

# The BEGONIAN



*Devoted to the Sheltered Garden*

FEBRUARY 1970

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B. 'Beryl'  
(see page 35)

Photo by The Merrys, Needham, Mass.

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

# EDGAR IRMSCHER IN MEMORIAM

by Rudolf Ziesenhenne

Recently German and other institutions have been receiving the finished and unfinished works of Prof. Edgar Irmscher who died at Sternenfels (near Stuttgart), Germany on May 3, 1968, after 55 years devoted to the study of *Begonias*. The American Begonia Society and "The Begonian" lost a good friend on that day as Irmscher was very much interested in the Society and its aims, promptly writing to me if he found inaccuracies or a misspelled word. In one of his letters, written in his fine German script, he exclaimed regarding a general article, "What will people think of us if we are not correct?"

Irmscher was the world authority on the family *Begoniaceae*. He published his first *Begonia* paper in 1913 and his most recent, to my knowledge, was an article on *Begonia Walteriana* n. sp. in 1964. Irmscher described over 200 new *Begonia* species and many varieties during his lifetime.

Edgar Irmscher was born August 17, 1887, in Dresden, Germany. He studied natural science, mainly botany, with the great plant physiologist, Wilhelm Pfeffer, at Leipsig. Here he prepared his doctorate in



Photo courtesy of R. Ziesenhenne

plant physiology. Ueber die Resistenz der Laubmoose gegen Trockenheit und Kaelte, (The Resistance of the Leaf Mosses Against Dryness and Cold) 1912.

Irmscher's inclination toward systematical botany led him to go to Berlin to study with the leading systematicist, Adolf Engler, who was director of the Botanical Museum and Garden at Berlin-Dahlem. Prof. Engler, recognizing the ability of Irmscher, proposed that they col-

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## 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.

laborate in the writing of a monograph of the genus *Saxifraga*, which appeared in two parts, 1916 and 1919. At the same time it was proposed that Irmscher work on a monograph on the *Begoniaceae*.

In 1919 Irmscher moved to the Institute of General Botany in Hamburg as curator of the herbarium and teacher of botany at the University of Hamburg where he became a professor in 1923. Here he again worked on *Begonias*, but was distracted by a plant geographical problem which resulted in two large works (1922 and 1929) entitled Pflanzenverbreitung & Entwicklung der Kontinente (Plant Distribution of the Continents.) Irmscher's other works are listed at the end of this article.

In 1942, before the bombing of Hamburg, Irmscher moved to Stuttgart-Plieningen, taking all the precious *Begonia* herbarium material which included practically all the *Begonia* specimens of the University of California at Berkeley. All the valuable collection of *Begonia* material came safely through the war thanks to Irmscher's foresight.

After the war it was necessary to change residence four times and at the time of his death he was living with his wife at Sternenfels. Mrs. Lilly Irmscher is now residing at Lueneburg with her sister.

As an emeritus professor, Irmscher was furnished a glasshouse for growing *Begonias* for identification and an office to continue his research and writing at the University at Stuttgart-Hohenheim, Germany. Irmscher had on loan original *Begonia* material from institutions all over the world which is being returned

to the owners. Prof. Dr. Th. Eckardt, the director of the Botanical Garden and Museum in Berlin-Dahlem, revealed on a recent visit to Santa Barbara that Irmscher's personal herbarium and papers are now in his care at the Berlin museum. Dr. Eckardt is hoping that Irmscher's work can be completed.

The following are Irmscher's important publications on *Begonias* of which we have record:

1913. Neue Begoniaceen Papuasiens mit Einschluss von Celebes (New Begonias of New Guinea with the inclusion of the Celebes.) *Englers Botanische Jahrbuecher*. 50. pp. 335-383, 5 figures.

1914. Die Verteilung der Geschlechter in den Inflorescenzen der Begoniaceen unter Beruecksichtigung der morphologischen Verhaeltnisse. (The Distribution of the Sexes in the Inflorescences of the Begonias with regard to morphological circumstances.) — *Bot. Jahrb. Syst.* 50, Suppl. — Bd.: 556-577/4 Fig.

1917. Eine neue, interessante Begonie aus Neu-Guinea. (A New Interesting Begonia from New Guinea). — *Notizbl. Koenigl. Bot. Gart. Berlin* 7, Nr. 63: 102-103.

1921. *Begonia Handellii* Irmscher.—*Anz. Akad. Wiss. Wien, Math.—Naturwiss. Kl.*, Nr. 4 u. 5: 1.

1921. *Begoniaceae Africanae*. III. (*Begoniaceae of Africa III*). — *Bot. Jahrb. Syst.* 57: 241-245.

1924. Ueber eine Abaenderung des Zahlenverhaeltnisses zwischen maennlichen und weiblichen Blueten bei der monoecischen *Begonia Wallichiana*. (About a variation in the numerical proportion between male and female flowers in the monoecious *Begonia Wallichiana*.) — *Mitt. Inst. Allg. Bot. Hamburg* 6: 149-158. 15 Fig.

1925. *Begoniaceae*. — In: *Engler-Prantl, Die Natuerl. Pflanzenfam.* 2 Aufl. Bd. 21: 548-588. 18 Fig.

1927. *Beitraege zur Kenntnis der ostasiatischen Begonien*. (Contribution to the Knowledge of the East Asiatic Begonias.) — *Mitt. Inst. Allg. Bot. Hamburg* 6: 343-360. 2 Fig.

1929. *Die Begoniaceen der Malaiischen Halbinsel*. (The Begonias of the Malayan Peninsula). — *Mitt. Inst. Allg. Bot. Hamburg* 8: 86-160. Taf. 1-10.

1931. *Begoniaceae*. — In: *Handel-Mazetti, Symbolicae Sinicae* 7: 384-390.

1937. *Begoniaceae*. — In: *L. Diels, Beitrage zur Kenntnis der Vegetation und Flora von Ecuador*. (Contribution to the Knowledge of the Vegetation and Flora of Ecuador.)—*Biblioth. Bot.* 116: 111-114.

**Edgar Irmscher In Memoriam (Continued)**

1939. Die Begoniaceen Chinas und ihre Bedeutung fuer die Frage der Formbildung in polymorphen Sippen. (The Begoniaceae in China and their significance in the morphogenesis of polymorphic taxa.). — Mitt. Inst. Allg. Bot. Hamburg 10: 427-557. 17 abb.

1949. Beitrage zur Kenntnis der Begoniaceen Suedamerikas. (Contribution to the knowledge of the Begonias of South America). — Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 74: 569-632. 3 Taf.

1951. Some New Chinese Species of Begonia. — Notes Roy. Bot. Gard. Edinburgh 21: 35-45.

1953. Systematische Studien ueber Begoniaceen des tropischen Suedamerikas, besonders Brasiliens. (Systematical studies on Begoniaceae of tropical South America, especially Brazil). — Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 76: 1-102. 5 Taf.

