and B. 'Lulu Bower', (rich pink to red flowers), are good varieties for this

BEGONIAS, MANHATTAN STYLE (Continued)

purpose. The fern *Begonia* (*Begonia foliosa*), excellent for a very shady area on a terrace or in any north facing garden, is another good choice.

Plant your basket as follows. Line a standard wire frame basket (available in any garden supply shop) with sheet moss. Then fill with the recommended soil mixture given above. Set in several plants in groups of three. Try placing three *Begonias* around the circumference of the basket in a triangular design. You will then have room for three additional plants spaced between the *Begonias*. Ivy varieties such as 'Merion', 'Pittsburgh', or 'Crowsfoot' will look well here. In the center of the basket you might plant *B. semperflorens* 'Pink Ice', or perhaps one of the tuberous varieties.

Speaking of tuberous *Begonias*, so showy and magnificent of bloom and foliage, keep in mind that they will do best if set in when they are already well along in their growth. (This applies especially to terrace plantings.) A general rule of thumb to follow for all types of outdoor gardening in New York City is to use only vigorously growing, mature plants. Newly rooted cuttings or seedlings should be kept indoors either under fluorescent lights or in a bright window. Remember that the growing season on a rooftop or terrace garden is short. While you can plant out in the suburbs, or even in your backyard city garden during the month of May, and often earlier, on a terrace we have known it to snow as late as the 18th of May. Winds combined with temperatures in the 30's can freeze plants; the thermometer does not

have to go below 32° F. to kill plantings. If well established materials are used, the chances of their being affected by temperature changes will be greatly reduced.

New York City backyard gardens will vary from terrace, window box, and other types of planters in several ways. The soil will usually be highly acid and claylike, and will require proper conditioning. However, if this is too much of a chore for you, try double sinking your pots in the ground. Double potted *Begonias* can also sit on the pavement or walks of your garden, provided they do not receive very strong light. (An attractive Spanish jardiniere of proper size can serve as the outer container and lend any garden a note of cheery color all its own.)

If your garden gets only bright daylight, with a minimum of sun, you can grow a very large assortment of *Begonias*. However, don't crowd your plants — allow plenty of room for circulation of air and growth. Surrounding buildings, fences, etc., tend to block off the flow of air to a considerable degree, and it is wise to keep this in mind when designing any backyard city garden. If you enjoy considerable amount of sun during the day, you can plant any of the *sempreflorens Begonias*. Favorite specimen plants of angel-wing or rex *Begonias* can be given a vacation in your backyard. Sink them, pot and all, into the ground.

Last, a few words about general care. It is best to water in the early morning or evening; do not wet the foliage in the middle of the day if the plants are in direct sunlight. This will burn the leaves. Fertilize your plants regularly. Don't wait for them to look shabby and then

BEGONIAS, MANHATTAN STYLE (Continued)

try to make prize-winning specimens of them. I have found the new liquid concentrate fertilizer Superthrive very good. Follow the directions on the label carefully.

Begonias are plants that have little insect or disease trouble; however, they are not immune. If you employ good gardening practices, such as picking off dead blooms and foliage from plants and surrounding soil regularly, you will reduce your chances of infestation. A sloppy gardener is inviting trouble. When purchasing a new plant, check it for insects carefully, and then isolate it for at least a week, to prevent the spread of any possible pests to your other plants. An occasional mealy bug can be eliminated by daubing it with a Q-tip dipped in rubbing alcohol. Another method that I have found very effective (this works on black or green aphids, too), without harming the plant, is to invert the pot and then completely submerge the foliage and stem of your *Begonia* in tepid water for a few minutes. If the plant is slightly dry, water well before treating it in this fashion. For a heavier infestation, try one of the several aerosol sprays on the market made for houseplants. Hold the container 15 to 18 inches away from the plant and spray thoroughly. Make certain you wet the undersurfaces of the leaves. Use any spray only in a well ventilated room or outdoors. Two or three hours after spraying or swabbing your plant, submerge it briefly in lukewarm water to wash off any residual insecticide. A good preventive measure against nematodes (tiny worms that eat roots of plants)

is to use only sterilized soil. If you do find these pests in your soil, however, try a nematocide.

