

The BEGONIAN



AUGUST, 1973

Devoted to the Sheltered Garden

VOL. 40, NO. 8



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

BRANCH NOTES & CALENDAR EVENTS

August 10-12 — The Eastside Begonia Club will hold its 9th annual Flower Show in Bellevue, Wash. The theme is "Nature's Jewels". Show chairman is Phil Aaron and it will be held in the Bellevue Square Pavilion. Show hours will be: August 10, 1 to 9 p.m.; August 11, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; August 12, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Rare plant material will be available at the sales booth.

August 19 — The Long Beach Parent Chapter, 6300 East Spring Street in Long Beach. Program: Joe Littlefield will speak on the fabulous Botanical Gardens in British Columbia. Visitors are always welcome.

August 27 — The Santa Barbara Branch will entertain ABS members from the East Coast at the Rudolph

(Continued on Page 191)

COVER PICTURE — BEGONIA ACAULIS

By Dr. J. Doorenbos

This pretty little plant from New Guinea was introduced into cultivation in 1968 when Mr. J. F. U. Zieck sent seed to the Dept. of Horticulture of Wageningen University, the Netherlands, from where it was distributed to other collections. Mr. Zieck found it growing on rocky slopes in half-shade, giving a magnificent display of pink flowers when in bloom. He gives the locality as Rauna, which I take to be the same as Rona, given in Merrill and Perry's original description.

Begonia acaulis is in some ways an easy plant: it grows quickly and flowers profusely. It is, however, susceptible to fungal diseases like mildew and 'damping off'. It forms a tuber, but we found that the easiest

way to keep it in healthy condition is to grow the plants from seed and discard them as soon as they become unsightly. The cover is a reproduction of a diapositive taken by R. Jensen.

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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*.

1973 SHOW PROGRAM

41st Annual Show of the American Begonia Society
 At Student Commons Building, California State University
 800 N. State College Blvd., Fullerton, Ca.

August 16, 1973

Enter Plants 10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M.

August 17, 1973

Judging Start 9:30 A.M. Show closed to public
 Preview for A.B.S. members 6:30-8:00 P.M.

August 18, 1973

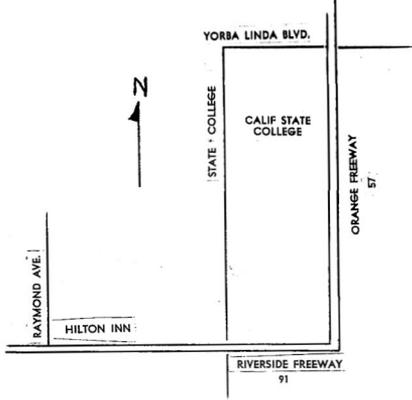
Public Showing 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.
 Annual Meeting of the American Begonia Society 1:00 P.M.
 Annual Banquet Hilton Inn, 1500 S. Raymond, Fullerton, Ca.
 Speaker Frank Reinelt
 Master of Ceremonies Mabel Corwin
 Installation of Officers Evelyn Cronin

August 19, 1973

Public Showing 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.
 Seminar — Speaker and Subject to be announced 10:00 A.M.
 Seminar — Speaker and Subject to be announced 11:00 A.M.
 Seminar — Mark Golding: "Bottle Growing" 1:00 P.M.
 Seminar — Sylvia Leatherman: "Rex Begonias" 3:00 P.M.

California State University is on the western side of the Orange Freeway (Hwy. 57) at the Yorba Linda Blvd. exit.

The Hilton Inn is at the north side of the Raymond Ave. exit of the Riverside Freeway (Hwy. 91).



BEGONIA CONCHIFOLIA OR WHAT?

By Jack Golding

Was the *Begonia* called 'Zip' and *Begonia conchifolia* Dietrich the same, or different species?

Initially I thought it would be simple to answer this question, but to resolve it required the work of many people throughout the country and overseas. I wish to thank all of them, especially Carrie Karegeannis of Annandale, Va., and Thelma O'Reilly of La Mesa, Calif., for their help and splendid cooperation that made it possible for me to write this story and to determine the answer.

The quest started for me in 1969, when I first admired that most interesting compact rhizomatous *Begonia* with peltate, flat, almost circular leaves that were shiny dark green on the upper surface and had a red spot above the attachment of the petiole. I was told that it was called *Begonia* 'Zip' and that it was a new species from Brazil. In 1970 I obtained plants of it from Rudy Ziesenhenné and Mike Kartuz.

Then at different flower shows I saw plants labeled *B. conchifolia* that looked like *B. 'Zip'*. One of these was exhibited by Carl L'Hommedieu at the 5th Eastern Convention and comparing it with my *B. 'Zip'* we found that they were the same. Carl thought something was wrong because his original plant had come from Bernice Brilmayer's collection.

In the few books I then had, *B. conchifolia* was described as having ovate leaves cupped like a mussel shell. My plants of *B. 'Zip'*, with the red spot, not mentioned in any

of those descriptions, had leaves that were flat or even turned down, almost circular, and with an acute tip. Also, *B. conchifolia* came from Costa Rica and *B. 'Zip'* was reported as coming from Brazil, so I thought they were different species.

I asked Rudy Ziesenhenné if he had a description of *B. 'Zip'*. He replied that he had not had the time to search it, but thought that it possibly was an un-named Brazilian species, and that some people had called it *Begonia conchifolia*.

About that time I had obtained A. B. Graf's new book, "Exotic Plant Manual." In it was a picture of a *Begonia* identified as *B. conchifolia 'Zip'*. I wrote to Mr. Graf that I thought these were separate plants because of their origin from different countries. Mr. Graf replied that he had photographed the plant at Sylvia Leatherman's Nursery in California and he thought she had brought the plant from Brazil. In 1966 Dr. Huttleston of Longwood Gardens, Pa., had told him that *B. 'Zip'* was probably a South American clone of *B. conchifolia* with a red spot. They had it under the Number P.I. 242577, and suggested that it be called *B. conchifolia 'Zip'* until someone gave it a better name.