1954. Neue Africanische Begonien. (New African Begonias). — Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 76: 212-216.

1954. Neue Begoniaceen, von O. Beccari in Malesien gesammelt. (New Begonias Collected by O. Beccari in Malaysia). — Webbia 9: 469-510. 8 Fig.

1955. Einige wenig bekannte Begonien. (Some little known Begonias). — Gartenwelt 55: 126-128. 6 Abb.

1956. Was ist Begonia teuscheri? (What is Begonia teuscheri?). — Gartenwelt 56: 389. 1 Abb.

1957. Bemerkungen ueber ein neuse Begonienbuch. (Remarks about a new Begonia book.) Sueddeutsch. Erwerbsgaerten. 11: 581-582.

1957. Ueber Raddis Brasilianische Begonien und einige verwandt Arten, sowie Beschreibung von zwei neuen Arten. (About Raddis Brazilian Begonias and a few related species, as well as the descriptions of two new species). Webbia 12: 443-512. 13 Fig.

1957. Begonia echinosepala Regel. — Begonian 24: 29. 1 Abb.

1959. Begoniaceenstudien. — Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 78: 171-194. 4 Taf.

1959. Begonia Masoniana Irmscher. (English Description). — Begonian 26: 202-203.

1959. Begonia Masoniana Irmscher (Latin description). — Begonian 26: 231.

1960. Begoniaceae, Schiefblattgewaechse. (Begoniaceae, Begonia plant). — In: Pareys Blumengaertnerei. 2. Aufl., Bd. 2: 67-98 mit 8 Illustr. and 838-839 (Additions and corrections, including Begonia masoniana Irmscher. 1959).

1961. Monographische Revision der Begoniaceen Afrikas I. Sekt. Augustia und Rostrobegonia sowie einige neue Sippen aus anderen Sektionen. (A Monographic Revision of African Begonias I. Sections Augustia and Rostrobegonia as well as some new taxa from other Sections). Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 81: 106-188. 8 Tables.

1962. Begonia Morelli Irmscher — New Species. — Begonian 29: 46-47 (Illustration), 56 (text).

1963. Begoniaceae. — In: F. Weberling, Neue Funde von Bluetenpflanzen aus El Salvador. (New Found Flowering Plants of El Salvador). — Beitr. Biol. Pflanzen 39: 438-447. 3 Abb.

1964. Begonia Walteriana n. sp. — In: Beitrage zur Phytologie. Prof. Dr. Heinrich Walter zum 65. Geburtstag gewindmet. Verlag Eugen Ulmer Stuttgart.

Also in: Arbeiten Landw. Hochschule Hohenheim 30: 13-15. 1 Abb.

1965. Correction Corner. (Correction of Begonia names for illustrations in Begonias written by Roy Genders and published in London.) Begonian 32: 228.



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# GROWING BEGONIAS IS A PERSONAL THING

by Margaret B. Zieshenne

Although Santa Barbara, where we live, is known to have one of the world's most favored residential climates and is practically ideal for growing plants, within thirty miles of our home there is such a variety of climates if I were to lay down a rule for growing *Begonias*, it likely would not apply to an American Begonia Society member living in a windy valley two miles away.

As each develops his own method of growing *Begonias*, the possession of a *Begonia* is a very personal thing. One may admire a *Begonia* in a show as one might admire a jewel in Tiffany's. Possessing the plant or the jewel is the principle thing, except to the institutional taxonomist whose dried plants are most important.

The American Begonia Society was formed in 1934 to stimulate interest in *Begonias*; encourage the introduction and development of new plants; standardize nomenclature; gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture; issue a bulletin; and bring *Begonia* lovers and growers into friendly contact. I think that the most important of the aims is the last one, as the former can only be accomplished if the final one is paramount. We have found this particularly true this last year, traveling beyond the geographical boundaries of Southern California and meeting personally such fine and enthusiastic *Begonia* lovers, still corresponding with them and with others whom we have not seen, in

Japan and in the Southern Hemisphere.

Each of the over 2500 members of the ABS, including those whose only contact is through 'The Begonian', has a responsibility for promoting the aims and purposes of the society, unless the member is an institution. It is the love of growing this diverse and interesting plant which cements us into a group. But the beginner may be more interested in what soil he should use; I am interested in the lighting and heating requirements in the colder regions and how they are supplied when there are five feet of snow on the ground.

Plants which growers in other parts find spindly invalids, may grow like weeds for us (and as weeds I often trim them to pot size to the consternation of the taxonomist in our family who may have been watching a particular branch for the first bloom in years of growing!) We struggle to grow a plant which is a weed to others.

The nurseryman in our family grows certain plants 75 feet to the southeast of my completely exposed rooftop garden. My B. 'Corallina de Lucerna' in an eight inch pot sends out husky, reddish-brown leaves on sturdy stems sometimes mildewy, while his, down the hill about 25 feet and protected by glass, has a brittle, green growth, completely free of mildew.

I use soil from the nursery in the pots of my private outdoor garden - whether for *Begonias*, geraniums,