With so many different varieties to choose from there is no excuse for not trying several *Begonias* in a city garden. All it takes is a little attention, and the rewards make the effort well worth it.

AUTUM ARRAY OF KANSAS BEGONIAS

The Smoky Valley Branch held their annual *Begonia* show September 27, 1969 at the United Methodist Church in Salina, Kansas. The theme of the show was "Autum Array of Kansas *Begonias*".

Sixteen members had a total of two hundred and fifteen entries. The flower arrangement division was the main attraction as special effects were created with the use of decorative rocks, small plants, ducks and frogs.

Mrs. Lyle Melvin Sr. was first place winner with the most points; second place winner, Mrs. Frank Shults; third place winner, Mrs. W. H. Vaupel and fourth place winner was Mrs. M. L. Rose.

Trophy award winners were Mrs. Vaupel for best in show for a cane *Begonia*; Mrs. Earle Mattison Sr. for best in show for a rhizomatous *Begonia*; Mrs. Melvin Rømeiser for best in show for a rex *Begonia*; Mrs. Vaupel best in show for an African Violet and Verna Fowler for best in show for a Shade Loving Plant.

Ruth E. Beineke
Salina, Kansas

BEGONIA BOWERII

by Elda Haring, *Greenwich, Connecticut*

In my opinion *B. bowerii* whose native habitat is Mexico is "everybody's" *Begonia*. Easy to grow; very attractive at all times, it blooms in late winter and early spring with clusters of small pink flowers on stems held well above the leaves. The pretty green leaves are stiched with black on the edge having small regular erect hairs, hence its name 'Eyelash' *Begonia*.

B. bowerii crosses so easily with other species that it has become a boon to hybridists who are always seeking to produce an interesting and attractive *Begonia*. There are many named crosses notably among them *B. 'Bow-Joe'*, *'Bow Chancee'*, *'Virbob'*, *'Beatrice Hardrell'*, *'Bow Nigra'*, *'Chantilly Lace'* and the delightful small-leaved *B. 'Illsley'* a hybrid produced by my friends the Percy Merrys of Massachusetts. All of these are numbered in my collection of treasured *Begonias* and are so easily grown under house conditions, some or all of them should be considered if you are looking for *Begonias* to add to your collection.

'Eyelash' *Begonia* is rhizomatous and depending upon growing conditions, leaf sizes vary from 1 inch to 1¼ inches. It makes an excellent variety for a basket plant for the rhizomes spread out and hang over the edges of the basket.

For four years I kept *B. bowerii* in a small decorative container in a rather lean soil mix and gave it feedings with Plant Marvel one-half strength once a month. When it began to look very unhappy and the rhizomes were hard and brittle I discarded the old plant after taking

a number of cuttings. These thrived under fluorescent lights in my cellar where nighttime temperatures in winter went to 55 degrees. In the east window of the living room *B. bowerii* thrives at 65 to 72 degree temperatures. In my greenhouse which is kept at 60 degrees it is very happy and with constant feeding the plant in the photograph is now growing in a 6 inch pot.



Photo by Walter Haring

While *B. bowerii* does not like sudden cold drafts or drops in temperature it does seem to be happy in quite cool (55 degree) or (75 degree) rooms. However, as proper humidity is essential it should never be placed near warm air rising from radiators or heating ducts. I do not provide extra humidity for mine under living room conditions but I do take it to the kitchen sink and give it a shower once a week, so that all the leaves are washed clean of dust. If the leaves start to become papery dry, you can provide humidity by filling a 2 inch dish with pebbles instead of using the usual saucer. Keep the dish filled with water but make very sure that the bottom of the pot is

Begonia Bowerii (Continued)

above the water level in the dish for too much water at the roots will likely cause rot.

B. bowerii grows easily from cuttings. Take a short piece of the rhizome with two or three leaves on it and place it in the rooting medium on a slant. I have had equal success using sand, or vermiculite, milled sphagnum and perlite in equal parts. Leaf cuttings with 1½ inch of stem attached root readily but take longer to produce plants. *B. bowerii* can be potted up in sand or the vermiculite mix and fed twice monthly with your favorite fertilizer and will astound you by growing happily without the benefit of soil.