Through the American Begonia Society Round Robins I advised friends that I was looking for plants of *B. conchifolia*. It brought results. Fausta Waite of Downingtown, Pa., told me that Marilyn Bottjer of Eastchester, N.Y., had one. In April 1971 I obtained a cutting of her plant

that had been grown from seed obtained from the A.B.S. June 1969 Seed Fund. The plant looked like my plants of *B. 'Zip'*, except it did not have the red spot above the petiole attachment.

I told Carrie Karegeannes of my search and she wrote that Thelma O'Reilly had been trying to solve this same riddle since 1967. I sent both of them cuttings of *B. 'Zip'* and the *B. conchifolia* from Marilyn Bottjer.

LONGWOOD'S NO. 581282

Thelma and I shared and compared the information we had been collecting. Her information revealed the following that was new to me:

In October 1959, Sylvia Leatherman visited Longwood Gardens and obtained a plant labeled "D.E. (Dutch) #581282 — Brazil, collected by Williams." Sylvia tired of referring to this plant by number and since they reminded her of zip code numbers, started to call the plant *Begonia 'Zip'*. She also introduced this plant to some members of the American Begonia Society, including Rudy Ziesenhenne. Later Rudy "selfed" his plant and noted some of the seedlings had the red spot, and some did not.

In 1964 Sylvia sent a plant she called *B. 'Zip'* back to Longwood, for their identification.

In response to a letter from Thelma to Longwood, requesting the identification of Plant No. 581282 that Sylvia Leatherman had obtained from them, Dr. Huttleston replied on Dec. 3, 1969:

"Longwood Garden's Accession No. 582182 had been identified as

B. conchifolia, Otto & Dietr. It was collected by Llewellyn Williams on his 1958 collecting trip to Brazil for U.S.D.A. It bears the Agricultural Dept. plant introduction No. 242587."

Fausta Waite visited Longwood Gardens in May 1971 to see their plants of *B. conchifolia*. But they had "lost" their plant in 1968 as well as the *B. 'Zip'* they had received from Sylvia Leatherman in 1964. Their *B. conchifolia* was Longwood's accession No. 581282 and was received from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Md.

From Carrie I received a copy of Dr. Smith and Dr. Schubert's description of *B. conchifolia* from the "Flora of Panama," Ann. Mo. Bot. Gdn. XLV, 1, 1958, Photo No. 20874, of the herbarium species of *B. conchifolia* from the Field Museum of Natural History. I also obtained a copy of DeCondolle's description in Prodr. Syst. Natl. 15 (1): 337, 1864. None of these mentioned the red spot above the petiole attachment. But their work was done with herbarium specimens and the red spot does not show on a dried leaf. In A.B.S. Round Robin #8, a letter from Anita Sickmon of Cheney, Kansas, gave a description of *B. conchifolia* from Albert Fotsch's "Die Begonien" which described a plant from the Botanical Gardens of Goettigen. It also had no mention of the red spot.

Carrie recalled some notes from other A.B.S. Round Robins: Marge Sikkelee obtained a cutting of 'Zip' in 1968 from Rudy Ziesenhenne as No. 3099-581282; Anita Sickmon had a plant that looked like *B. 'Zip'* from

Hazel Harmon with the label #3099 species; Pat Burdick reported having #3099, Brazil species, Ziesenhenné, that came to her from Belva Kusler. It had a red circle on a green leaf.

U.S.D.A. P.I. NO. 242577

From Dr. William L. Ackermann of U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Plant Introduction Station at Glenn Dale, Md., we learned that No. 581282 is not a Beltsville or Glenn Dale number [from our other information we now know that it is a Longwood accession number]; No. 242577 was recorded as Collector's No. 5513 collected by Dr. Fred Meyer in Great Britain in 1957 from L. Maurice Mason;

No. 242587 was another plant collected by Dr. Meyer from Great Britain, but it was not a *Begonia*;

No. 3099 was not known at U.S.D.A. (I later learned it is Rudy Ziesenhenné's packet number for the seed he obtained from the B. 'Zip' he selfed).

From Dr. Llewellyn Williams of New Crops Research Branch, U.S.D.A., we learned that he had brought back 30 *Begonia* species from his 1958 trip to Brazil (also cosponsored by Longwood). The P.I. numbers of the plants he collected did not include either 242577 or 242587, but were from 247164 and up.

Dr. Fredrick G. Meyer of the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C., confirmed that he had obtained P.I. 242577 from L. Maurice Mason of Talbot, England in 1957. Dr. Meyer sent Carrie a copy of a booklet ARS 34-9 of Oct. 1959 "Plant Explora-

tions" that reviewed his trip to Europe, March 4 to Nov. 13, 1957. It showed that Mr. Mason had visited Costa Rica but not Brazil.

The description of the plant 242577 in the booklet said "reddish on the petiole," but by further checking, Carrie found that the original collector's description said "reddish at the petiole" [like 'Zip'].

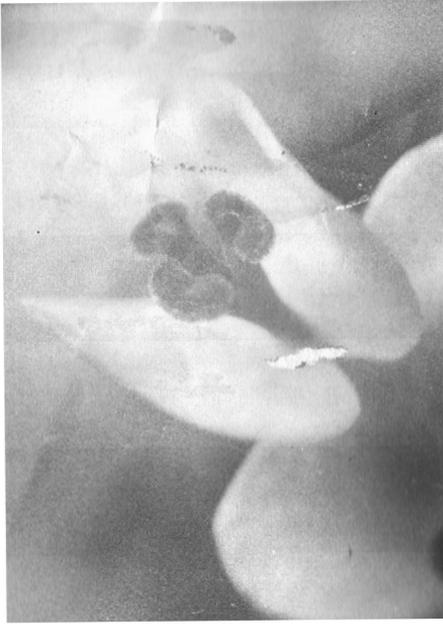
Carrie wrote to L.M. Mason telling of our quest and included my picture of B. 'Zip'. He replied that the plant he had given to Dr. Meyer was obtained in 1950 from Costa Rica. It had come from the gardens of Mr. Charles Lankester near Cartago. He had thought that it might be a form of *B. conchifolia*.