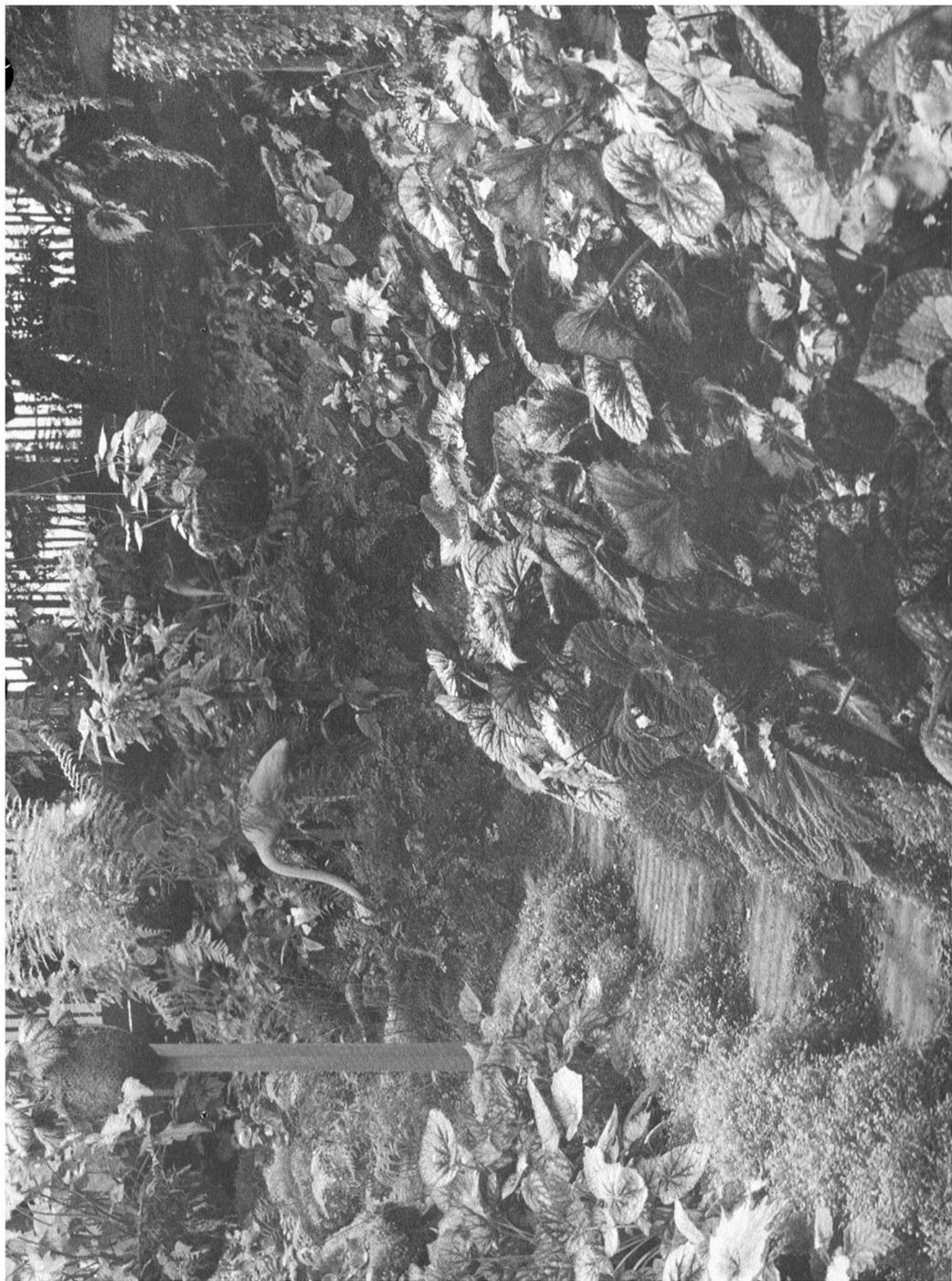


Photo by R. Ziesenhenn

View of lath-cloth house of Verna Flaitz and the late Henry Flaitz, Ojai, California about 1943. Rexes grown in beds of ground scrub-oak leaves, 6" thick.



Photo by R. Ziesenhenné

*Begonia* 'Frances Kay' in hanging basket (ab. 1943.) Rex cultivar of the Henry Flaitz' of Ojai, California.

*Growing Begonias is a Personal Thing*

(Continued)

chrysanthemums, sedums, epiphyllums, or hoyas. I use the same soil for my African violets, palms and marantas in the house. Our cyclamen soil has a little sterilized sand added and lacks the steer manure of the basic mixture as the fertilizer causes leaf growth and the blossoms will not come until most of the nitrogen is used up.

We've shipped boxes of our soil mix to apartment dwellers in New York but there are all kinds of planter mixes on the market which, with fertilizer added, will suit many growers.

The most beautiful rexes I have ever seen were grown in six inches of pure, ground, scrub-oak leaves on a hillside with a northeast exposure in a combination lath and cloth house. The location was Ojai, in Ventura County, many times hot as blazes in summer, and very cold in winter, but a month after the devoted growers, Henry and Verna Flaitz, reset their plants in late Spring and watered them as needed, huge, luscious leaves crowned last year's rhizomes and in among them, fresh new seedlings added the personality of their unusual growth, pattern, or color to the hillside cloth house.

The results of the labor and love of this generous couple remain clear in memory and in pictures some of which illustrate this article to inspire rex enthusiasts. Of all their introductions my favorites, B. 'Frances Kay' and B. 'Ojai' remain in cultivation.

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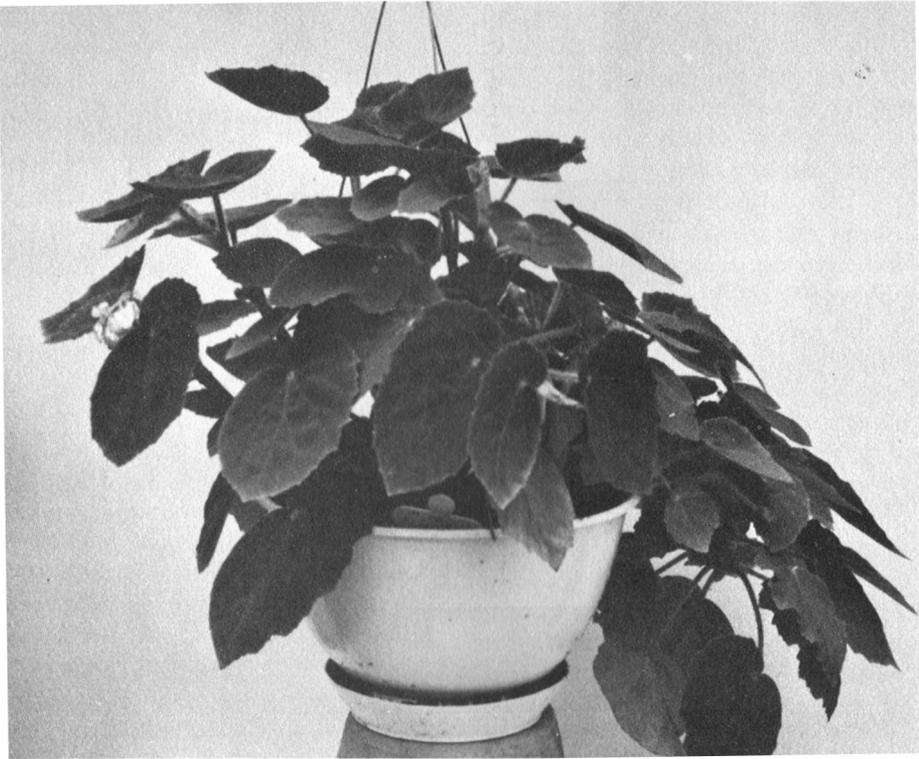
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## BELVA KUSLER HYBRIDS

by Elda Haring

Two years ago I obtained several Belva Kusler hybrids. I was interested to see how these would grow under ordinary house conditions. The three that I purchased were B. 'Gwen Lowell', B. Frances Lyons' and B. 'Jill Adair'. The first winter they were placed in a south window in my workroom where the light is very bright and where they received four hours of sunshine a day during the winter. Growth was very slow and it was not until summer that new shoots and leaves were evident. However, leaves of all three curled under and the edges of some of them turned brown. I do not provide any additional humidity for plants growing in my living area but I have successfully grown many *Begonias* under living room conditions as well as African Violets, Gloxinias, Columneas and other plants that are considered to need extra humidity. Temperatures in my living area are 70 degrees daytime and 65 by night during the winter months. This past April I gave up hoping that the Kusler hybrids would do well in the house and moved them to the greenhouse where the nighttime temperature is 60 degrees. What a transformation! The leaves uncurled, became crisp and healthy and the plants started to show new growth within a very short time. The plant in the photo, B. 'Gwen Lowell' quickly outgrew its four inch pot while the growth remained compact and graceful. As it grew I could see that it would lend itself to basket growing.