ROUND ROBIN NOTES

Members are busy comparing dormancy in plants, hours of light used for *Begonias*, different potting mixes, comparing the use of different mixes for the germination of seeds, and many other things. Interest is high and flights are flying from one member to another.

Kuslers:

Mae Blanton, Mesquite, Texas reported she was repotting *B. 'Victoria Kartack'* after main stem had died down and found little stems wandering around in the soil trying to find the surface.

Margie Sikkelee, Dallas, Texas had her *B. 'Lenore Olivier'* outdoors under a Mimosa tree, in August, she put clam and oyster shells around the pot, the shells were filled with water to make humidity.

Hazel Snodgrass, Ventura, California says she has been told that comes that lose their leaves except those at top may need fertilizing or

moved to a larger pot.

Beth Sackman, San Francisco, California uses warm water to water her Kuslers and warmer water when she feeds them with Hyponex.

Ruth Wille, Jackson, Mississippi, feels that *B. 'Gwen Lowell'* likes more water than most *Begonias*.

Panama Species:

Elizabeth Mercier, Canal Zone writes "If you can grow those Panama species — any of them — in a pot you are really a wonder. As I wrote my article last February, I found them growing on rock without enough soil around the roots to support lichen! So I suggest filling your pot with chunks of rock and just a little soil. That should help you to not keep them too wet. The cane-stems seem to take a tremendous amount of sun and like it; also they insist on dying back in winter no matter what you do, so let them. If you have kept them growing all winter, maybe you should rest them during your summer and then begin to water them again next fall. After all, their dormant time is during the dry season when it is very hot and dry. They will show their desire to go dormant by shedding their stems, which will just fall over and break apart at the joints. Sometimes these pieces can be rooted and sometimes not. Mine hasn't done much this year, but I think it is because it is not getting enough sun. The rhizomatous species which is planted beside it, is flourishing wonderfully. How about *B. filipes*? It's the miniature plant I wrote about that didn't seem worth collecting when I saw it growing wild; but the plant I brought home on a piece of tree stump came back this

Round Robin Notes (Continued)

year and has turned into something rather attractive. It has very tiny white flowers, but kinda cute. It should have lots of seed next month (November).”

B. *Deliciosa* and B. *Diadema*:

Mickey Meyer, Australia, comments that the two plants she grows as *B. deliciosa* and *B. diadema* are not at all alike. They both revel in a warm sunny window with a tight shoe to grow in.

Seeds:

Mickey reports that the Panama species cane seedlings are more subject to damp off so need drier conditions than the rhizomatous ones at seedling stage.

Seed germination was good on seeds from A.B.S. Seed Fund, first tiny seedlings appeared in 5 days and all had good showing in 10 days, on: *B. conchaefolia*, *B. versicolor*, *B. tafiensis*, *B. gigantea*, *B. decora*, and *B. evansiana*. The ones planted in coarse sphagnum moss outgrew the other by twice.

Miniature Begonias:

Mae says to her a miniature *Begonia* is one that will be very small when mature and still look good in a small container, it must have tiny leaves and tiny flowers in perfect scale.

Lucille Peck, Union City, Michigan says her idea of a miniature *Begonia* is one that must be content in a two and one half inch pot or three inch pot all its life. She has planted seed of the miniatures listed in Seed Fund.

Pots or Beds?

Elizabeth says “One thing I have recently learned to my amazement is that some *Begonias* seem to grow better here, planted in the ground instead of pots. I thought with the terrific amount of rain we have here that *Begonias* would surely drown and root-rot in a bed; this is the season when the humidity runs between 70% to 100%. A couple of months ago, though, I became discouraged with watching them die, and just stuck them into an empty spot in a bed at the back of the house. It isn’t raised for proper drainage, it receives blistering hot sun on sunny mornings from about nine thirty till noon and I hadn’t prepared the bed. I expected those *Begonias* to quietly fade away; instead, they started to grow and are now beautiful plants covered with bloom. They were my *B. ‘Pink-Profusion’* semps and they are now beautiful plants covered with bloom. I have started putting my other *Begonias* in other beds and most of them seem to be doing all right. It is now mid-October.”