Carrie gave Dr. Meyer a cutting of my B. 'Zip' to see if it was familiar to him. Later he told her that he found a plant growing at the National Arboretum under the name *B. conchifolia* that looked like this B. 'Zip'. The plant had come from Longwood and was the same as the one he had obtained from Mr. Mason in England.

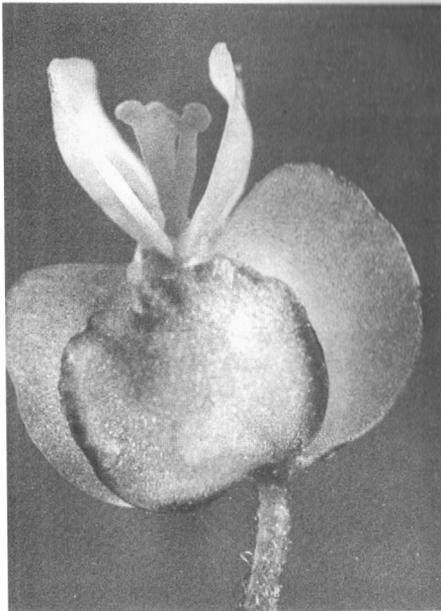
From all this we now know that P.I. 242577 had not been collected by Williams in Brazil, as reported by Longwood, but came from Costa Rica. I can only speculate that since they cosponsored both Dr. Meyer's trip to Europe and Dr. Williams' trip to Brazil and received plants collected by both of them, somehow the information on the origin of this plant became confused.

B. CONCHIFOLIA COMPARISON

Dr. L. B. Smith and Dr. Bernice Schubert had said that one could not



B. conchifolia
pistillate flower
Jack Golding Photo

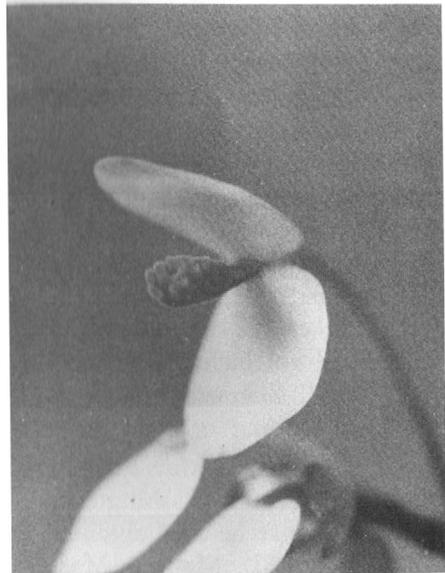


B. conchifolia var. *rubrimacula*
pistillate flower
Jack Golding Photo

be really sure of the identity of a species by the leaf shape alone and it is necessary to examine the details of the flowers. Fortunately, since I grow my plants indoors under fluorescent light, by the control of the period of darkness, I was able to induce them to bloom. During March and April 1972 I took photographs and compared the flowers from *B. 'Zip'* and *B. conchifolia* [from Marilyn Bottjer] and they were the same, proving that they were the same species.

But I still was not satisfied and I wondered if we really had the true *B. conchifolia*. These plants were so much alike (except for the red spot). Was it possible that Marilyn's plant was grown from seed of a *B. 'Zip'* selfed, like those of Rudy Ziesenhenné?

Seeking more information to resolve this latest question, in May



B. conchifolia var. *rubrimacula*
staminate flower
Jack Golding Photo

1972 I visited the Smithsonian Institution, hoping to discuss this with Dr. Lyman B. Smith. Unfortunately, because of the illness of his wife, he was unable to meet me, but he arranged for Dieter C. Wasshausen to assist me. Thanks to their cooperation, Carrie and I were able to examine many specimens in the general collection at the National Herbarium. Carrie had previously examined the Type collection. We looked at the many specimens in the *B. conchifolia* folders and it was not possible to determine from the dried leaves if they had a red spot. But then we saw No. 1306825 collected by Standley & Torres on March 6, 7, 1926, in Costa Rica. The collector's note said, "... leaves with dark red spot above at insertion of petiole . . ." [The leaf tip was shortly acuminate like *B. 'Zip'*].

Specimen No. 1226304 collected by Standley Feb. 8, 9, 1924 also mentions red spot on the label [the leaves were shortly acuminate].

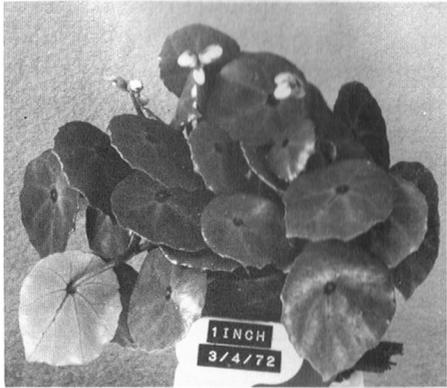
Specimen 2086157 collected Nov. 26, 1946, by Austin Smith—note on collector's label "Agrees with description of type but no red spot on blade . . ."

We wondered about this note referring to the type description. Was it possible that the original description by Dietrich in 1851 refers to the red spot and that *B. 'Zip'* is the true species of *B. conchifolia*? Carrie had been trying to get the original description, but it was not available in the Smithsonian Library.

Examining more specimens, we noted that where there were notations of the red spot the leaves were broader, almost circular with a short



Begonia conchifolia Dietrich
Jack Golding Photo



Begonia conchifolia Dietrich
var. *rubrimacula* Golding
Jack Golding Photo



Begonia conchifolia Dietrich
staminate flower
Jack Golding Photo

abrupt tip like *Zinnia*. Those without any notations of a spot were ovate leaves with a long tapering point (long acuminate). Some had slight angles on the margin, some less. The tooth at the nerve ends was also variable. The leaf sizes varied. The flower seemed all the same, except the shape of the wings varied—some bluntly rounded and some nearly acute at the apex.