Gwen Lowell

Photo by Walter Haring

The basket in the photo is a six inch white plastic with attached saucer. It hangs over the west bench in the greenhouse. The outside glass was covered with shading paste for the summer and the greenhouse also enjoys the shade of some rather large trees. In early October shading paste was removed and the plant exposed to afternoon sunshine. Flower buds developed and as of this writing several very heavy clusters of flowers, pinkish in bud opening to white, are quite spectacular. The foliage is olive-green becoming rosy beneath in the sunlight and the stems are reddish . . . truly a handsome plant and one to be proud of. B. 'Frances Lyons' is

still in the four inch pot but is rapidly putting on new growth making it necessary soon to give it a larger pot. While B. 'Jill Adair' responded to the humidity of the greenhouse by uncurling its leaves it did not start to show new growth until late summer. These *Begonias* are really an exciting addition to my collection.

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# BEGONIA HYBRID REGISTRATION

(Continued from the January issue)

*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 Ziesenhenné, ABS Nomenclature Director, 1130 N. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, California 93103.*

Editor

Held over from the January issue in order that the picture could be printed in greater detail.

Editor

## No. 255 — Begonia ('Bunchii' x unknown) 'Beryl' —

B. 'Beryl' is said to be much more distinctive than B. 'Ricky Minter' with 100% crested leaves, heavy with satiny finish and a good dark green. The leaves are oblique, 8" x 12", with 8" petioles, hairy with reddish spots from which hairs emerge extending to underside of veins. The flowers are pink, ½", two-petalled, emerging from rhizome in panicles on a 12" stem blooming two or three months from Christmas on. Developed by Mrs. Ruth Waltzu Stanley, 1000 Garfield Ave., Box 34, Bellefontaine, Ohio 93311, in 1955, it first bloomed in 1957, and was first distributed in 1960. Available through Mrs. Edna Stewart, RR 2, Box 491, Tarentum, Pa. 15084 and Mike Kartuz, 92 Chestnut St., Wilmington, Mass. 01887. Registered March 27, 1969.

## No. 260 — Begonia (Rex cv. x Rex cv.) 'Sir Arthur Leatherman' —

B. 'Sir Arthur Leatherman', a

spiral rex has large (9" x 10") round, deeply fluted and ruffled leaves, with even margin and heavy texture; bronzy brown, with irregular areas of silver-blue; short petioles red, with sparse white hairs. Originated by Sylvia B. Leatherman, Leatherman's Gardens, 2637 N. Lee Ave., So. El Monte, Calif. 91733, in 1962 and first distributed in 1966. Registered June 14, 1969.

## No. 261 — Begonia (Rex cv. x Rex cv.) 'Lady Frances Leatherman' —

B. 'Lady Frances Leatherman', a large, spiral rex, is hardy out of doors in California and was developed by Sylvia B. Leatherman, Leatherman's Gardens, 2637 N. Lee Ave., So. El Monte, Calif. 91733, in 1963 and first distributed in 1967. The leaves are deeply pointed and ruffled, 10" x 12", margin irregularly pointed, thick heavy textured, with pink and bluish hues; petioles are red with sparse red hairs. Registered June 14, 1969.

## No. 262 — Begonia (undulata x dichroa) 'Diclata' —

B. 'Diclata' is an intermediate, cane-like *Begonia*, developed July 20, 1942 and first bloomed in 1943, by Rudolf Ziesenhenné, 1130 N. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93103. The leaves are long, egg-shaped, 7¼" x 3", with an even undulate margin; the texture is thin, with veins palmately-pinnate, color medium green; petioles are round, 1" long, and stipules are long ovate, falling early. Blooming in summer and fall, the flowers are pink, 1¼" x 1", in axillary position on plant

*Begonia Hybrid Registration (Continued)*

and stem, arranged in a dichotomous cyme on flower stem 2½ inches long. Registered October 6, 1969.

**No. 263 — Begonia (dayii x hydrocotylifolia) 'Penny O'Day' —**

B. 'Penny O'Day' is a plain-leaved rhizomatous *Begonia*, resembling a giant pennywort. Leaves are oval, 5" x 7", margined in a soft, brown fuzz; texture is smooth, glossy, leathery; color dark green with reddish-black veins; petioles are reddish, 10" long; stipules are small, papery, brown. Flowers are pink, but female has green ovary; male ½", female 5/8", shaped like *hydrocotylifolia*, arranged on 13"-20" stem, above leaf axil, three groups to each stem; blooms February to April. Originated in 1966, first bloomed and distributed in 1967 by Mrs. Elaine Wilderson, 5764 Robertson Ave., Baton Rouge, La. Propagated by Mrs. Rosetta White, 425 E. Second St., Newton, Kans. 67114, and available from her. Registered Oct. 15, 1969.

**No. 264 — Begonia ('Elizabeth Lockhart' x sceptrum) 'Kentwood' —**

B. 'Kentwood' was originated in 1961, first bloomed in 1964, and first distributed in 1966 by Irene Nuss, 6429 Riggs Place, Los Angeles, Calif. 90045. A tall, cane-type *Begonia*, its leaves are angel-wing type, deep green, faintly spotted or splashed with silver, 12-15" x 8"; margin is deeply notched, superba type; texture is smooth and veins green; petioles are 3" and stipules are green, but turn brown and fall. Flowers from August to October, deep clear pink, fragrant, large, male blossom 2½" across, positioned

on four-inch flower stem, near top of cane; seed vessels have very large wings and there will be as many as 60 to 80 female blossoms in one cluster. Plant tops 8 feet easily. Registered October 27, 1969.

**No. 265 — Begonia ('Kentwood' x Lenore Olivier) 'Hannah Serr' —**

B. 'Hannah Serr' is an intermediate cane, with nodes close together giving the plant a compact look. As many as five clusters of flowers of deep coral pink in light shades, fragrant, large and showy, bloom from April to February on 2 inch stems. Leaves are superba type, 9" x 5", with notched wavy margin, tending to curve at tips; texture is smooth, with veins green, as are the leaves; petioles are short, 1½"; stipules are green but turn brown and fall. Flowers are tucked in close to leaf node, with as many as 50 blooms in one cluster, long-lasting and very fragrant. Originator Irene Nuss, 6429 Riggs Place, Los Angeles, Calif. 90045; developed in 1965, first bloomed in 1967. Plant was listed in the ABS National Show in 1968 as 'Kentwood x Lenore Olivier' and won Dyckman Award in that show as noted in October 1968 "The Begonian". Registered October 17, 1969.



