

# Begonia Handbook

A SPECIAL ISSUE OF

*The* BEGONIAN

FOR JULY 1980





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Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

### Aims and purposes

- 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.
- TO bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

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**THE COVER:** Eight begonias representing the diversity of the genus came from the collection of Joan Coulat of Sacramento, Calif. Arranged and photographed by Chuck Anderson and Karen Bartholomew. See page 181 for names.

<b>World of begonias</b>	What is it about these plants, anyway?	180
<b>Cane-like begonias</b>	If you like bamboo, you'll love these.	182
<b>Rex Cultorum begonias</b>	They hit the foliage color jackpot.	184
<b>Rhizomatous begonias</b>	Nice leaves, flower "clouds"—and easy.	186
<b>Semperflorens begonias</b>	They're everywhere—for good reason.	188
<b>Shrub-like begonias</b>	Grow them for leaves, flowers, or both.	190
<b>Thick-stemmed begonias</b>	Unrecognized and challenging	192
<b>Trailing-scandent begonias</b>	Like vines, they grow up or down.	194
<b>Tuberous begonias</b>	Those spectacular flowers.	196
<b>Begonia books</b>	What's available (and about to be).	198
<b>ABS since 1932</b>	A brief history of the society.	204
Seed fund		199
Round robins		200
ABS news		202
Associated groups		204
ABS services		207
Mini-ads		207

NOTES/ *From the editors*

It happens repeatedly at any begonia show. A bystander walks up to look at the plants and exclaims: "That's a begonia?"

It seems everybody knows *Semperflorens Cultorum* begonias (they call them "wax begonias"), tuberous begonias (the big flowers are hard to miss), and "angel wing" begonias.

But the others? Forget it. To just about everybody, they're as obscure as the snail darter was before they built the Tellico Dam.

That, in short, is why we are publishing this *Begonia Handbook* issue of *The Begonian*. It's a brief and basic primer about the fascinating world of begonias and how to grow them. Though veteran American Begonia Society members may find a helpful tip or two, the *Begonia Handbook* is meant primarily to introduce new members to begonias.

The society will send a copy of the

*Begonia Handbook* to each new member as long as the supply lasts. It replaces a leaflet, *Culture of Begonias*, published for the same purpose in 1974.

The editors wrote the text, but a great amount of credit is due many ABS officers and other begonia authorities, who checked our manuscript and made helpful suggestions. These include Jan Clark, Joan Coulat, Corliss Engle, Alice Gold, Jack Golding, Elda Haring, Carrie Karegeannes, Pat Maley, Thelma O'Reilly, Joy Porter, Elisabeth Sayers, Millie and Ed Thompson, and Herb Warrick.

Space limitations prevent us from delivering here more than a taste of this immense and diverse plant genus. It just so happens, though, that on page 198 you'll find descriptions of good books with more begonia information in them.

—C.A. & K.B.

# The immense, diverse world of begonias

There is a begonia for just about any growing condition short of a lightless closet.

*Begonia vitifolia* will grow as tall as a house, while *B. prismatocarpa* is a creeping 2-inch plant. Many hybrids in the semperflorens classification take full sun, but *B. pavonina* requires deep shade. *B. grandis* ssp. *evansiana* is cold hardy, while *B. versicolor* requires the contained atmosphere of a terrarium.

*This diverse genus has more than 2,000 members*

The plant genus *Begonia* probably is more diverse than any other. More than 2,000 species and cultivars are grown today for foliage as well as flowers, and additional species are being discovered and cultivars developed each year.

A great number are easy to grow—others are challenges requiring special potting mixes, high humidity, just-right light, terrariums, temperature control, or an unusual fertilizer program.

*We group together begonias with similar requirements*

To make it easier to know how to treat them, begonia hobbyists classify begonias so that those with similar growth habits and requiring similar care are grouped together. This horticultural classification system—different from the way systematic botanists classify plants—was pioneered by several early plantsmen, compiled by ABS, and refined by Mildred and Edward Thompson of Southampton, N.Y., in their *Thompson Begonia Guide*. Millie was named ABS' classification chairman in 1980.

The main classes of begonias are cane-like, Rex Cultorum, rhizomatous, Semperflorens Cultorum, shrub-like, thick-stemmed, trailing-scandent, and tuberous. (Don't worry if some terms seem cumbersome. They'll be second nature to you in no time.)

We don't use—and we want to discourage—such misnomers as “fibrous begonias,” “wax begonias,” and “bedding begonias.” We don't even talk about “watermelon begonias” or “strawberry begonias,” which aren't begonias at all.

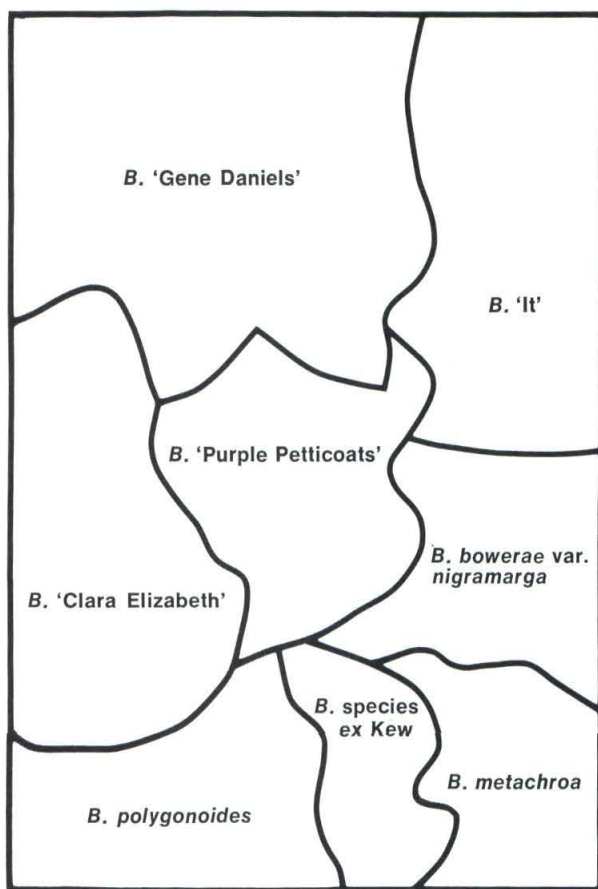
Besides knowing the classes, accomplished begonia collectors make it a point to use proper names. The right name ensures that when you mention a begonia to a hobbyist anywhere in the world, he or she will know what you mean.