The next day I returned to the National Herbarium and examined more specimens. Many specimens, including some determined by C. deCondolle Feb. 1887, by Tonduz in 1896, by Dr. Houghton and another one by P. C. Standley, with labels marked "not spotted," all had shortly acuminate leaves. There were also many specimens with longer acuminate leaves.

Dieter obtained for us a copy of P. C. Standley's "The Flora of Costa Rica II," Field Mus. Bot. 18, 1937. In it *B. conchifolia* was described as having a red spot above the attachment of the petiole.

ORIGINAL DESCRIPTION

Mrs. Lothian Lynas, Librarian at the New York Botanical Garden sent me copies of the literature on *B. conchifolia* as listed in T. H. Everett's 1941 "List of References of the Literature on Begonias." Included was the original description of *B. conchifolia* by Dr. Albert Dietrich which appeared in "Allgemeine Gartenzeitung" 19: 258, 1851. The following translation from the German and Latin was done with considerable help from George Elbert, Carrie Karegeannes, Dr. Lyman B. Smith and Dieter Wasshausen.

(from the German)

"Description of a new *Begonia*
Begonia conchifolia, to us
 by Albert Dietrich

"In many local gardens can be found this delicate *Begonia* with shell-shaped concave leaves, which was brought from Central America by Von Warszewicz and introduced under the name *Begonia lindleyana* with the assurance of the owners that the seed was received from V.W. with this name. However, evidently there is an error here since Warszewicz described his *B. lindleyana* as one of the handsomest and largest flowered species, while this one has only very small flowers, indeed is the smallest of all *Begonias* that we are aware of. It belongs to the section *Perennes* with creeping many-branched rhizomes from which no stem, but only close clusters of leaves and peduncles, are produced; therefore, it should be best placed at the end of the section. Especially characteristic are its small, very neat, shiny leaves, peltate, with the surface deeply depressed—which are like rounded shells, differing from any others we know, which is the reason we have given it the above name. The immediately following description better explains the characteristics of the species.

(from the Latin)

"Stemless *Begonia* with creeping rhizome; with leaves arising from the rhizome eccentrically peltate, concave with the shape of the half-shell of a mussel, obliquely ovate, with toothed angles, acuminate, rounded at the base, shiny above, whitish below with reddish wool at the nerves; with two-petaled flowers,

female bracteolate, capsules with rounded wings, with the narrower two green, the third colored, not very much wider, a little crenulate. It grows in Central America, perennial. (from the German)

"No stem develops from the multi-branched rhizome, only a thick, close cluster of leaves, which is accompanied by stipules at the base of the petiole. The peduncles develop continuously between the leaves and begin to bloom while still young, very soon growing out and producing fruit.

"The leaves are all based on the rhizome, long petioled, eccentrically peltate and fleshy. The petiole is about 4 in. long [1 Zoll = 1 inch], terete, colored bright red and covered with a reddish-brown wool. The blade of the leaf oblique and nearly roundish-oval, 2 to 2½ in. long, 1½ to 2 in. wide, acuminate, at the base closed and equally rounded; the margin with reddish-brown ciliate hairs, indistinctly angularly dentate, on which irregularly one or another tooth is more prominent or is lengthened by a jag or angle. The surface shell shaped, concave, dark green, shiny, apparently glabrous, but under magnification covered with unevenly distributed small erect, reddish-brown hairs. The under surface domed, whitish, very shiny, palmately seven nerved, the nerves densely clothed in reddish-brown wool, the surface itself apparently glabrous but also bearing woolly hairs under magnification.

"The stipules which subtend the petiole at its base are ½ in. long, narrowly lance shaped, pointed, entire, strongly keeled on the under-

side, the keels almost winged at the base, some here or there being more prominent and on these a few fleshy brown hairs can be found under the microscope combining in the end into a crooked almost spine-like tip. The color of the stipules is strongly red on both surfaces and especially on the keel, growing paler and whitish toward the margin, that's why it seems as if they have a membranous margin, and there they have even the appearance of flesh.

"The peduncles rise between the leaves and are nearly twice as long as the petioles, also a bright red and bearing reddish-brown hairs, terete, beginning from the middle dichotomously branching and producing on the tip a rather slender inflorescence, bearing numerous small, male and female flowers. Branchlets, peduncle and pedicels the same in color and hairiness as the flowering stalk. In the axils are found large bracts, over 4 lines (1/3 in.) long, rather boat-shaped and concave, blunt, somewhat dentate, reddish and with hairy edges — which soon fall off, being persistent and drying out only in the lowest parts.

"The male flowers are 2 tepaled, not provided with bracts, small but still of different sizes; the first ones appearing in bud on the young stalk are almost the size of lentils, with somewhat more attenuate tepals which appear a little, but yet barely noticeably notched on the tip. Stamens 12, barely half as long as the tepals, filaments free.

"The female flowers are subtended by two clasping, roundish, concave, notched at the tip, non-persistent

(Continued on Page 188)

CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND

No. 1—*B. mollerii*.

Trailing, waxy leaf, everblooming Begonia from the coast of Africa. Price \$1.00. Photo in Jan. 1973 *The Begonian*.

No. 2—*B. masoniana* syn *B. 'Iron Cross'*.

Discovered by Mason in 1952. One of the most beautiful Begonias in cultivation. White-hairy, reddish stems and large, roundish, firm puckered leaves, Nile green, marked with contrasting bold pattern of brown-red in the form of a cross. Older leaves are overlaid with silver and covered bristly-red and red-ciliate. Waxy flowers are greenish-white with maroon bristles on back. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 3—*Hillebrandia sandwicensis*.

Rare and beautiful native of Hawaii. Found growing at an elevation of 2,000 feet in very rough terrain and does not appear any place but the Hawaiian Islands. See cover picture *The Begonian* for Sept. 1958. Supply limited. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 4—*B. versicolor*. China.