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### No. 1 — *B. Capenemae* —

New species from Brazil with rather large green leaves. Stems and petioles are densely covered with broad bract-like hairs. The flowers are greenish white, borne in dense hairy clusters. This plant (see picture) was grown from seed sent by Seed Fund to Europe in 1966 and was some of the seed collected by Ralph Spencer and came to us as unidentified Brazil species. If you have this *Begonia* now it is as mentioned here. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

### No. 2 — *B. johnstonii* — Africa

Tall, branched, loose and trailing habit, stems and branches pale green, succulent, streaked with red; leaves broad-ovate with basal lobes overlapping, glossy bright green above, margins crenately lobed, paler beneath with soft hairs barely visible along the nerves; flowers very large, soft pink on four to five inch arching stems. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

### No. 3 — *B. macbethi* —

African species which resembles *B. suffruticosa* (*B. richardsiana*) but has a more compact habit. Flowers white. Price 50 cents per pkt.

### No. 4 — *B. boliviensis* — Medium

Stems succulent, smooth, green, tinged with red or brown. Leaves

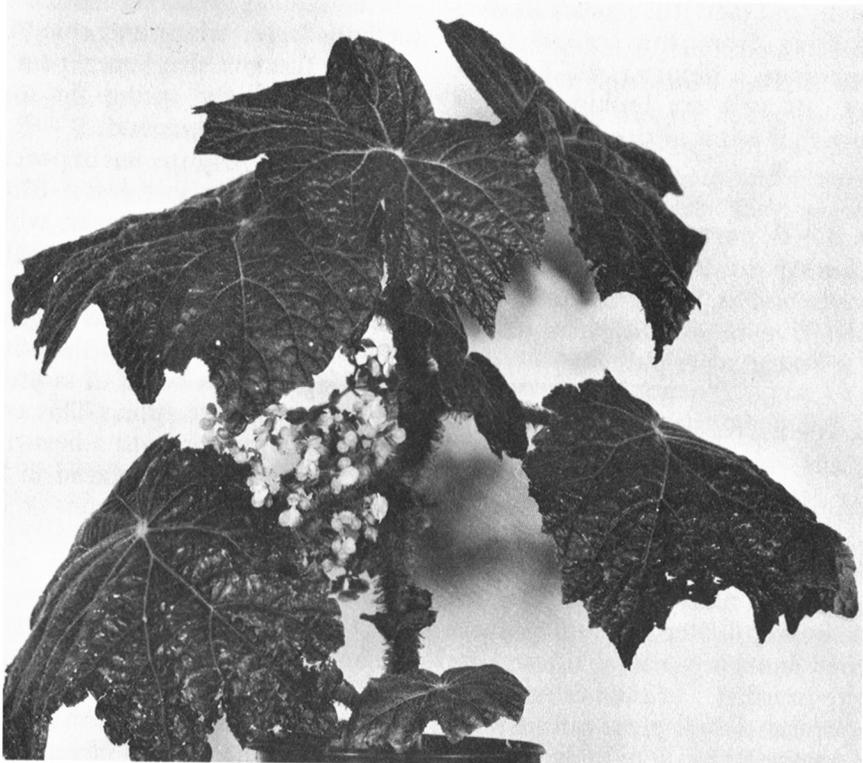


PHOTO BY J. BOGARDUS

ovate-lanceolate, broad at the base and tapering to a slender point, glossy dark green, double toothed. Flowers orange-red, nodding, petals long. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 5 – B. richarsiana x B. dregei –**

Should produce interesting small type plants with compact growth. Described as being very attractive. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 5 – B. sc 'Prince Charming' x 'Pink Calla' –**

Most unusual all green semperflorens type with intriguing flowers which are described as pink doubles with completely new blooms dropping from the centers of the original blooms and then still smaller flowers appearing from the second ones. Sometimes, a bloom is 2½-3 inches long. If you are looking for the unusual, this it it. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 6 – B. porteriana –**

Similar to *B. franconis* and *B. birtella* and is found in collections under five or six different names. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 7 – B. 'Kallaking' – Selfed**

Calla type with pink blooms. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 8 – B. echinosepala – Brazil**

Regular, narrow, serrate leaves, not heavily-haired, drooping from arched branches. Male flowers are white-bearded. Seed came from England and their plant differs from the one we know here by this name. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 9 – B. corallina –**

Cane type plant with very large clusters of coral flowers. Hardy and where climate permits, it can be grown out doors. Leaves sometimes silver spotted. Price 50 cents per pkt.

**No. 10 – B. venosa – Brazil**

Growth shrubby, erect medium height. Stems succulent round, green with small white lines, surrounded entirely with large, almost transparent, fine, venous, light brown, vesicular bracts, in such a way that the stems themselves, are hardly visible. Petioles are as long as the leaves or slightly longer, fleshy, covered with brownish pubescens. Leaves auricular, succulent, margins entire; green background is covered with a dense tomentum of white hairs. Flowers abundant, medium large, white and spicy-fragrant. Blooms the latter part of summer to early spring, in some places all the year around.

*B. venosa* is quite an important plant, but we do not see it often. The white tomentous cover, which comes off easily when the plant is touched, constitutes the ornamental value of the plant. This *Begonia* thrives best in a warm location, where it gets a few hours of morning and afternoon sunshine. This condition turns the leaves to a beautiful white. If the plant is placed in the shade permanently, it remains greenish. Water sparingly in winter. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

**No. 11 – B. parilis – Brazil**

Can be grown as a basket or upright but support is required. One of the best Brazil species with longish narrow leaves and many large, white blossoms. Price 50 cents per pkt.

In looking through our files we found many seed of good *Begonias* that you should be growing and you will be doing the Seed Fund a favor as well as yourselves if you would invest in a few packets — Most of them have appeared on the Seed Fund lists before, therefore, we can't take the time and space for descriptions and the price is so attractive you won't be able to resist.

Close out sale continued —

- No. 1 — *B. panama sp.*, cane type
- No. 2 — *B. panama sp.*, rhizomatous
- No. 3 — *B. Philippine Island*, cane type.
- No. 4 — *B. sc Semperflorens*, "Garden varieties" from England — many and varied.
- No. 5 — *fagifolia*
- No. 6 — *B. egregia*
- No. 7 — *B. lobata*
- No. 8 — *B. evansiana*
- No. 9 — *B. kellermanni*
- No. 10 — *B. taylori* — Mexico, tuberouse
- No. 11 — *B. palmaris*
- No. 12 — *B. subvillosa*
- No. 13 — *B. rotundifolia*
- No. 14 — *B. hispida cuculifera*
- No. 15 — *B. sc. Semperflorens*, basket type.

You may purchase the above mentioned for the ridiculous price of **TWO** dollars or eight for **ONE** dollar — single pkts fifty cents. You just can't afford to miss this sale.

Send request for seed to:  
Mrs. Florence Gee  
Seed Fund Administrator  
234 Birch Street  
Roseville, Calif. 95678

The Holidays are over and winter is here, don't you think this would be a good time to paint, draw or photograph some of your *Begonias*? These add much to the flights, or maybe you could write an article about your experiences with one special *Begonia* or a group of *Begonias*. Think about it and when flights get to you, you will have something to add beside your usual letter.