If you want to join a flight, tell me your choices and maybe you will decide to take more than one.

Mrs. Anita Sickmon
Round Robin Director
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Cheney, Kansas 67025

NOTICE TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS:

December 1 is the deadline for all material for the January issue. Due to a change in the method of printing the “*Begonian*” it would be most convenient if all material was submitted as early as possible.

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND

Instructions — “*Begonias* From Seed-Sowing and Growing” gives step by step easy-to-follow instructions and encouragement for beginning seed growers. Price 25 cents per copy.

No. 1 - rex hybrids — Very fresh seed from a large collection in Southern California representing all popular colors and color combinations and leaf formation. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

Rex seeds are touchy about warmth. Bottom heat is desirable. Seeds require from three to four weeks to germinate, sometimes longer. Sow them especially thin, to give seedlings room to grow undisturbed as long as possible before transplanting. Do not transplant until they have produced the second set of true leaves. True characteristics will not be evident until the fourth set of leaves appear, and sometimes they are not permanent as they can change color and texture during the first three years. Do not destroy small or slow growing seedlings as they may turn out to be the most beautiful plants. Rex *Begonias* are such complicated hybrids, they will not come true from seed. Germination sometimes takes place within three weeks but can take as long as six weeks.

From December to February is the ideal time for sowing seed of the exotic tuberous *Begonias*. We offer the very best seed from one of the world's foremost specialists. Camellia-flowered are ninety per cent double strains. The accepted sowing medium is well rotted, screened and sterilized leafmold and temperature

should be maintained at sixty five degrees for good germination.

B. Tuberhybrida — Large red doubles. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. Tuberhybrida — Large copper blooms. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. Tuberhybrida — Large rose-colored blooms. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. Pendula — Mixed. Shades of scarlet, rose, salmon. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Listed below are the popular multiflora type tuberous rooted *Begonias*. Very good in pots, beds and borders — they give more color and greater ease of growing than the larger type. In beds, they seldom need staking and will stand more adverse weather than any type *Begonia* except *semperflorens*.

B. Multiflora 'Sweet Home' — F 1 hybrid. Bright salmon-orange flowers. Very free flowering, sun and rain proof, excellent for bedding. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. Multiflora double 'Tasso' — F 1 hybrid, heat and rain resistant. All double, medium sized, deep blood-red flowers are produced freely on dwarf, bushy plants. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. micranthera — Semi-tuberous from a Botanist in Holland who has this to say, “I am curious to know what you think of *B. micranthera*. It is a summer-flowering species with large, pink flowers. Most plants are either male or female. We are using it a lot in hybridizing work, but are not sure if it is the true *micranthera* Griseb.”

There seems to be two types of this *Begonia*, both semi-tuberous and

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund (Continued)

natives of Argentina. We would like to add that several members are growing the above mentioned and it is prized highly for its large, beautiful, pink blooms. Price 50 cents per pkt.

The most popular activity of the Seed Fund are the close out sales and with this in mind, we offer you choice *Begonia* seed at a very modest price and hope you will find something of interest. You may purchase all twelve varieties for \$5.00 or six for \$3.00. Single pkts. 50 cents each.

No. 1 - *B. heracliefolia nigricans* — Robust star-leaf, almost black, with white flowers. Rhizomatous.

No. 2 - *B. Mazae* — Mexico. Round with pointed, dark bronzy-green leaves with dark stitches around edges. Deep red underneath. Small, light pink, red spotted flowers. Grow in warm protected place.

No. 3 - *B. engeleri* — Rare and curious. Stems erect, red streaked and covered with stiff, curly red hairs, short-branched; leaves ovate, to three by five inches long, coarsely white-hairy, dark green, veins reddish and depressed, margins toothed. Flowers rose pink.

No. 4 - *B. josephi* — Choice species from India.

No. 5 - *B. 'Wallichiana'* — Easy to grow, seeds germinate quickly.

No. 6 - *B. molecaulis* syn *B. subvillos* — Green over and under; stems succulent. Flowers white or pink.

No. 7 - *B. nelumbiifolia* — Also called 'Water-lily *Begonia*'. Rhizomatous with rather large, cupped green leaves shaped like a water lily.