Terrarium or greenhouse plant. Three inch leaves are round, mahogany, emerald, silver, apple-green and maroon. Flowers are salmon pink. Allow ample time for seed to germinate, sometimes from three to six weeks under favorable conditions. Temperature should be 70-75 degrees and humidity should be high. *B. versicolor* will not survive in dry conditions. Also, if you have furry, four-footed friends around the house, plants should be well protected as they love to reach a paw in bowl or terrarium and fish out a

plant and toss it in the air until the poor plant is a hopeless disaster. If you are now growing *B. versicolor*, please let someone else have the seed as the supply is short. Price \$1.00 per pkt.

No. 5—*B. platanifolia*.

Often confused with *B. aconitifolia*. See photo *The Begonian* Aug. 1971. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 6—*B. Mme. Helene Harms*.

Double canary-yellow flowers produced in great abundance on dwarf bush plants. Multiflora type. Price 50 cents per pkt.

No. 7—*B. sc 'Danica'* and *Fortuna* series. (New) Intermediate.

To meet the increased interest in large-flowered single Begonias, these two strains offer two popular colors, rose and scarlet. They have the same versatility as the dwarf plants but produce large two-inch-plus blooms and withered flowers do not detract from plant beauty. They are earlier flowering. We offer *B. sc 'Danica'* scarlet, dark leaved. Price 50 cents per pkt.

B. sc 'Fortuna'

Rose, green leaved. Price 50 cents per pkt.

GREENHOUSE PLANTS

Each 50 cents per pkt.

Gesneriad macrantha.

(*Rech. cardinalis*) Brilliantly flowered tuberous plant with round cordate, emerald green, velvety leaves topped by large, curved tubular flowers, white downy over brightest scarlet, throat markings purple.

Pteris argyrea (the silver fern)

Easy to grow, attractive dish garden or terrarium type.

Polypodium polycarpon.

Attractive basket type fern.

Billbergia macrolepis.

From Venezuela with no description.

Aechmea distichantha.

Violet flowers, bright rose bracts, little care and not particular about temperature.

In answer to inquiries about Rieger Begonia seed — here is a direct quote from Edna Stewart's story in July Begonian, "For all practical purposes the varities are sterile and hence propagated asexually by leaf or stem cuttings."

Please send requests for seed to:
Mrs. Florence Gee
Seed Fund Administrator
234 Birch Street
Roseville, California 95678

Please include complete return address with orders.

IN MEMORIAM

Beryl Allen, 83, of Tampa, Florida, passed away February 24, 1973. She was a very early member of ABS as she lived in California when it was organized. Until her death she was an active member of several Round Robins in both the ABS and the Bromeliad Society. She helped introduce many varieties of begonias to Florida growers, and will be greatly missed by her many friends and correspondents throughout the world.

Our sympathy is extended to her family.

Dora Lee Dorsey, Tampa, Fla.

ADDED DOOR PRIZE

As in prior years, members are purchasing door prize tickets for the drawing to be held during our Annual Show.

The drawings for the prizes will be made on the afternoon of August 19th. It has been customary to mail to holders of winning tickets not present only the monetary awards. However, due to the generosity of Mr. Alfred Byrd Graf, author of "Exotic Plant Manual," we have a copy of this marvelous book as an added door prize. This book will be mailed to the winning ticket owner if he or she is not present during the drawing.

In any case, purchase of door prize tickets by our members results in a winning ticket each time — your Begonia Society.

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BEGONIA SHOWS — QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

By Ruth Pease

Question: Many are growing their plants in attractive stoneware containers. Next year when the show schedule is being prepared can consideration be given to opening a division for such entries?

Answer: This will be up to individual show committees. Some desire horticultural shows in the strictest sense of the word while others take into consideration what is best for their exhibitors and their particular area.

If a division of this nature were to be entered by the exhibitors, the Judging Chairman would have to give much thought to each of the three judges assigned to judge it. Compatibility of the plant and container would have to be considered carefully. This could mean a separate system of scoring would have to be prepared for this division.

Question: I am qualified to judge more than appears on the mimeographed list of ABS-accredited judges. How can this be corrected?

Answer: Updated information has been requested several times through items in this column. We would prefer having updated information to give to show chairmen. If you have been judging other plants, have decided that you would travel farther than shown on your original application for a judge's card, or have any other change you wish to make in your records, please send for another application, complete it and return to the Judging Chairman for recording and filing. We are eager to assist

our judges as well as judging and show chairmen.

Question: If I entered in the Junior Division last year, do I have to go into the Novice Division this year? I am fifteen.

Answer: No. You are still able to enter in the Junior Division to compete with entries brought in by exhibitors who are twenty years old or younger. However, you do have the option of going into the Novice Division if you wish. Keep in mind that you can only enter in the Novice Division one time. Read Rule 6 of the Show Rules.

Question: What happens if an individual enters a plant he did not grow himself?

Answer: Rule 8 of the Show Rules states: *All* entries exhibited in competitive Classes must have been grown by the exhibitor and have been in his possession at least three months prior to the Show. Arrangements and Corsages excepted.

Over the years we have been aware of a few individuals who have entered plants they did not grow themselves. If the Show Chairman is certain of such a situation at the time of registration he may disqualify the entry; however, judges do not know at any time during judging who the exhibitors are and may award a ribbon or a trophy to an entry unfairly exhibited. An exhibitor who receives an award in this manner must face the possibility of someone calling this to the attention of the show

chairman and others. It is not an enviable position.

Question: I attended the class in judging twice but have not completed the written homework. May I accept a judging assignment?

Answer: Yes. We have been asked by show chairmen if it would be all right to give such people an opportunity to use what they learned in class sessions. If you attended the majority of the classes given and participated in the class discussions on judging, classifying and scoring, you should be able to judge and I would recommend you.

The information given in this column for the past two years should help any show committee or exhibitor or judge. We suggest that you review past issues of the *Begonian* and reread this column when preparing your show.