*How to label your plants correctly—and why*

Every begonia you own should be labeled with the correct name. A species name is not capitalized—as in the example *Begonia schmidtiana*, which can be shortened to *B. schmidtiana*. Cultivars (cultivated varieties) are labeled with the genus name plus the cultivar name, which is capitalized and enclosed in single quotes: *B. 'Ricky Minter'*. Some species have varieties: *B. conchifolia* var. *rubrimacula*.

Be careful to use the single quotation marks and capital let-





## Begonias on the cover

ters only for cultivars. Cultivar names are almost always in a modern language, usually English, while species are named in Latin.

When you became interested in begonias, you joined a long line of enthusiasts dating back three centuries. The name *Begonia* was first used by plant explorer Charles Plumier for the six species he discovered in the West Indies in the 1690s. The name honored botany patron Michel Begon, a French government official who arranged Plumier's trip.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, begonias grew to be popular house and conservatory plants in Europe and America. Introduction of bold-leaved *B. rex* into cultivation and hybridizing in the mid-1800s boosted interest in begonias as foliage plants.

Today, people grow begonias in the house, under fluorescent lights, under semi-shady patio covers, in the ground, in greenhouses—anywhere they can find space. Keep reading and you will find out how you can, too.

*Begonia interest  
can be traced  
back three  
centuries*

# Cane-like begonias: like bamboo with flowers

If you ever have seen an “angel wing” begonia, you know the cane-like group. So-called angel wings comprise a large portion of the classification.

Cane-like begonias have long stems with slightly swollen joints (“nodes”)—they resemble bamboo. The leaves and flowers arise from the joints. With optimum care, some cultivars can reach six feet or more in height in a container, as much as 15 feet or so in the ground in mild winter areas. Others remain short enough for indoor culture.

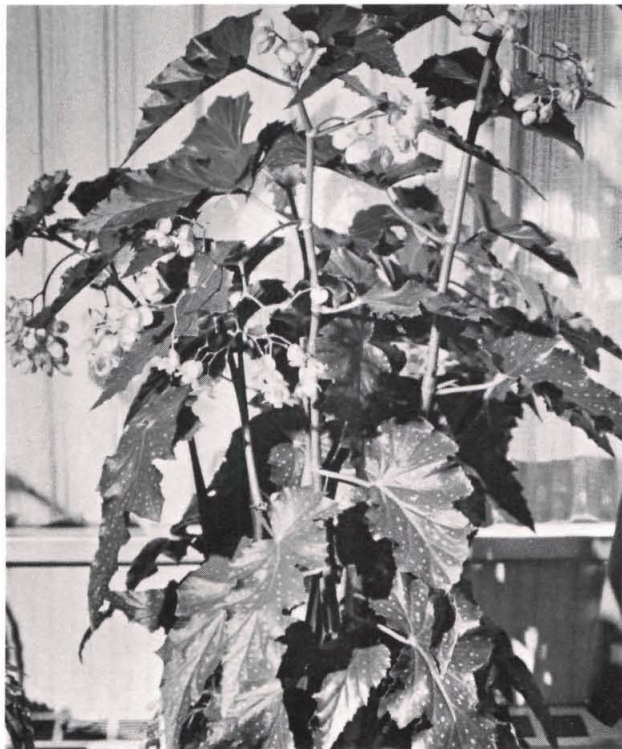
*Many find canes easier to grow than most other begonias*

Many people find them easier to grow than some other kinds, such as Rex Cultorum and tuberous types which have special needs.

Cane-like begonias are grown for both foliage, which sometimes is spotted or textured, and flowers, usually large, cascading clusters of white, pink, red, or orange, for a large part of the year. Timing varies from variety to variety.

The classification is subdivided into three types: Superba, with deeply cut foliage sometimes spotted; Mallet, with maroon or deep rose leaves; and all others. Among the cane-

Photo/Chuck Anderson



**B. 'Marguerite DeCola',  
a cane-like begonia**

like begonias are *B. albo-picta*, *B. 'Irene Nuss'*, *B. 'Lenore Olivier'*, *B. lubbersii*, *B. 'Lucerna'*, *B. 'Sophie Cecile'*, and *B. 'Tingley Mallet'*.

The best place to grow a cane-type begonia is in bright light—even sunny if the sun isn't intensely hot. It's best to use a standard-size pot to accommodate a large root system, making it a clay or wooden container to provide the weight necessary to keep a tall plant from falling over. If you use a plastic pot, take measures to keep it upright.

Plant in rich, humusy mix. Cane-type begonias tolerate a heavy mix to support tall growth. (Most other begonias require a coarser, more porous mix.) Water when the soil surface is nearly dry to the touch. Never overwater. A balanced fertilizer (one containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) may be applied at half-strength twice as often as recommended on the label whenever the plant is in growth.

Most cane-like begonias are not fussy about temperature or humidity. Any range that is comfortable for people is fine. If leaves brown and get crisp on the edges, the humidity is too low. If leaves yellow and fall off, you are watering too often. These begonias rarely need staking, but require pruning in winter or early spring: remove old, woody canes and shorten green ones to about four or five nodes, some canes longer and others shorter. (New canes just starting should be left alone.) Repot into fresh mix at the same time.

During the growing season, judicious tip pinching will keep overly vigorous canes in bounds and promote growth of new canes from the base. (Cane-type begonias rarely branch above soil level.)

As begonias go, canes are relatively free of insects and diseases when plants are healthy and tended properly. Many believe any apparent ailment should be diagnosed specifically, then treated with the least toxic product that will work. Often a water spray, hand picking, or an insecticide derived from natural ingredients (Dipel, pyrethrins, rotenone) will do the trick without endangering beneficial insects, animals, or humans. Always follow label directions exactly. Some collectors prefer to prevent infestations altogether through a more extensive chemical program. If you have questions, consult an experienced begonia grower, a competent nurseryman or nurserywoman, or a Cooperative Extension agent in your county.