No. 8 - *B. listida* — Pretty small type Brazil species with green leaves with white stripe down the center.



At first the leaves are shaped like ivy but later change. (See photo)

No. 9 - *B. maculata* — Leaves lobed and toothed, dark, dull green; flowers pink.

No. 10 - *B. sanguinea* — Brazil. Thick, leathery, oval leaves, brown over green on top; red beneath; white flowers.

No. 11 - *B. incana* — White-felted, fleshy green leaves attached to the stem near the center. Many drooping white flowers.

No. 12 - *B. epipsila* — Brazil. Thick, polished, leathery green leaves coated with red brown wool. Good basket *Begonia*.

B. s. c. Scarletta — Bright scarlet-red flowers on uniform compact plants. Blooms early. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. s. c. Derby — New — Six inches. Coral salmon with lighter center. Unusual. Price 50 cents per pkt.

GREENHOUSE PLANTS —

Paschia — Many dainty Lady Slipper-like flowers dance above decora-

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund (Continued)

tive Gloxinia like foliage. The color is brilliant, shining scarlet, alive and lovely. New and beautiful. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Aechmea bracteata — Bromeliad family. Central America. In bright light the plant becomes markedly bottle-shaped when approaching maturity. Some forms show a definite red coloration. Bright red bracts and black berries. Nice. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Tillandsia polystachia — One of the best in this group. Price 50 cents per pkt.

Mrs. Florence Gee
Seed Fund Administrator
234 Birch Street
Roseville, Calif. 95678

JUDGING AND CLASSIFICATION OF BEGONIAS

by Ruth Pease, Director, ABS Judges Course

The Judging Course, approved by the ABS Board of Directors, October 1965, is still available.

The object and intent of the course is to and to the knowledge of present judges; train new *Begonia* judges; help exhibitors know specimen *Begonias*.

This is a 12-lesson correspondence course. As each lesson is completed it should be sent to the Director, ABS Judges Course. The enrollee sets his own pace to accomplish the lessons.

An enrollee in the course is considered a Freshman Judge — a prospective judge. As such, he or she may participate in shows as a Student Judge. Clerking and student judging provide good training for the future Sophomore Judge.

The student becomes a Sophomore Judge upon completion of the course. Points towards Junior and Senior Judge's Cards are earned by judging.

An application for the Judge's Card is included with the course and should be filled out after all lessons have been completed and forwarded to the Director. There is space on the application to detail other plant families the applicant is capable of judging as well as to note distances he is willing to travel to judge. This recorded information is made available to show chairmen when they request judges.

For those who have taken judging courses in the past and who have been judging, the application is available upon request. It is not necessary to take this course.

NOTICE! NOW AVAILABLE

Xerox copies of the last six months of "The Begonian" for 1938 and complete xerox copies of the years 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942 are now available in limited supply!

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Judging and Classification (Continued)

The Point-Scoring System for Judging Begonias compiled by Rudy Ziesenhenne, reviewed by the 1969 Classification Committee, and approved by the ABS Board of Directors April 28, 1969 is also available from the Director of the Judges Course.

This 20-page book is complete. Judges for any show where *Begonias* may be entered will find it an invaluable aid in judging. Taking time early in the season to review the book, and to become acquainted with the system will make judging that much easier when the *Begonia* and Shade Plant shows take place later in the year. The book has been prepared so that exhibitors will also find it valuable — to learn what points are given for culture, symmetry, grooming, distinctiveness, showmanship in displaying their collections.

A Suggested Guide to Classification of Begonias for Show Purposes, prepared by Classification Committee after 2 year's research and approved by the ABS Board of Directors on July 27, 1969, is now available. The approved outline for classification of *Begonias*, which may be used by show chairmen in preparing *Begonia* show schedules, is included in the book as well as an introduction explaining the various terms used, giving the reader a ready-reference to take with him to shows, to use at any time.

The 48-page book lists approximately 1,000 *Begonia* names of plants that are in collections and nurseries throughout the world, many of which are entered in shows, as well as *Begonia* names that may be used as examples to aid in calssi-

fication of future "new" *Begonias* with similiar habits of growth.