The Judging Course will continue to be available as a correspondence course and homework should be submitted to the Director, ABS Judges Course. For information regarding the course, the Classification Guide and the Point Scoring System, write to the Director.

We appreciate the many letters and comments saying that information in this column has been helpful.

Ruth Pease
Director, A.B.S. Judges Course
A.B.S. Judging Chairman

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This past year as President has been an unusual and rewarding experience.

I would like to thank the committee chairmen as well as all those on the board who have devoted a tremendous amount of hard work. All the people who have spent their time helping the Society have my deepest gratitude. I can't tell you how nice it was when I asked someone to fill a position or perform a task and they accepted the responsibility without complaint.

I hope that more people will support by volunteering for office. The Society's greatest support through participation. Volunteer to help. Get involved. The future president will need your full support and if you want to improve the Society you will lend a hand.

John W. Provine, President

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SOIL HEATING CABLES

By Joe H. Nickolls

(Reprinted with permission from the 1966 Hardrop Annual of the British Columbia Fuchsia and Begonia Society)

Most gardeners reach a point where they become interested in starting new plants from seed, cuttings, leaf propagation or root divisions. An invaluable aid in this work is a soil heating cable. This cable is a pre-determined length of resistance wire usually covered in lead or plastic and contains a grounded plug on one end. When this cable is plugged into a standard 110 volt grounded outlet, the cable heats up to a safe temperature and in turn heats the surrounding soil. When controlled by an accurate thermostat, these cables can be a very useful source of heat.

As we know, bottom heat is of primary importance when rooting plant cuttings or tubers. A properly constructed propagating bench using a soil heating cable will provide this bottom heat and give you healthy vigorous root systems that are vital to new plants.

A 60 ft. cable will adequately cover an area of 6 ft. x 3 ft. yet draws only 400 watts of electrical power. Coupled with a matching thermostat, it will only use power to maintain your present temperature switching on and off as required.

The recommended method of installing a cable is as follows. First, make a box or metal pan approximately 3 ft. x 6 ft. and cover the bottom of it with one or two inches of coarse sand or pea gravel. Arrange the cable over the surface of

this area in hairpin turns and parallel rows until the cable is evenly spread over the total area. Do not make the bends too sharp, at least a one inch radius, or the cable may crack. Also, do not cross the cable over itself and leave at least three inches between adjacent strands.

Press the cable down into the sand or gravel until it is just below the surface. This will prevent the cable from coming into direct contact with the flats or pots placed in the bed. Install the rubber covered thermostat in the sand making sure it does not come into contact with the cable. I find that by having the thermostat control a double outlet that I can plug the soil cable into one outlet and a small night light into the other outlet as a visual indicator of when the cable is on. It is well to insert a thermometer somewhere in the sand base without touching the cable as an accurate check on the actual temperature of your bed.

Over this box containing the cable, rig up a frame and cover it with plastic or glass to help contain the moisture as a fairly high humidity helps to prevent the cuttings from wilting before they have rooted. Be sure, however, to allow some fresh air to enter at regular intervals as this is essential.

Prepare your cuttings or tubers in your regular manner and place the flats on the surface of your bed containing the cable. It is recommended

that you place the cuttings as deep as possible in the flat so it will be as close as possible to the source of heat. This produces a very vigorous and yet even root system.

Except for checking on the moisture content of your propagating frame and regular checks on its temperature range, there is no additional work required and you will be rewarded with some of the best new plants you have ever grown.

In addition to propagating plants, soil cables can be used to provide heat in greenhouses. By keeping the beds warm, the air temperature can be lowered by 10 to 15 degrees F. with the resulting savings in heating costs. In unheated greenhouses a small area can be screened off and kept at a safe temperature range by use of a soil heating cable placed in the bed as described below.

The Canadian General Electric make an excellent lead covered heating cable and a matching covered thermostat. They also supply a descriptive bulletin #3324 which covers the use of a cable in hot beds and cold frames.

A word of warning, however, make sure that cable is grounded when installed so there will be no danger of receiving a shock. Never cut or shorten a cable as this is likely to make it overheat and could be a fire hazard. Be careful if using a trowel or sharp instrument near the cable as you might damage the protective lead covering causing the cable to short circuit.

Aside from these relatively simple precautions, you will find a soil heating cable a great assist in propagat-

ing plants which in turn will increase your enjoyment of growing plants.

Joe H. Nickolls

Ed. Note: The U.S. equivalent of Bulletin #3324 described above is included with heating cables bought in the United States. The recommended 60-foot heating cable is General Electric Cat. No. 73004; the thermostat is Cat. No. HSC-5.

Save the Date . . .

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ROUND ROBIN NOTES

This month I have received more suggestions for Robin study: "Growing the Large Begonias," "Photography," "Forcing Begonias with Lights." All these would be most interesting Robins if enough are interested in such — let me know if you are.

Bob Hamm, Indiana, has already been experimenting with his lights. He grows most of his *semperflorens* and summer tuberous from seed under lights. He finds the large flowered tuberous (*camellia*, fringed, etc.) take 5-6 months on a 16-18 hour day. The hanging kind take 4-5 months. A trick for quicker growth: when plants out of 3" pots are put directly into 5½" pots and put under a 20 hour day for two weeks then dropped to 16-18 hours, it gives them a real boost.

Peg Belanger of Rhode Island reported on her experiment using shredded foam as a starting or rooting medium: she found that it can be quite useful — up to a point. That is, as a more or less temporary way to hold a leaf in the best of condition until one finds time to get regular medium prepared. She doesn't think that it would be satisfactory in permanent potting for plants. The roots do form rapidly but as they reach out they grasp the pieces of foam to the point that it is impossible to separate them at potting time. She does keep a box handy to use when she is pressed for time and has had leaves heal and callus, sprout roots in less than a week. She uses a starting solution of plant food, using about a cup to start with, in a plastic shoe box

almost full of the shredded poly foam (don't add more until the bottom inch is dry to the finger poked down). The same proportions would make an excellent shipping "wrap," too, as leaves which she has left enclosed in a margarine cup for two weeks were still in great condition, though they deteriorated after that time. The difference in the keeping time seemed to be that the shoe box was ventilated with air holes in the cover and she did open it usually for an hour each day while the exhaust fan was running.