The easiest and most reliable method of propagating cane-type begonias is from stem cuttings. Take a tip cutting with two to four nodes—root it in a rooting medium such as perlite or sand. Species can be grown from seed, as can hybrids—but hybrid seed produces plants not identical to the parent.

*Rich, heavier-than-usual planting mix supports tall plants*

*Promote compact growth with judicious tip-pinching*



# Rex Cultorum begonias: gloriously gaudy

The Rex Cultorum group—whose members commonly are known as “rex begonias”—is aptly named. These “kings” of the begonia world display wildly varied leaves streaked, bordered, spotted, and splotched by many colors. They also flower, but usually the flowers are overshadowed by the striking foliage.

Rex Cultorum begonias are derived from the species *B. rex*, whose dark leaves are marked with a prominent silvery-gray band. *B. rex* was discovered in Assam and introduced into cultivation in the 1850s. Its immediate and widespread use in hybridizing gave rise to countless cultivars that boosted foliage begonias as indoor plants.

*Rexes, with bold leaves, have exacting requirements*

Most rex begonias grow from a thickened stem structure called a “rhizome.” They are not classed with other rhizomatous begonias, however, because of their bold leaves and more exacting growing requirements. Some varieties are upright and branching rather than creeping.

Some of the oldest rex cultivars, such as *B.* ‘Abel Carriere’ (1878) and *B.* ‘Louise Closson’ (1889), are still in cultivation. Other cultivars include *B.* ‘Fireworks’, *B.* ‘Helen Lewis’, *B.* ‘Lady Frances Jean’, *B.* ‘Merry Christmas’, *B.* ‘Purple Petticoats’, and *B.* ‘Woodriff’s Tricolor’. Several hundred named cultivars are grown today, and many more are hybridized and sold but never named. Rexes hybridize readily, and, of the several hundred seedlings that may grow from a single cross, no two will be alike.

*Easy-care they’re not—watch humidity, fertilizer, water*

Rexes are not “easy care” plants. They require high humidity (more than 50%—some cultivars want more than others), porous planting mix, a shallow pot, heavy fertilization during growth, and care to avoid overwatering. Once you hit the proper combination of growing conditions, the stunning color display will make it worthwhile.

Your watering technique should permit the soil surface to become almost dry between waterings. Stick a finger into the planting mix to check.

In spring, when new growth has started, a balanced complete fertilizer (23-19-14 or similar formula) should be applied quarter strength every two weeks. Or a controlled-release fertilizer can be applied every three months. Taper off in fall and stop in winter.

Provide plenty of light without putting the plants in direct, hot sun. Spring morning sun or filtered sunlight may be acceptable in mild areas. If light comes from one side, give each plant a quarter turn weekly. Rexes do best if day temperature hovers around 70 degrees F., and 60 degrees at night. If it is





**An unnamed *B. rex* cultivar**

cooler, they usually will survive but growth will be slow.

In fall or winter, unless grown under lights, many cultivars enter dormancy—they stop growing and might even drop some or all of their leaves. If this happens, water only sparingly until spring, when new leaves will emerge.

Most don't need pruning unless they are "upright rexes" or the rhizome has grown too long for its container and has unsightly bare sections. Pruning is simple: just cut the rhizome back. It will develop new leaves and may even branch. You can root the rhizome cutting and grow another plant. Tip pruning earlier will result in beneficial branching.

*Pruning and pinching are simple matters*

The primary enemies of rex begonias are mildew and botrytis, both fungus diseases marked by white spores. The systemic fungicide benomyl is a good preventative. Many growers use a fungicide containing karathane to kill the diseases once they have started. As with all garden chemicals, follow label directions exactly.

Occasionally, the insect known as mealybug may appear as a small cottony-looking mass tucked in the joint where a leaf joins the leaf stem or the stem joins the rhizome. To kill the bugs, just dip a cotton swab in rubbing alcohol and touch it to each mealybug. A large infestation can be treated with malathion.

*If mealybugs strike, get out the cotton swabs*

The best way to prevent insects and diseases is to keep a plant well groomed, removing dead leaves and any debris on the surface of the planting mix.

*The Begonian* of March 1980, a special issue called "The Regal Rexes," is a source of detailed information on the Rex Cultorum group. Propagating information is contained in an article in the June 1980 *Begonian*.

# Rhizomatous begonias: leaves, flower clusters

They're called "rhizomatous," but many are easier to grow than the word is to pronounce (rye-ZOMM-us-tuss). The name means simply that these begonias grow from a modified stem called a rhizome (RYE-zome). Leaves emerge from the rhizome, forming a more or less ball-shaped plant, a virtual mound of leaves, some patterned with spots and blotches.

*"Miniature canteen" stores water and nutrients*

The rhizome stores water and nutrients like a miniature canteen, making it possible for the plant to survive some neglect, irregular watering, and temperature variation. That means a rhizomatous begonia will survive more easily than certain other kinds. You still must provide good care, though, if you want a handsome specimen.

Rhizomatous begonias vary in size from windowsill-sized ones with inch-long leaves to giants requiring planting tubs and a growing space a yard across. They include those with multi-pointed leaves called "star begonias"; a group with heavily textured, colorful leaves known as "distinctive foliage"; the widely available iron cross begonia, *B. masoniana*; a group with frilled lettuce-like leaves; and the "beefsteak begonia," *B. 'Erythrophylla'*.

Some rhizomatous begonias you may run across include *B. acetosa*, *B. bowerae*, *B. 'Bow Nigra'*, *B. 'Buttercup'*, *B. 'Cleopatra'*, *B. 'Crestabruchi'*, *B. goegoensis*, *B. 'Joe Hayden'*, *B. manicata*, *B. prismatocarpa*, *B. rajah*, *B. 'Tiger Kitten'*, *B. 'Universe'*, and *B. versicolor*.

To grow rhizomatous begonias well, use a shallow pot, preferably clay (but if your water is high in salts, plastic pots may be better), and a standard coarse, fast-draining planting mix. Don't overwater or overpot—move a plant up to a pot only one size larger at a time and only when the roots have

Photo/Brian Halliwell



***B. 'Cleopatra'*,  
a widely  
grown  
rhizomatous  
begonia**



filled the present pot. A shallow, wide bonsai pot works nicely. During spring through fall, the time of active growth, water only when the surface of the soil feels dry to the touch. In winter, when some varieties become dormant (growth stops or slows), water only sparingly until growth resumes.