There is no other publication with this many *Begonia* names listed and as many classifications. The booklet may be used by anyone including those in garden clubs that have *Begonia* divisions in their show schedules.

This guide should not be confused with the classification guide previously published by the Westchester Branch. That guide listed approximately 500 *Begonias* and used an earlier system of classification and includes crosses of the hybrids listed so it is still another source of reference material for the *Begonia* enthusiast.

These publications are available by writing to:

Mrs. Ruth Pease
Director, ABS Judges Course
8101 Vicksburg Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90045

ABS Judges Course \$5.00
(plus \$1.00 for spouse wishing to take the course also).

The Point Scoring System for Judging Begonias \$1.25

A Suggested Guide to Classification of Begonias for Show Purposes \$1.50

These publications would make welcome gifts to give to anyone interested in *Begonias*.



The revised Membership Roster is off the press. Order your copy from the Membership Secretary.

Pearl Benell

10331 S. Colima Rd., Whittier, Calif. 90604

REPORT ON BRYANT PARK FLOWER SHOW

by Jack Golding

The KNICKERBOCKER BRANCH exhibit, "BEGONIAS ARE FOR EVERYONE" was outstanding success. It was one of the most beautiful exhibits at the Bryant Park Flower Show, October 2nd-7th, 1969. This unique show was staged under a tent in a public park of New York City. The setting was delightful, the grass was pleasant underfoot, and the light airiness of the tent was a welcome change from the usual stuffiness of large convention halls.

To stress our theme, only plants of our members were used. They were displayed in the same environment in which they were grown — in a greenhouse, in the garden, on a window sill or sunporch or under fluorescent lights. These were not all specimen show plants, but average plants that would normally be in the locations shown.



BY JACK GOLDING

The indoor and outdoor gardens were divided by a display window, borrowed from a local lumberyard. A window box, full of *B. semperflorens*, was hung from the window. The front of the outdoor garden had a border of more *B. semperflorens*. Also, in this garden were *Begonias acutangular*, 'Corallina de

Lucerna', 'Di-Anna', *echinosepala*, 'Mrs. Fred T. Scripps', 'Ricinifolia', 'San Miguel', *scharffii*, *ulmifolia*. The display in the simulated greenhouse included a beautiful orange upright tuberous *Begonia*, baskets of white and a red hanging tuberous *Begonias*, *B. 'Beatrice Haddrell'*, *compta*, *metallica*, *oxyphylla*, *sunderbruchii*.

Indoors on the window shelf and sunporch area were many *B. 'boweri'* hybrids, small rexs and other miniature *Begonias*.

In the light unit area various *Begonias* growing from feather and lava rocks and more Rex *Begonias*, *B. 'Dancing Girl'*, *epipsila*, 'Erythrophylla', 'Fuscomaculata', 'Sachsen', 'Sophie Cecile', 'Venepi' and 'Weltoniensis'.



BY JACK GOLDING

The booth was further enhanced by hanging baskets with cascading *Begonias* — *compta*, 'Di-clata', 'Medora', 'Preussen' and *schmidtiana*.

The attendants at our exhibit were constantly busy answering cultural questions about *Begonias* and explained to everyone — Yes, these are all *Begonias!* and with our help, you too, can grow them.

Say "Merry Christmas" with a Begonian subscription
Mail your gift card with your order and it
will be included in your gift subscription.

BEGONIA HYBRID REGISTRATION

The American Begonia Society is the International Registration Authority for the genus Begonia appointed by the International Horticultural Congress. See "How To Register Begonias", December, 1967 p. 266 and "Nomenclature News," August, 1968, p. 157. For further information write: Rudolf Ziesenne, ABS Nomenclature Director, 1130 N. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, California 93103.

Editor

No. 241 — Begonia ('Joe Hayden' x unknown) 'Arcola' —

B. 'Arcola', a rhizomatous *Begonia* with slightly-cupped, 5 lobed star shape, has green velvety leaves when mature, with copper-toned immature leaves, rusty-red on bottom side. Stems are light green, with red freckles and white hairs, the hairs appearing also at the point where the stem joins the leaf. Flowers are light pink, one-inch, two-petaled, with pink ovary; stems rise from rhizome, 10 inches long with flowers in scattered clusters winter and spring. Developed in 1962; first bloomed and distributed in 1963 by U. U. Stanford, 4749 Lewis Dr., Port Arthur, Texas 77640. Registered August 1, 1967.