Yvonne Wells of Mesquite, Texas reports she has *B. 'Lenore Olivier'* seedlings — two unusual with the first true leaves a pure silver, shaped in angel wing fashion with ruffled edges, another is half the size of others with silver dots.

#### **B. 'Iron Cross':**

Winifred Smith, Hillsboro, Oregon visited her husband's parents and saw *B. 'Iron Cross'*, the only *Begonia* there, hanging full of seed pods, she picked them and planted them, wondered if they would grow!

#### **B. 'Otto Alfred':**

John Yochum, Princeton, Indiana reported that *B. 'Otto Alfred'* was outgrowing all the other plants in his greenhouse in November.

#### **B. versicolor:**

David Allen, of San Francisco, California put a deep layer of charcoal in the bottom of a bowl, then planted *B. versicolor* in a layer of sphagnum moss. He keeps water standing in the charcoal and feeds it with fish-i-lizer tablets. He noticed that there is a tiny leaf growing on a leaf still attached to the plant.

**Feeding:**

Bob Totino, of Norristown, Pennsylvania thinks it is best to water his *Begonias* from the bottom except when he fertilizes, this way the roots will spread better and not cluster at the top of the pot, he has less rot that way. He uses Black Magic fertilizer.

Dorothy Thomas, of Findlay, Ohio fertilizes with a weak solution of Blue Whale, Plant Marvel and Hyponex 20-20-20, she likes to water with dolomite lime in the water about once a month.

**Bloom:**

Delores Willens, of Bozeman, Montana wrote in September that she had these Rex in bloom: B. 'Red Berry', B. 'Thrush', B. 'German Dwarf', B. 'His Majesty', B. 'Robin', B. 'Helen Lewis', and B. 'Northern Lights'.

Pat Burdick of Burnsville, Minnesota had B. *quadrialata* in bloom in October with pretty yellow bloom.

**Sport:**

Edna Stewart of Tarentum, Pennsylvania has a sport of B. 'Richard Robinson' that she is watching, she has potted it into two and one-half inch pots but both plants acted like they were going dormant.

**From Miniature flight:**

Lucille Peck of Union City, Michigan had seedlings of what was supposed to be B. *tafiensis*, they were in bloom in December.

Blooms were very tiny and white and in pairs. She wonders what they are, likes to have plants correctly named but wouldn't have missed these for anything. She likes to tuck anything small into a terrarium and has dozens of bowls of various sizes under lights. One Ming Uru type bowl under the "Fruit ripening lamp" and two quite large aquariums near windows. Most of the small bowls under the lights have one of a kind plantings but the larger containers are landscaped for her own pleasure.

Lucille went to a large woods near her home and brought spoonful of bog soil to experiment with in her bowls. She says they contain an unbelievable number of seeds and spores and given the right condition they will grow. She has a little sun dew\* that came up in one section of the peat bog. They are dormant in winter so she let this little fellow go to sleep then moved his bowl into her seed planting tray where the temperature is from seventy to eighty degrees. In about two weeks he woke up and started to grow so her problem was what to feed him, maybe she could find some spiders egg cases.

If you would like to enjoy the study and discussion that goes on in the flights, write me and tell me how you grow *Begonias* and your interests.

\*sun dew — a group of small bog plants — species of the genus *Drosera* with sticky hairs that capture insects.

To join a Flight write:

Mrs. Anita Sickmon  
ABS Round Robin Director  
Route 2, Box 99  
Cheney, Kansas 67025

## PRIMROSES FOR HOUSE OR GREENHOUSE

The indoor primroses grow well in the house or outside in warm weather in shady spots. They cannot take cold weather or dampness as the crown will mildew and wither away the plant.

### **Primula Obconica**

These plants can be raised from seed, the new hybrids being developed have such huge blooms in luscious colors, some have frilled edges, others scalloped and rolled edges. Seeds planted in the spring will start blooming by August. Once in blooming state they continue to bloom if the old umbles are removed when through blooming. I have had continued bloom for three years now on one plant. The flowers are as large as a silver dollar.

This *primula* has given primroses a bad name due to its ability to cause a painful and prolonged rash to appear on some of those who come in contact with it. It is not allowed in hospitals. I am one who suffers when touched by the leaves (*P. obconica* has irritating hairs which are poisonous to some people. Washing with alcohol, followed by soap and water, will relieve the irritation of *primula* poisoning. Those known to be susceptible to primrose poisoning are cautioned not even to smell the flowers, let alone touch the plant — Editor).

Due to the large paper like flowers and the beautiful foliage, it is a temptation to raise some of the plants. Keep a pair of rubber gloves on hand. When you brush against it by accident, as I seem to do, the rash appears in a couple of hours. If you scratch, the rash is worse.

Like all primroses, they like a

rich soil, one part peat, one part sand, one part rich garden loam, a dash of bone meal and water well with a liquid fertilizer once a week. You can transfer from seedling stage into four inch pots as the plants grow so rapidly. In three months time you should have bloom. A delight to see but do not touch plants. To some it has no effect. Maybe you are the lucky one as they are a delight to grow.

### **Primula Malacoides (fairy primrose)**

Another pot primrose used by florists has been developed in Czechoslovakia by their horticulturists engaged in the growing of new, first quality varieties. This one has appeared in the florists shops since the second world war. Due to the hybridizing for larger flowers, for more color and aroma, these fairy-like flowers make a delightful plant. They bloom continually once started.

The blooms come in pastel shades, some are double, blooming tier on tier. The leaves are rounded and somewhat hairy with dentate margins. Heat during blooming season should be about 45 to 50 degrees. For winter bloom sow seed in July and cover pots with glass and paper until germination. As soon as possible prick out into three inch pots and later into five inch pots in which they will flower. A mixture of seven parts loamy soil, three parts peat moss, two parts of course sand makes a potting soil to their liking. To achieve maximum bloom, a comparatively cool temperature with adequate ventilation and careful watering is necessary.

Continued on page 42, Column 1

# CHRISTMAS CACTUS

(*Zygocactus truncatus*)

Christmas cactus is an epiphyte, growing upon trees or other objects in its native habitat. When grown in a pot, drainage should be perfect and the soil should not be packed tight around the roots.

Christmas cactus never likes direct sunlight if it is too hot; it scorches the leaves. But early morning sunlight will benefit the plant so an east window would be ideal. They like a cool place, good ventilation or good air circulation and really appreciate extra moisture in the air. In addition to providing as much humidity as possible, try giving your plant a misty spray of tepid water every day while it is in active growth.

Feed your plant lightly but regularly while it is growing most rapidly but omit any supplemental feedings during its fall rest. Even the best of care will not produce flowers unless you see that your Christmas Cactus has only eight hours of light each day for at least eight weeks. This is vitally important as it gives the plant an opportunity to form buds, which it will not do with longer hours of light.