Except for those with “distinctive foliage,” most rhizomatous begonias are not fussy about humidity. About 50% is sufficient, but lower humidity does little harm. The “distinctive foliage” types require high humidity and often are grown in terrariums and other closed containers for this reason.

Rhizomatous begonias are “cool temperature” plants, doing best in the range of 58 to 72 degrees F. In mild winter areas, they may remain outdoors year-round as long as they don’t freeze. In all, they are extremely adaptable.

A “complete” fertilizer (one that contains all three of the main ingredients, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) should be applied according to label directions unless the plant is in dormancy. During dormancy, don’t feed at all. You can tell the percentage of each ingredient by checking the formula (such as 15-30-15) on the label.

These begonias do not attract many insects or develop many diseases. Occasionally, you may find mealybugs. For treatment, see page 185. Many growers feel any apparent ailment should be diagnosed specifically before any toxic chemical is applied—and such chemical used only if a safer measure will not work. Some growers, however, choose a preventive program of frequent chemical spraying.

Rhizomatous begonias grow nicely when given adequate light without strong direct sun. Under a shade structure or a tree is good. A shaded greenhouse or a window free of direct sun also will suffice. You’ll know when light is insufficient because the leaf stems will elongate and the plant will grow lanky. Some varieties perform well outdoors with morning or afternoon sun in mild areas, but too much light will bleach leaves.

Flowers appear in airy, cloud-like clusters on stems well above the foliage, usually late winter through spring. Some plants bloom at other times.

Tip pinching early develops a well-rounded plant. Pruning usually consists of replanting an old plant that is crowding itself. Rhizomes often will grow over the pot edge. This forms a nicely rounded plant and, unless you find it unattractive, need not prompt pruning. Some rhizomes grow upward and may require pruning to keep the plant in bounds. In any case, pruning yields rhizome cuttings which can be rooted in a medium such as sand or perlite to create new plants.

*Humidity usually is not crucial with this group*

*Occasionally mealybugs, but usually little else bothers them*

*Form a well-rounded plant with early tip pinching*

## Semperflorens begonias: most are sturdy, easy

The bulk of the plants in the “begonias with semperflorens characteristics” group are probably the most common of all begonias—those compact bedding plants known as “wax begonias” but more properly termed *Semperflorens Cultorum*. These have been hybridized over the years using as an ancestor the species *B. cucullata*, once known as *B. semperflorens*.

*Many cultivars  
have been de-  
rived from  
these species*

There also are other species with similar appearance and many cultivars derived from these species. Another prominent species in this group is *B. schmidtiana*, a many-branched plant with small, velvety leaves and white to pink flowers almost all year.

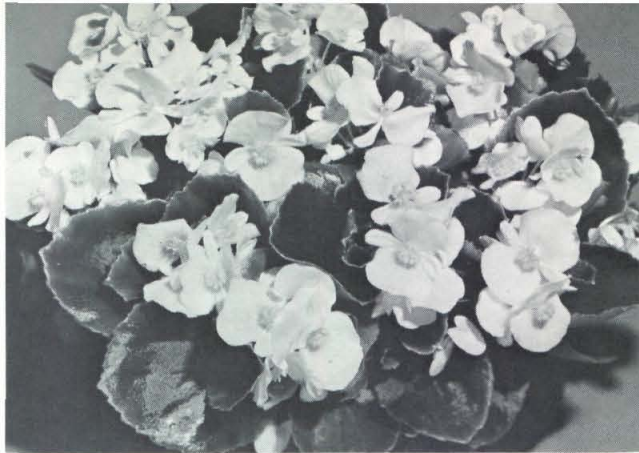
Many new varieties grown for bedding use are  $F_1$  hybrids and come in different colors. *B.* ‘Butterfly’, *B.* ‘Cinderella’, *B.* ‘Glamour’ series, and others are sold at nurseries. These have large flowers (as wide as 3 inches) and make good pot and



*B.* ‘Kallaking’, a variegated semperflorens-type begonia with reddish-pink flowers



**B. 'Viva', a free-flowering  
F<sub>1</sub> hybrid Semperflorens  
Cultorum begonia**



Photo/George Ball Co.

hanging basket plants. They have no special soil requirements and will grow in full sun except in hot, dry climates. They also grow in filtered shade. They range in height from 4 to 18 inches, depending on strain.

Other semperflorens-like begonias are grown in containers with standard planting mix containing enough coarse organic material to make the mix porous and fast-draining. These include, in addition to *B. schmidtiana*, such variegated foliage cultivars as *B. 'Calla Lily'*, *B. 'Charm'*, and *B. 'Kallaking'*; double-flowering types such as *B. 'South Pacific'* and *B. 'Lucy Locket'*; crested-flowered cultivars such as *B. 'Thimbleberry'*; and the species *B. cucullata* and *B. leptotricha*.

All begonias in this group will grow in a wide temperature range, but are at their prime when daytime temperatures are in the 60s. Frequent pinching will provide fuller plants with more bloom. Humidity requirements are not unusual: any level comfortable for people will do.

A fertilizer program should depend on a complete fertilizer (such as 20-30-20) applied every two to three weeks, with a high-phosphorus (0-10-10) formula substituted every third or fourth feeding. Water only when the planting mix feels dry to the touch. In the ground, semperflorens-like begonias are almost drought-tolerant once established.

Except for an occasional whitefly attack, these begonias are resistant to insect infestation. But in high-humidity climates fungus diseases such as powdery mildew have been known to strike. A dose of a karathane fungicide will combat diseases and applications of the systemic fungicide benomyl work as a preventive.

All semperflorens-like begonias are propagated easily from tip cuttings or basal stem cuttings, preferably without bloom. Cuttings must have at least two leaf buds, dormant or active, buried in the planting medium.

*Lots are grown  
for uses other  
than as bedding  
plants*

*Double-duty  
fertilizer pro-  
gram works  
best*

## Shrub-like begonias: some leaves have hairs

A large, diverse group, the shrub-like begonias offer interesting foliage, including some velvety leaves, as well as mostly seasonal flowers in pink, cream, or white (a few salmon- and peach-flowering cultivars exist). Some shrub-like plants are grown for the leaves, a few for the flowers, and many for both.