No. 242 — Begonia ('Inglewood' x Joe Hayden) 'Texastar' —

B. 'Texastar', a rhizomatous star-type *Begonia* with seven-lobed leaves, 7 to 9 inches, on eight to ten inch stems. Velvety textured, with veins and center light green. The petioles are light green with red ¼-inch freckles; leaf color gun-metal green top, red underneath. Flowers are about one inch, medium pink, clustered on stem extending from rhizome about two inches above

foliage, blooming in late winter and early spring. Developed in 1962; first bloomed and distributed in 1963 by U. U. Stanford, 4749 Lewis Dr., Port Arthur, Texas 77640. Registered August 1, 1967.

No. 243 — Begonia ('Pinafore' x Unknown) 'Zemenia' —

B. 'Zemenia' is a cane, hanging basket type, leaves oblique base, angel wing, 2 x 6 inches, margin slightly rippled, smooth textured, with indented veins; petioles are 1½ inches long, stipules brown, leaf-color mahogany-green, with red underneath. Flowers are orange, growing from branched stems; flower stem 2 to 4 inches, in bloom most of the time. Developed in 1963; first bloomed in 1964; first distributed in 1965, by Allie C. Stanford, 4749 Lewis Dr., Port Arthur, Texas 77640. Registered August 1, 1967.

No. 244 — Begonia ('Burgandy Queen' x *bowerii nigramarga*) 'Little Darling' —

B. 'Little Darling' is a miniature rhizomatous plant, with leaves obliquely based with acuminate tops, 1½ to 2½ inches; margin dentate, with white lashes; smooth textured, hairline veins nearly invisible, 4 inch petioles light green as are stipules, the latter red freckled; color, black with bright-green spots around the edge, red underneath. Flowers are white, shaded to pink, ¾ inches across, male 2-petaled, female 2 to 3 petaled; 5 inch flower stem arises from rhizome; blooms in early spring one plant 4 inches x 12 inches having 315 blooms at one time. Developed in 1964, blooming first in 1965 and distributed that year by U. U. Stanford, 4749 Lewis Dr.,

Begonia Hybrid Registration (Continued)
Port Arthur, Texas 77640. Registered August 1, 1967.

No. 245 — Begonia ('Curly King Edward' x 'Silver Queen') 'Frosty Dwarf' —

B. 'Frosty Dwarf' is a miniature rex, leaves almost heart-shaped with acuminate tip, 12 cm x 9 cm; margin hairy with fine teeth, slightly puckered texture. Flowers are flesh pink, with reddish pink sepals, 2½ cm. Flowers three at end of stalk which rises from leaf axil, blooming early summer. Originated by Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Thomas R. Hofmann, Propagator, in 1960, first bloomed and distributed by BBG in 1961; First published in January 1966 "The Begonian", illustrated on page 5. Available from Brooklyn Botanical Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn 25, New York. Registered September 2, 1967.

No. 246 — Begonia ('Curly King Edward' x 'Silver Queen') 'Shorty' —

B. 'Shorty', a miniature rex, has leaves nearly heart-shaped with slight lobulation along edges and overlapping basal lobes, acuminate tipped, 10 cm. x 9 cm.; margin very shallowly crenulate, hairy; firm textured, with veins more or less obscure; petioles are red and hairy, 6 cm. long, and stipules almost semi-circular with apiculate tip; color, a solid greenish-gray in center, surrounded by a narrow dark green rim; back of leaf light to medium green with edges dull red and basal area same. Flowers have two light-pink sepals, two whitish petals, 1½ cm., arising half open on peduncle 6½–8 cm. long from leaf axil; blooms early summer. Originated and distributed by Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Thomas R. Hofmann, propa-

gator, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn 25, N. Y. Developed 1960; first bloomed and distributed 1961. First published in "The Begonian" January 1966. Registered September 2, 1967.