Chuck Tagg, California, said his experience with canes has been that the best way to initiate basal growth is to plant as deeply as possible. He has known plants which had very poor reputations for basal growth that were fine plants but had been grown from poor cutting material. When a cane cutting is taken, there should be at least one good node below the soil, with an obvious axillary bud showing. If the cane was grown in bright light so the nodes were close together, there may be three or four nodes under the soil. As the first subsoil canes start to sprout, the type of growth produced seems to be much more prolific with additional basal growth than a branch which formed above the soil and was later used as a cutting.

Edna Stewart of Pennsylvania bought a new Rieger begonia for Easter, B. 'Schwabenland Red'; it has 50 flowers open on it and many buds. She had rooted leaves of her pink one but it took them a long time to send up plantlets. She thinks bottom

heat would have helped.

Pat Burdick, Minnesota, reported she still had her Rieger Begonias she had cut and put in a vase for the table at Christmas. They had lots of roots in April. The ones she put in a bowl to root at same time died.

Letitia Isner of West Virginia said the two Rieger begonias she had bought were in hard clay soil and only had tiny leaves. She took them up and found bulbs, some small ones and a larger one which had the leaves. She put them in new soil and each bulb in a pot and covered them with plastic glasses, as they had lots of roots and were solid.

Yvonne Wells, Texas, enclosed a list of the yellow-flowering species: *B. cathcartii*, *B. cathayana*, *B. ficicola*, *B. laciniata flava* (lutea), *B. pearcei*, *B. staudtii* var. *dispersipilosa*, *B. quadrialata*, *B. prismatocarpa*, *B. modica*, *B. xanthina*, *B. xanthina* var. *lazuli*, *B. lacinata*, *B. laciniata flaviflora*. It is doubtful the last three are in cultivation.

Grant McGregor, Canada, wonders if *B. taylori* should not be in this list of yellow flowering ones. His bloomed only once and he recalls it was a creamy yellow. He wonders if anyone else has ever had it bloom.

John Yochum, Indiana, reported *B. venosa* again blooming with an aroma that smelled to him like a mixture of honeysuckle and Ivory soap.

Yvonne said her *B. rubra-venia silver* is a beautiful blooming plant with lovely apricot colored bloom in umbels with the peduncle weeping. The flowers are large, too, about the size of a quarter.

Bonny Bersch of California is

growing some mosses, etc., in jars on their sides, with an attractive piece of rock or such in them, keeping them sealed except when she peeks into them like through the end of one of the Easter eggs with a little scene inside.

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BEGONIA CONCHIFOLIA

(Continued from Page 179)

bracts which are as long as the ovaries and more or less reddish. The ovaries are 3-angled, 3-winged, with the wings rounded off, of which two are the same in size, green and entire margined, the third somewhat larger, red and sinuate-dentate toward the top along the margin. Perianth two tepaled, with roundish obovate, reddish colored tepals. Style 3-parted; the style lobes separate, grooved on the inner side, the tip slightly emarginate and carrying coarse head-shaped stigma on each of the lobes, on which the stigmas converge to the back of the style. The capsule is about the size of a small pea and like the ovary winged and, in maturity, with the wings dry and markedly brownish.

"The seed of this charming plant was collected as far as we can gather by Herr von Warszewicz on a trip to Central America in the Province of Costa Rica in the Chiriqui-Cordilleras. He then divided them in the year 1850 among several local gardeners, as already stated above, under the false label. It forms a dense, leafy, evergreen plant which remains dwarf-like, whose bloom appears in June. The flowers indeed are very small; however, the petiole and the peduncle are a very vivid red color. The plant loves the warm house and is cultivated in the same way as the other species. It is obviously a pretty addition to the many species that are now found in our gardens. They are grown and can be obtained in the garden shop of Herr Bergman in Berlin."

[Note: The original spelling "conchaeifolia" used by Dietrich has been

corrected to *B. conchifolia* as required by the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*.]

There is no mention of the red spot on the leaf in this description; nor did we find it in any of the others we had, except Standley's in the "Flora of Costa Rica."

MORE PLANTS FROM COSTA RICA

From Carrie I learned that Alice Nierenberg of Miami, Florida, had visited Costa Rica during April 1972. Alice had seen plants of *B. conchifolia* with and without the red spot growing side by side on rocks in full sun. The leaves were 4 inches long. This was in La Muneco along the Rio Navarro.

Responding to a request from Carrie, Alice examined her plant to see if there was any correlation between the presence of the red spot and the leaf shape. She reported that there was no consistency; leaves with the red spot were ovate with a long acuminate tip, and some without the spot were almost circular and with a shortly acuminate tip. I have since obtained cuttings of these plants from Alice. Also, I have received a *B. conchifolia* from Dr. Fred Barkley of Boston that he had collected in Costa Rica.

At the 7th Eastern Begonia Convention in Pittsburg, Pa., Sept. 1972, Mildred Thompson of Southampton, New York, had a *Begonia* 'Zip' with leaves that had the red spot and were cupped and shaped just like the drawing in W. W. Saunder's article on *B. conchifolia*. (*Refugium Botanicum*, IV, tab. 246, 1871). A cutting of it was added to my collection.

In the American Begonia Society Species Robin 24, Jane Neal of Rome, Italy, enclosed a sketch typical of the leaves she had seen on *B. conchifolia* at Kew Gardens, England, and Wageningen, The Netherlands. This leaf was also cupped, ovate, and acuminate like the Saunder's drawing. A note on the original species at the Kew Herbarium said, "sinus 'eye' distinctly 'black'."