Artificial lighting will throw the plant off its schedule if not watched. Blooming period for the Christmas

Cactus is November to January. They can be brought into bloom at almost any season simply by shortening their days for the proper length of time. Give less water during rest period although at no time should they be allowed to shrivel from lack of moisture.

Clay pots are best for Christmas Cactus. The important thing is that the pots be provided with adequate drainage and that it be filled with humus soil. Possibly, for this plant, clay pots have an advantage over non-porous containers since they do permit some transference of moisture and air through their walls.

Christmas Cactus can be raised from seed for different colors. They grow readily from seed although since they are hybrids you will never know what color or habit to expect. It takes three years from seed to flowering stage.

Reprinted from Eastside Branch "Shady News".

(*Zygocactus truncatus* — A popular species of Brazilian epiphytic cactus with flattened, glossy joints which suggest one of its common names, Crab or Lobster Cactus. Its drooping branches are tipped with handsome red, sometimes double, flowers which appearing from just before the winter holiday season until early spring, suggest the common name, Christmas Cactus. An attractive, easily-grown house plant. It has been popular and a feature of most cactus collections ever since it was introduced into cultivation more than a century ago. It is also used in hanging pots or baskets: if cuttings are inserted a few inches apart they soon produce a thick, graceful mass of foliage. As it is a tropical plant, this cactus prefers a richer soil than is needed for the other types of desert origin.)

From the New Garden Encyclopedia

(Check the Advertisers for where to purchase these satisfactory house plants. Hybridist have developed plants that bloom in other seasons and with other colored bloom)

ED.

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## Primroses for House or Greenhouse (Continued)

They can be used as border plants outdoors during the warmer months.

by Beth Tait

Reprinted by permission from the Eastside Branch "Shady News".

# REPORT OF THE RESEARCH DIRECTOR

November 24, 1969

I am glad to report that all of the members of the Research Committee have consented to serve for another year.

The credit for the work in the research on *B. paranaenses* Brade goes to Thelma O'Reilly. Both Carrie Karegeannes and Thelma are deep in the researching of many *Begonias* that seem to be questionable as to name. Jane Neal of England is also working on this project with them. Some of the other species they are working on are *B. echinosepbla*, *B. obscura* and *B. dietrichiana*. Carrie is able to do considerable research in this field since she has access to the U.S. National Herbarium in Washington, at the courtesy of Dr. Smith.

Dr. Grant McGregor is going to do research on the problem of sterility in certain *Begonias*. He will compile a list of those *Begonias* that are sterile in the male or female flower or both. To have a complete list of all known sterile *Begonias* will be of value to anyone that is interested in *Begonia* hybridizing.

Another one of our important projects for this year is to have all of the Committee members participate in contacting Colleges and Universities all over the country and Europe, to see if we can find someone that is doing research with the *Begonia* family of plants; and to interest them to work with *Begonias* in their Botany or Horticultural Departments. This may involve supplying them with material for research purposes, which is one of

the reasons why I am interested in having a Research Fund established. In this field of research Elaine Wilkerson has accomplished a number of contacts with many Southern Universities.

M. Carleton L'Hommedieu  
*Research Director*  
370 Locust Avenue  
Oakdale, N.Y. 11769



## A. B. S. LIBRARY BOOKSTORE

The following selection of books are  
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## TUBEROUS BEGONIAS

Tuberous *Begonias* should be started in February, March at the latest, depending on the availability in your nursery and the climate in your area. Seeds should be planted between December and March. (The Seed Fund is a good source of seed. Watch it for the offer of tuberous seed. ED.)

The tubers are roundish, saucer shaped on the bottom, with a depression at the top. They range in size from almost nothing to several inches in diameter. The size does not seem to be affected materially by age, nor does size seem to affect quality. A two year old tuber seems to produce a little the best flowering plant and many growers think that a medium sized tuber of good depth is preferable.

Tubers may be secured from a commercial grower, any good *Begonia* nursery or most large nurseries and seed houses between December 15th and March 1st. On visiting a Tuberous Begonia Nursery during the summertime, one may pick out the plant he desires and take it with him or have the tuber sent to him when it matures.

Tubers are easily grown and form a better plant than those from seed the first year.

The tuber may be started from February to June. Place the tuber depressed side up in pots or flats filled with leaf mold or similar growing medium. Most authorities advise sinking half of the tuber in the growing medium, placing in a shady location, or in a just warm part of the greenhouse and keeping barely

moist. A cool atmosphere seems conducive to stronger plants and tubers. Heat causes faster starting but plants and especially bulbs seem to suffer from the forcing.

When a good sprout and good roots have developed, the tuber should be planted in as small a pot as the tuber allows, placing the tuber  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches below the top of the soil. The pot then should be set in water and allowed to soak until the top soil in the pot shows moist and then not watered again until the soil is dry on the surface.

As the roots fill the soil just inside the pot, it is time to shift the plant to the ground or to the pot in which the plant is to grow. A full grown tuber will fill a five to eight inch pot. If the first blooms are removed and the seed pods picked off, the plant will make a much better specimen.

Tuberous *Begonias* require a great deal of water and they should be kept damp, not soggy, at all times. Sprinkling should be done only if the sun does not strike the plant directly and the atmosphere is warm enough to evaporate the water within a few hours.

The tuberous *Begonia* is a profuse bloomer and necessarily requires a great deal of food. Any good balanced plant food may be used every two weeks when the plants are in a good growing condition. Never fertilize a dry plant and always water several times between fertilizing.

These plants ordinarily bloom heavily so requires staking early. The green bamboo stakes in your nursery will last a season and will hardly be visible if staking is done early.

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3rd Saturday, Homes of Members  
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## CONNECTICUT BRANCH

4th Sunday of each month  
Mrs. Peggy E. Fratus, Secy.  
1363 Boston Post Road  
Old Saybrook, Conn. 06475

## DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS BRANCH

3rd Monday, 10 a.m., Members' Homes  
Mrs. Mae Blanton, Secy.  
Rt. 1, Box 558, Mesquite, Texas 75149

## EAST BAY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:45 p.m., Willard School  
Telegraph at Stuart, Berkeley, Calif.  
Charles Badcock, Secy.  
2325 Esmond, Richmond, Calif. 94804

## EASTSIDE BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Natural Gas Co. Bldg.  
Crossroads Shopping Center, Bellevue, Wash.  
Edith Lange, Secy.  
990 Belfair Lane, Bellevue, Wash. 98004

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3rd Friday, Members' Homes  
Mrs. Gladys Mattuket  
314 N. Rural Drive, Monterey Park, Calif. 91754

## FOOTHILL BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 8:00 p.m.  
La Verne Community Bldg.  
2039 Third St., La Verne  
Mrs. A. Esther Smith, Secy.  
309 E. Foothill Blvd., Pomona, Calif. 91767

## FORT, ELSA BRANCH

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628 Beach Ave., Laurel Springs, N.J. 08044

## GLENDALE BRANCH

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Glendale Federal Savings, 401 N. Brand  
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4177 Flannery Rd., Baton Rouge, La. 70814