No. 247 — Begonia ('Pinafore' x unknown) 'Theresa Lynn' —

B. 'Theresa Lynn' is an intermediate, cane type *Begonia*, shrubby, with angel-wing shape, 2 inches wide and 4½ inches long, with smooth, thick, leathery texture; margin undulate, flat; petioles 1½ to 2 inches; stipules drop off as plant matures; slate green with few silver spots and dark red back. Flowers are white, in drooping, large airy clusters; flower stem 2 to 4 inches; blooms spring and summer; the large clusters of snow-white flowers make it outstanding. Developed in 1962, first bloomed in 1963, and distributed in 1964 by originator, Mrs. Harry Kennedy, Rt. 1, Box S-17-M. Hammond, La. 70401. Registered September 12, 1967.

No. 248 — Begonia (hydrocotylifolia seedling x 'Maphil' x Rhiz.) 'Wanita' —

B. 'Wanita', a rhizomatous plant, has a modified star-shaped leaf, 16 cm. x 13 cm., crenulate-fringed margin, leathery texture, green to bronze on margin, white veined; thick, brown, hairy, green-pink spotted petioles; stipules white at first, finally brown and scarious. Flowers are pink, 2 to 5 cm.; petals round; arranged in panicles, stem 20 - 30 cm. Originated by M. C. R. Sharrad, 11 Lumsden Ave., Ridgehaven, South Australia, in 1965; first bloomed 1966. Registered December 23, 1967.

No. 249 — Begonia (unnamed Rex x unnamed Rex) 'Purple Petticoats' —

B. 'Purple Petticoats' was origin-

Begonia Hybrid Registration (Continued)

ated by Peter P. Lee, 1852 31st St., San Diego, Calif. 92102, in 1960, first distributed in 1962, and name first published in the October 1964 "The Begonian". The medium, spiralled Rex has leaves broad ovate, pointed, double helix-ruffled, green, veins outlined in dark green with a purple band around the edge of the leaf, with deep-purple marginal markings; the under side of the leaf is green with red veins and edges; leaf size 6 x 9 inches; margin ciliate, crenate; texture firm, puckery; veins are prominent, green near sinus, red further out; petioles are red with white hairs; stipules red, small. Flowers are pink. The plant tends to hug the pot with its leaves. Registered January 15, 1968.

No. 250 — Begonia (B. echinosepala Regal x B. venosa) 'Eunice Gray' —

B. 'Eunice Gray' was originated by Irene Nuss, 6429 Riggs Place, Los Angeles, Calif., 90045 in 1964; first bloomed in 1965 and first distributed in 1967. The name was first published in the October 1967 "The Begonian". The plant is intermediate, shrub-like, very hardy, nice on a trellis, totem pole, or in a basket. The leaves are 5 x 2 inches, heavy, succulent, with short petioles and brown stipules which remain on plant, shiny green; leaf nodes about 1½ inches apart. The blossoms at every node are white with light green ovaries, fragrant, spicy; blooms 9 months, from april to December; flower stem 6 inches long; female flower 5-petaled. Available to trade 1968, propagated by Sylvia Leatherman, 2637 N. Lee Ave., South El Monte, Calif. 91733. Registered July 1, 1968.

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CALENDAR

December 4th — Whittier Branch
The Begonia and Fuchsia Societies
annual Xmas party. Pot Luck dinner,
6:30 p.m. Bring table service
and vegetable, salad or desert. Meat
will be furnished by the branches.
Xmas Tree. Gift exchange of approx-
imately \$1.00 (optional).

December 4th — Westchester Branch
Christmas "Whoopic" Party, 7:30
p.m. Bring a \$1.00 gift marked
"His" or "Hers". Prize for best
gift wrap.

December 11 — Orange County
Branch: Christmas meeting with
usual "Goodie" refreshments. In-
stallation of officers by Darrell Bath.

December 12th — San Gabriel Val-
ley Branch Xmas Party, Pot Luck,
Games, Prizes! Installation Ban-
quet January 9th, 1970, make reser-
vations early.

December 16th — Seattle Begonia
Society Annual Christmas Party.
Loyal Heights Recreation Center,
Seattle, Washington.

There is no National Board Meeting
in December. Next Board Meeting,
January 26th, 1970, 8:00 p.m.

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