These plants range from about 10 inches tall to *B. luxurians*, whose stems may reach 8 feet or more. Some people have trouble telling them from cane-like begonias, but there are two usually reliable differences: shrub-like begonias branch readily and their stems don't have the woody, bamboo-like appearance with swollen joints that cane-like begonias do.

The group is divided into three classes: those with bare leaves, those with hairy leaves, and those with "distinctive foliage." The last group is subdivided further, into those with unusual surface or coloring, those similar to *B. listida*, and the compact ones.

Many of the 250 or so plants in this group are grown fairly widely, so you are likely to run into several hundred names. Some of the most popular are *B. acida*, *B. 'Argenteo-guttata'*, *B. 'Catalina'*, *B. 'D'Artagnon'*, *B. echinosepala*, *B. foliosa*, *B. 'Hazel Snodgrass'*, *B. 'Medora'*, *B. metallica*, *B. 'Murray Morrison'*, *B. olsoniae*, *B. scharffii*, *B. species ex Kew*, *B. 'Thurstonii'*, and *B. venosa*.

Light is important with shrub-like begonias but the amount needed varies among them. Too much will bleach leaves, but too little will elongate plants and discourage bloom. As a rule, provide as much light or sunlight as a plant will take without showing unhealthy symptoms, but avoid hottest midday sun. Bare-leaved plants can take more light and sunlight than hairy-leaved ones. In an area where the sun is intense and summer temperatures are consistently hot, provide broken shade under a tree or a lath structure.

*There are bare leaves, hairy leaves, "distinctive" leaves*

*Important: provide enough light, but not too much*

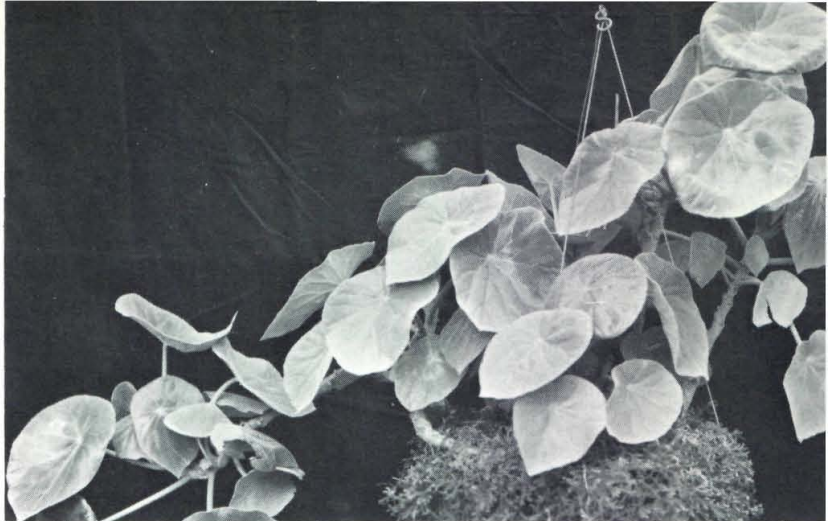
Photo/Karen Bartholomew



***B. olsoniae*, a shrub-like species with ornamental leaves**



***B. peltata*, a  
felted hairy-  
leaved shrub-  
like begonia,  
can be grown  
upright or in a  
hanging basket**



Photo/Alfred D. Robinson Collection

The tallest of these plants require large containers—wooden tubs or big clay pots. Or they can be planted in the ground in a mild winter climate or where dug up for winter. The best planting mix is the usual loose, coarse begonia mix. Smaller shrub-like begonias can be planted in hanging baskets (especially if they have lax stems) or standard-sized pots. They can be displayed indoors any time of year. A few should be planted in terrariums to meet their high-humidity requirements.

Watch your watering. These begonias need just enough water to keep the leaves crisp. Too much will rot the leaves and stems, which often are very succulent. Be sure the top of the planting mix is dry to the touch before watering.

The blooming period varies from plant to plant in this group. *Learn when your particular species or cultivar blooms, then schedule fertilizing to make the best of it.* During the whole growing season, a complete fertilizer should be applied according to label directions—or at half-strength twice as often. One month before bloom is to start, apply a dose of high-phosphorus (such as 0-10-10) fertilizer to boost flowering. Continue its use through the bloom period.

No insects or diseases are partial to shrub-like begonias other than those which may infest begonias generally. The usual rules apply—diagnose carefully and use the least toxic remedy that will work. Always follow label directions exactly. Or, if you prefer, maintain a frequent-spray preventive program.

You'll be able to tell if a plant needs pruning or staking—when it starts to become unruly or misshapen. Regular pinching begun early to encourage branching will produce a fuller plant with more bloom.

Best propagation is from tip cuttings, but stem cuttings also work.

*Overwatering is  
death to these  
succulent be-  
gonias*

*They don't  
attract unusual  
insects or  
diseases*

# Thick-stemmed begonias: many are really BIG

Possibly the least recognized yet most challenging begonias are those in the thick-stemmed group. They are marked by thick, almost tree-like stems and many grow very tall—some as high as a house. Few are considered decorative, but they can be striking, majestic, and interesting.

One of the first  
begonias ever  
found is thick-  
stemmed

This is a group with relatively few member plants, although one of the first begonias ever found, *B. malabarica* (1650 or before), is thick-stemmed. The majority don't make good indoor plants because they need lots of room to grow. Those in the thickset classification grow low, however, and make suitable indoor subjects.

Some thick-stemmed begonias are *B. 'Bangles'*, *B. 'Bessie Buxton'*, *B. dichotoma*, *B. egregia*, *B. friburgensis*, *B. involu-crata*, *B. johnstonii*, *B. ludwigii*, *B. 'Marie Reed'*, *B. parilis*, *B. 'Paul Bruant'*, *B. 'Perle de Lorraine'*, *B. 'Phyllomaniaca'* (syn. *B. 'Jessie'*), *B. rigida*, *B. 'Rudy'*, *B. sulcata*, *B. 'Tamo'*, *B. 'Temp-linii'*, *B. ulmifolia*, *B. valida*, and *B. vitifolia*.

The thick-stemmed begonias rarely branch—instead, they produce new stems from the base to replace old, woody, spent ones. With a few exceptions, they are seasonal bloomers if they bloom at all. Some bloom very sparsely, even in good cultural conditions. Leaves can be bare or hairy, depending on the plant.