THE ANSWER

For a true comparison, specimens of the various plants with and without the red spot have been growing in the same area of my light. Controlling the light cycles I have again induced the older plants to bloom, along with the newer additions. The flowers on the plants collected in Costa Rica by Dr. Fred Barkley and Alice Nierenberg are the same as on the *B. conchifolia* from Marilyn Bottjer and the *Begonia* called 'Zip'.

In Summary I would like to make these observations:

The shape of the leaves varies, even on the same plants, from almost circular with a short acute tip, to ovate with an acuminate tip.

There is no correlation between the leaf shape and the presence of the red spot above the petiole attachment.

The leaves may vary in size from 2 inches to 5 inches long and from 1½ inches to 3¾ inches wide.

The variation of the leaves from convex to flat to concave like the mussel shell, is not consistent on any plant and changes with different growing environments.

The plants with or without the

red spot do not lose or gain this characteristic. Even when grown in different environments; either indoors under artificial light, or outdoors in natural light; with changed conditions of humidity, temperature, or with various growing media.

The growth characteristics, rhizome, stipules, inflorescence and the details of the staminate and pistillate flowers are the same for plants with or without the red spot.

They all conform closely (except for the red spot) to the original description by Dr. Dietrich in 1851 and to the herbarium specimens.

The species *Begonia conchifolia*.

When reproduced asexual, the plants having the red spot above the petiole attachment always retain this very attractive characteristic.

Therefore I concluded that the plant that has been known as 5513 (Dr. Meyer), P.I. 242577 (U.S.D.A.), 581282 (Longwood), 3099 Species with red spot (Rudy Ziesenhenné) and 'Zip' (Sylvia Leatherman) is not a separate species but a distinctive clone of *Begonia conchifolia*. The following diagnosis will give this variety the valid name it deserves.

Begonia conchifolia Dietrich var. *rubrimacula* Golding, var. nov.

differt foliis macula rubra supra in affixus petioli, colore rubro interdum diffuso secus venas principales.

It differs by the leaves with a red spot above the attachment of the petiole, the red color sometimes

spreading irregularly along the main veins.

Type from Costa Rica, El Muneco, south of Navarro, Province of Cartago, altitude about 1400 meters, wet banks, common, Feb. 8, 9, 1924, *Paul C. Standley*, 33417 (U.S. 1226304).

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CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society was held on June 25, 1973, in the South Gate Auditorium with eleven officers and nine representatives present. After the usual opening ceremonies the minutes of the May meeting were read and approved.

The Treasurer reported receipts \$1,233.71; disbursements \$1,600.64; leaving a balance on hand as of June 18, 1973 of \$433.07. The Membership Secretary reported 73 new members, 178 renewals, total members 2784, total members last year 2147, funds received and deposited \$1,053.26; expenses \$29.63.

The Circulation Manager reported total Begonians dispersed 3052; total mailing expenses \$63.67. The Advertising Manager reported receipts \$55.45; unpaid accounts \$2.50.

The Nomenclature Director reported 350 begonias have been registered so far; Jack Golding plans to register about 35 Kusler hybrids and the growers in Japan also plan to register many of their begonias. He had received 35 begonia leaves and cuttings from Australia to be identified.

The Board authorized the Nomenclature Director to reprint registration forms.

The Public Relations Director reported all correspondence answered including a letter from a man in Scotland.

The report of the Research Director was read. Scott Hoover will join Dr. Barkley in Colombia in August. The financial report of the Research Fund was read: balance on hand as of February 26, 1973 \$244.81; receipts \$198.49; disbursement (grant for Scott Hoover) \$400.00; leaving a balance on hand as of June 25, 1973, \$43.30.

The matter of color covers for The Begonian was discussed. A motion was made and carried to authorize four more color covers.

Walter Barnett displayed a picture which had been sent to him by Carrie Karegannes, whose husband found a plate made in 1852 of *B. prestoniensis* which has been lost for about 100 years.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Grannell,
Secretary

CALENDAR

(Continued from Page 171)

Ziesenhenné Nursery on Milpas St. and other points of interest in Santa Barbara.

August 28 — Miami Branch, 8 p.m. A Begonia Clinic will be held at this meeting. Members and guests are invited to bring problem plants and a qualified group of specialists will diagnose the difficulty and hopefully, prescribe the cure. Free parking. Refreshments. All "Begonia Freaks" are invited.

The July meeting was a "mini-show" when each member and guest brought a plant and watched it judged as if it were in a real show. It was fun as well as a real learning experience.

August 31 — Seattle Begonia Society Annual Picnic. Time and place to be announced later.

September 1-3 — Santa Barbara Branch will hold its annual Begonia and Shade Plant Exhibit in Flower Hall of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 2559 Puesta del Sol Rd., Santa Barbara. Hours week-

days 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. Admission free. Hosts and hostesses will be on duty.

Sept. 6 — Westchester Branch — 6:30 p.m. September is our Birthday month and as usual will be celebrated with a potluck dinner — birthday cake and all. Also, our Birthday speaker for the last fourteen years will entertain us once again with his knowledge of Begonias. He is none other than Mr. Begonia himself — Rudy Ziesenhenné — grower, researcher, hybridizer and Begonia expert extraordinaire. He always has something for everyone. Come and learn.

Sept. 11 — Knickerbocker Branch first fall meeting of 1973.

September 13 — Regular meeting of Santa Barbara Branch in Farrand Hall of Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 2559 Puesta del Sol Rd., Santa Barbara, at 7:30 p.m. Plant table. Speaker will explain growing begonias to beginners.

September 22 and 23 — The Santa Clara Valley Branch will present a Begonia Show at the Mayfield Mall Shopping Center, San Antonio Rd. at Alma, Palo Alto, on September 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and September 23 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. No admission charge.

September 28 — Redondo Area Branch — 7:30 p.m. Members Margaret Buell, Henry Meyers, and Lydia Williams will participate in a panel discussion on Begonias, Ferns, and Fuchsias. Question and answer period will follow. Donation plant table. Refreshments. Visitors welcome.

PUBLICATION NOTICE

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

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

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