## HOUSTON TEXAS BRANCH

2nd Friday, 10:00 a.m.  
Garden Center, 1500 Herman Drive  
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12601 Broken Bough, Memorial Station  
Houston, Texas 77024

## INGLEWOOD BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Western Federal Savings Bldg.  
355 E. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood, Calif.  
Lola Somes, Secy.  
4849 W. 130th St., Hawthorne, Calif. 90250

## KNICKERBOCKER BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
McAlpin Hotel, New York City  
Mrs. Philip Sarna, Secy.  
37 East 30th St., New York 10016

## LONG BEACH PARENT CHAPTER

2nd Sunday, 1:30 p.m.  
Glendale Fed. Sav. & Loan Bldg.  
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Mrs. Bernita McClanahan, Secy.  
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Mrs. Wilma Simpson, Secy.  
3105 Belmont St., Baton Rouge, La. 70808

## MESQUITE BRANCH

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3209 Hula Dr., Mesquite, Texas 75149

## MIAMI BRANCH

4th Tuesday, 8:00 p.m.  
Simpson Memorial Garden Center  
Miss Rosamond Meriweather, Secy.  
1552 Plascentia Ave., Coral Gables, Fla. 33134

## MISSOURI BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 11 a.m.  
Members' Homes  
Kansas City, Mo.  
Miss Nine Austin, Secy.  
1104 Askew St., Kansas City, Mo 64127

## NORTH LONG BEACH BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
American Legion Post No. 560  
East 59th and Orange, Long Beach  
Ruth Hurd, Secy.  
2942 Sawyer St., Long Beach, Calif. 90805

## ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Garden Grove Grange Hall, Century and Taft Sts.  
Garden Grove, Calif.  
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621 Orchard St.  
Corona del Mar, Calif. 92625

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R. H. Dana School Cafetorium  
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8631 Clearview Pl., Riverside, Calif. 92509

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1609 W. Lewis St., San Diego, Calif. 92103

## SACRAMENTO BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 8:30 p.m., Garden Center  
3300 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, Calif.  
Mrs. Dora Hale, Secy.  
9770 Carmencito Ave., Sacramento, Calif. 95823

## SAN DIEGO BRANCH

4th Tuesday, 8:00 p.m., Asbury Methodist Church  
Marlborough & Polk St., San Diego, Calif.  
Mrs. Mary L. Hoffman, Secy.  
2327 33rd St., San Diego, Calif. 92104

## SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH

1st Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.  
Garden Center, Golden Gate Park  
9th Ave. and Lincoln Way  
Mr. Allen Sweet, Secy.  
139 Beverly St., San Francisco, Calif. 94132

## SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH

2nd Friday, 8:00 p.m.  
Los Angeles State and County Arboretum  
501 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, Calif.  
Mrs. Virginia Barnett, Secy.  
1213 Mullender Ave., West Covina, Calif. 91790

## SAN MIGUEL BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, Porter Hall 7:30 p.m.  
University & La Mesa Blvd., La Mesa  
Mrs. Margaret Lee, Secy.  
1852 31st St., San Diego, Calif. 92102

## SANTA BARBARA BRANCH

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History  
2559 Puesta Del Sol  
Mrs. Marilyn Nielson, Secy.  
16 Plumas, Goleta, Calif. 93017

## SEATTLE BRANCH

3rd Tuesday, 7:45 p.m., Loyal Heights Field House  
21st Ave., N.W. and N.W. 77th St.  
Virginia Level, Secy.  
13770 1st Avenue N.E., Seattle, Wash. 98125

## SHEPHERD, THEODOSIA BURR BRANCH

1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Y.M.C.A. Bldg., 5200 Telegraph Rd., Ventura, Calif.  
David Dichter, Secy.  
3280 San Luis St., Ventura, California 93003

## SMOKY VALLEY BRANCH

4th Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Members' Homes  
Miss Verna Fowler, Pres.  
920 Sheridan, Salina, Kansas 67401

## SOUTH CAROLINA BRANCH

Mrs. Leonard Thomas  
333 Harrow Dr., Columbia, S. C. 292910

## SOUTH SEATTLE BRANCH

4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Wm. Moshier Field House  
430 So. 156th Burien  
Mrs. Arthur Johnson  
12216 8th South, Seattle, Wash. 98168

## TARRANT COUNTY BRANCH

2nd Monday, 10:00 a.m., Members' Homes  
Mrs. F. E. Mahler, Secy.  
1815 Sixth Ave., Forth Worth, Texas 76110

## TEXAS STATE BRANCH

4th Thursday, Sabine National Bank Bldg.  
Port Arthur, Texas  
Mrs. R. J. Wilson, Secy.  
4620 Evergreen St., Port Arthur, Texas 77640

## TEXASTAR BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 10 a.m., Garden Center  
1500 Herman Dr., Houston, Texas  
Mrs. V. O. Harman, Secy.  
306 Cody, Houston, Texas 77009

## WESTCHESTER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Westchester Women's Club  
8020 Alverstone St., Los Angeles, Calif.  
Barbara Mack, Secy.  
424 Oregon St., El Segundo, Calif. 90245

## WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH

2nd Wednesday, 11:00 a.m., Homes of Members  
Mrs. Irene Fediaczko, Secy.  
125 Arlington Ave., Butler, Pa 16001

## WHITTIER BRANCH

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Palm Park Community Center  
5703 S. Palm Ave., Whittier  
Phyllis Ferguson, Secy.  
10722 Wiatt Way, La Habra, Calif. 90631

## WILLIAM PENN BRANCH

4th Tuesday, Noon, Homes of Members  
Mrs. Murdock Davis, Secy.  
256 Broughton Lane, Villanova, Pa. 19085

# CALENDAR

February 5 — Westchester Branch:  
Mr. Kenneth Drennon, member  
of the San Gabriel Branch will  
speak on "Soils and Fertilizers for  
Begonias". Plant table will be  
furnished by Mr. Drennon. Vis-  
itors are always welcome.

February 17 — North Long Beach  
Branch: Pot Luck 6:30 p.m.  
Speaker, Mr. Rudolph Ziesen-  
henne, topic, "The General Care  
of Begonias and Platycerium".

February 24 — ABS Board, 8:00 p.m.  
South Gate City Auditorium,  
4900 Southern Ave., South Gate,  
Calif. Meetings are always open  
to members.

March 5 — Westchester Branch:  
"Container Gardening" by Mrs.  
Sylvia Leatherman. Plant table  
will be furnished by Mrs. Leather-  
man. Visitors are always welcome.

**NOTICE TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS**  
March 1st is the deadline for the  
April issue. Due to a change in  
the method of printing "The  
Begonian" submit all material as  
soon as possible.

To make sure your meeting notices  
appear in this column, all those  
Branches with meeting dates after  
the tenth of the month, five  
weeks previous notice to Editor  
is requested. Before the 10th of  
the month, two months notice  
is requested.

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