These begonias require lots of sun to grow large and as full as possible, although intense sun in hot areas is to be avoided. Their temperature requirements are flexible. Almost any range comfortable to humans will do. In temperatures near freezing, however, many kinds will go dormant, dropping leaves and suspending growth. Thick-stemmed begonias need no special high-humidity conditions—a range of 40 to 50 percent is sufficient.

Their large root  
systems necessi-  
tate deep, heavy  
pots

Deep, heavy pots are needed for thick-stemmed begonias, because they develop large root systems. A heavy container will counterbalance the weight of the tall growth. One exception is the low-growing thickset section of this group, which requires squat pots.

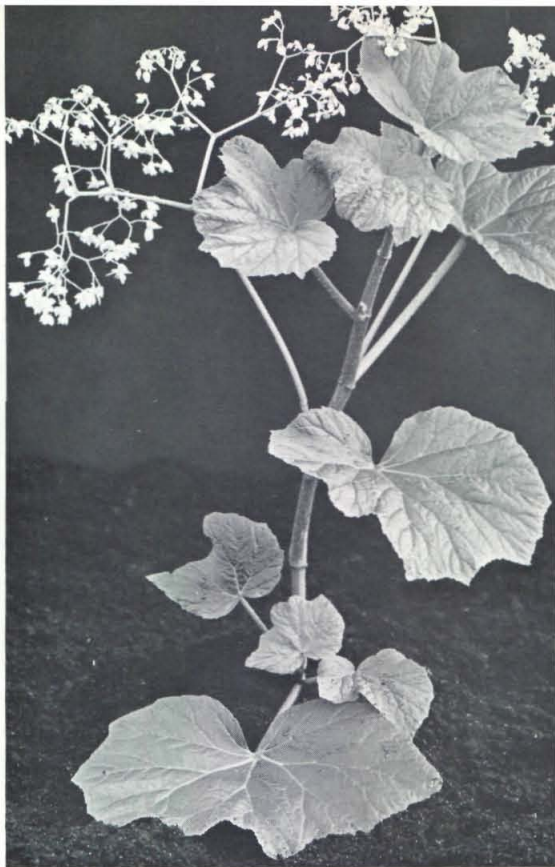
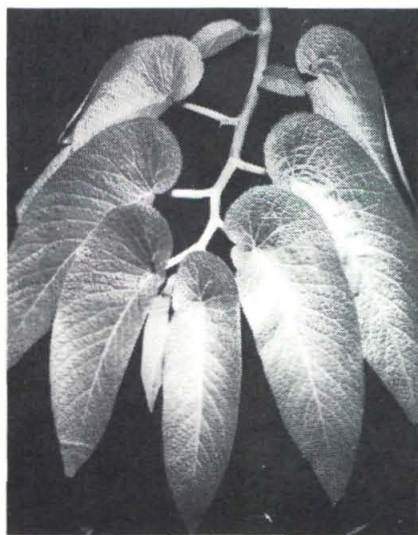
General begonia watering rules prevail—water thoroughly, then water again only when the soil surface is dry to the touch.

Because of their tendency to grow tall without branching, it often is difficult to train thick-stemmed begonias into compact, pleasing forms. Stake a stem that is going askew or that is drooping when it is supposed to grow erect. Pruning consists primarily of removing old, bare stems to make room for new, green, vigorous ones as they appear. Pinching new stems is the way to force side growth and control plant height.





Photo/Chuck Anderson



Photo/Reyer Jansen

Three thick-stemmed begonias: *B. paranaensis* (upper left), *B. vitifolia* (above), and *B. egregia*

Thick-stemmed plants can be kept in optimum condition with slightly more fertilizer—use a balanced, complete formula such as 18-18-18—than other begonias require. Always follow label directions. Few insects or diseases attack these begonias, but if you have such a problem, always diagnose carefully and use the least toxic chemical control that works, unless you practice a preventive chemical program. Read and follow the label exactly.

Stem and tip cuttings are good ways to propagate.

*A little more  
fertilizer than  
usual needed  
here*



## Trailing-scandent begonias: grow up or down

Trailing-scandent begonias grow vine-like, usually with many branches, and lend themselves superbly to hanging baskets or being trained up posts, trellises, and "totem poles." Most are packed with small leaves and bloom in clusters more or less profusely, the flowering season varying from plant to plant.

*Good subjects  
to hang from  
tree limbs,  
under lath*

These begonias are good subjects to grow hanging from tree limbs, under lath covers or greenhouse roofs, and in front of large windows.


Some trailing-scandent begonias you may find are *B. convulvacea*, *B. 'Ellen Dee'*, *B. 'Elsie M. Frey'*, *B. fagifolia*, *B. glabra*, *B. mannii*, *B. 'Marjorie Daw'*, *B. polygonoides*, *B. procumbens*, *B. 'Shippy's Garland'*, and *B. 'Splotches'*.

These begonias need plenty of light, even some sunlight, but no intense midday sun. Good light will help produce a full plant with lots of bloom. If leaf stems elongate and the space between stem joints gets larger, you know the plant needs more light. If the foliage pales, you are providing excessive light.

The usual comfortable temperature range for people, 58 to 72 degrees F., is right for trailing-scandent begonias. The humidity requirement is average for begonias—40 to 60 percent or so.

Potting is more crucial than with some other begonias be-





This free-flowering species, listed in the Rosecroft Begonia Gardens catalog as *B. alba scandens* in the 1920s, probably is *B. glabra*

Photo/Alfred D. Robinson Collection

cause the long, pendulous stems are sometimes fragile. If you use plastic containers, be careful not to overwater. Some feel clay, wood, or moss-lined wire baskets are better. A squat or somewhat shallow container is best, because the begonias are shallow rooted.

Don't overpot. When potting up, put a plant in a new container only one size larger than the present one. Too much extra space can produce weak plants and retain so much water plants drown.

Staking isn't necessary, but pruning and pinching can make the difference between a so-so plant and a great one. Prune out old stems with long bare sections. Pinch stems often to encourage branching and to obtain stems of varying lengths resulting in a full, shapely plant.

*Pruning and pinching help create something great*

Water when the planter mix feels dry to the touch. If weather is warm or the plant seems to dry out faster than other begonias because it is in a hanging basket, water a bit more frequently. Spraying leaves with water in the morning increases humidity and washes off dust. A complete fertilizer used throughout the active growing season should be supplemented just before and during the blooming season with a high-phosphorus food.

Trailing-scandent begonias can be propagated easily using stem cuttings, especially tip cuttings you create when you pinch and prune.

# Tuberous begonias: most spectacular flowers

Spectacular and diverse, the tuberous begonia group is ignored by some because these plants usually have annual dormant periods. But enthusiasts scoff at this inconvenience because some of the show-stoppingest begonias are in this group.

Large-flowered tuberous hybrids (Tuberhybrida) are here, as are the widely grown Hiemalis begonias, thick with bloom any season. Also included are the "hardy begonia," *B. grandis* ssp. *evansiana*; the "hollyhock begonia," *B. gracilis* var. *martiana*; and semi-tuberous begonias such as *B. dregei*.

You usually can tell a tuberous begonia because of a swollen structure at the base of the stems, underground or at soil level. This is the tuber (or sometimes it is a bulb), whose function is to store water and nutrients during dormancy so the plant can start anew.

Although each classification in the tuberous group has its own cultural idiosyncrasy or two, general practices are similar.

Most do best with plenty of filtered light but little or no direct hot sun.

*Planting mix must be coarse and fast-draining*

Because they can rot from excessive amounts of water, a very coarse, fast-draining planter mix is required. Coarse perlite or leaf mold as a substantial part of the mix will do the trick. When you water, the excess will drain quickly. The large amount of air in the mix will require more frequent watering, though, in warm seasons.

Some, especially the Tuberhybrida begonias, need high humidity for adequate flowering. This can be provided through frequent misting early in the day or creation of a high-humidity section of a greenhouse.

A side effect of high humidity can be development of powdery mildew and other fungus diseases. These can be controlled with the fungicides karathane (to get rid of it) and benomyl (to prevent it). Always follow label directions exactly.

Some tuberous begonias grow upright, either without further assistance or with judicious staking to support the supple stems. Others trail and are well suited to use in hanging baskets.

*They are heavy feeders because of the big flowers*

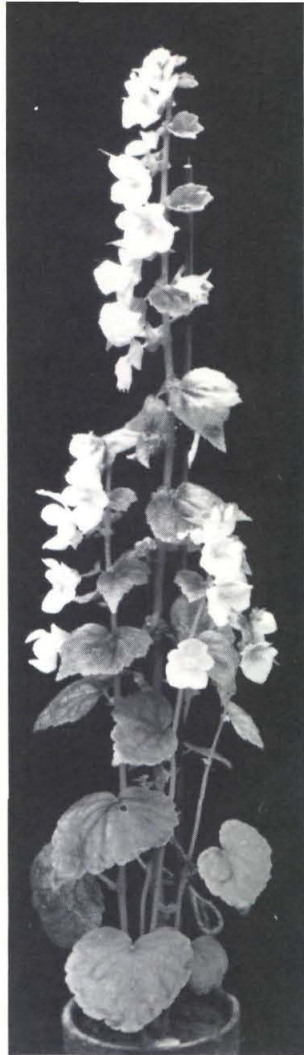
Since most tuberous types are grown for their flowers, they are heavy feeders. This means you must fertilize a lot. The most frequently encountered method is to use a low-intensity complete fertilizer such as fish emulsion (5-1-1) early in the season to get a large, healthy plant. When buds appear, switch to a combination of 5-1-1 and bloom (such as 0-10-10) fertilizers, one tablespoon of each to one gallon of water, applied every two weeks. Or feed at half-strength weekly. Otherwise, follow label directions.



Two very different tuberous begonias: Below is a Tuberhybrida flower of the picotee type; at right, *B. gracilis* var. *martiana*, the "hollyhock begonia"



Photo/Brown Bulb Ranch



Photo/Alfred D. Robinson Collection

When leaves begin to yellow, flowers wither, and the plant slows down, stop fertilizing and water less frequently because dormancy is approaching. When the plant is dormant, some, such as Tuberhybrida, do best if the tubers are lifted and stored clean in a dry place. Others can be stored right in their pots.

Like most begonias, tuberous kinds grow best in warm and airy but comfortable-to-humans temperatures. They are perfect to display in places where you and guests spend a lot of time outdoors in summer.

Because of the diversity in this group, you'll want to get further information on growing the kinds that have captured your interest. Many of the books listed on page 198 and back issues of *The Begonian* will help, as will information offered at meetings of ABS branches.

*Perfect for outdoor display in summer*

# Begonia books—where to find information

The number of begonia books in print is distressingly small, considering how much could be said about this large, diverse genus. However, those available encompass a wealth of valuable, detailed information.

Also, some good out-of-print volumes are sometimes found in used book stores and libraries—particularly the ABS Library and ABS branch libraries. And what promises to be the largest and most complete work for popular consumption is expected to be published around Christmas 1980.

This will be *Begonias* by Edward and Mildred Thompson, authors of the monumental, privately published *Thompson Begonia Guide*. Times Books is expected to publish *Begonias* with 350 pages containing 665 drawings and photos, many in color. To reserve an autographed copy before publication, write to Ed and Millie Thompson, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968. Or you can buy one at a bookstore.

*Begonias for Beginners* by Elda Haring, a thoroughly knowledgeable grower and author, is an easy-to-use little book with an illustrated encyclopedic section on individual species and cultivars. Elda explains growing techniques, propagation, pruning, and other topics that often perplex novices. Published by Bookworm Publishing Co.—no longer in business—the book now is available directly from Elda Haring, Box 236, Flat Rock, NC 28731, in paperback (\$3.75) and hard cover (\$5.75). You also can order it from the ABS Bookstore (see inside front cover of the latest *Begonian*).

The color plates are spectacular in

*Begonia Portraits* by Alice M. Clark. Alice published this book privately in 1977 and very few copies of the first printing remain unsold at this time. The volume consists of reproductions of her paintings of favorite begonias, along with her sometimes-quirky, sometimes-amusing, always-informative commentary. Order from Alice Clark, 3643 Jennings St., San Diego, CA 92106 for \$26.50 (plus \$1.50 tax for Californians).

*Begonia* by Isamu Misono is a book in Japanese with 302 color photographs of begonias identified in English. ABS published an English translation of the text by Marguerite De-Cola and Hikoichi Arakawa, without illustrations, entitled *Begonias*. Both can be ordered from the ABS Bookstore, the original (supply very limited) for \$30, and the translation for \$6 (plus 6% sales tax each for Californians).

Yet another book entitled *Begonias* is the translation from French by Alva Graham of Charles Chevalier's 1938 *Les Begonias*. Numerous color and black-and-white plates have been added to the translated version. A large-format soft-cover book, it is available from the ABS Bookstore for \$8 (plus 6% sales tax for Californians). This is an enduring classic with a wealth of technical information.

If you know a good used book store, some titles of out-of-print books to seek are: *All About Begonias* (1960) by Bernice Brilmayer, *Begonias for American Homes and Gardens* (1947) by Helen K. Krauss, *Begonias and How to Grow Them* (1946) by Bessie Raymond Buxton, and *The Tuberous Begonia* (1969) by Brian Langdon.



# SEED FUND/ *B. solananthera*—a trailing-scandent, fragrant begonia

Joy Porter, director, Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund

Many growers believe fresh begonia seed does not germinate as well as seed stored for several months. In the wild, seed remains dormant until conditions of moisture and temperature are correct to insure survival.

To test this theory, all seeds offered this month have recently been collected and have not been in the mail before, so they will not be cracked or crushed. Each packet will contain 30 to 36 seeds. If you are interested in experimentation, plant one-half immediately and store the remaining portion in an airtight container in the refrigerator until January 1981. Plant remain-

ing seed in the same medium and under the same conditions of moisture and temperature.

When you are certain no more germination will occur, please send me your test results: date and number of seeds planted, number of days to first germination, and number of seedlings for both plantings. Results will be tabulated and published here.

We may also learn something about the fragility of seeds under mailing conditions: just another avenue to explore regarding that exasperating question, "Why didn't my seeds germinate?"

## SPECIES

- JY 1 — *B. peltata* var. *kellermannii*: Shrub-like with white-felted, peltate and cupped leaves and a profuse array of soft-pink, scented flowers in late winter. ....per pkt 1.00
- JY 2 — *B. solananthera*: Trailing-scandent species discovered in Brazil in 1859. Scented white flowers with distinctive red blotch at center of flower. Blooms profusely in winter and early spring. ....per pkt 1.00
- JY 3 — *B. epipsila*: Shrub-like from Brazil, 1948. Medium-sized bare green leaves waxed to a high shine with red-brown wool on reverse. White flowers with attractive red wings on ovaries, blooming over a long period in spring and summer. Beautiful basket plant. ....per pkt 1.00
- JY 4 — *B. ludwigii*: Found in Ecuador in 1937 and once called *B. rigida* and *B. ecuadorensis*. This interesting species is thick-stemmed with dark green, soft-hairy, deeply-lobed leaves with each lobe-tip painted with silver, and lacy collar of spine-like hairs where petiole joins leaf. It is white-spotted when young and can be deciduous. Large white flower clusters on a tall stem in late winter. ....per pkt 1.00
- JY 5 — *B. incarnata*: An easy-to-grow shrub-like species from Mexico with narrow, green leaves with ruffled margins and profuse pink flowers in winter. The parent of many hybrids. ....per pkt 1.00
- JY 6 — *B. nelumbiifolia*: Rhizomatous with large, bare peltate leaves and small pale-rose flowers on 16-inch stems in early spring. Said to have been found in Jamaica in 1793 by Rear Admiral Bligh of HMS Bounty. ....per pkt 1.00

Send orders to Joy Porter, 9 Bayberry Lane, Framingham, MA 01701. Include self-addressed stamped envelope. Massachusetts residents add 5% sales tax. Checks and money orders should be made payable to: Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. Foreign orders: U.S. funds only.

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# ROUND ROBINS/ *How the robins can help you*

Jan Clark

Many ABS members participate enthusiastically in the Round Robin program. What is a Round Robin? Mabel Corwin, past Round Robin director, explains:

"A Round Robin is a small club of people from all over the world. They like to talk about their begonias, learn about them, and ask questions about them. Since they live so far apart, they can't meet in person, so they meet and become friends through correspond-

*Jan Clark is round robin reporter.*

*Information about joining a robin—a packet of letters circulated among begonia lovers—is available from Mary Harbaugh, round robin director. Write to her at Rt. 4, Box 343, Shawano, WI 54116.*

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ferns, terrarium plants.*

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throughout the world.**

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ence. Each group is called a flight, and shares a packet of letters from each member.

"A robin usually makes its rounds in two or three months. Many people belong to several Robins, and all agree that a packet is worth waiting for!"

There are about eight members on a flight, and currently there are more than 100 flights, on topics ranging from "arid climate begonia growing" all the way down the alphabet to "windowsill begonias."

## Friends around the globe

Robin members make friends cross-country and around the world. Recently a member from Pennsylvania visited a fellow Robin in Washington. Though they had corresponded for many years, they had never met face to face. It was a memorable experience for both.

In one recent Robin, Hikoichi Arakawa (Japan) eagerly anticipated renewing acquaintances with his many American friends at the upcoming Long Beach convention, while another Robin, Marie Treat (Pennsylvania) shared her experiences from the New York ABS convention with fellow Robins who couldn't make the trip





themselves.

Robin letters are always welcome, but never more than in bad weather. Awash in California rains, Diane Fries wrote: "Your letters arrived just in time to take me out of the doldrums." And after a February blizzard Lena Bussard (Kansas) commented: "It's such a joy to receive the robins at this time of year; it helps break the 'cabin fever.'"

### Swapping growing information

Robin members discuss their growing methods with each other. For example, Mike Ludwig (California), an avid terrarium enthusiast, described some of his planting ideas:

"Space is as important as the plants. Use a rock or stick instead of a plant. Good rocks and sticks are hard to come by, so keep looking. Try something natural. Imagine a rock cliff. No soil except in cracks, and a few ferns. Begonias or gesneriads tucked in only a few nooks and crannies."

### Sharing cuttings, seeds

Robin members not only share advice, they generously share cuttings and seeds with each other. On offering a start of a choice begonia to a fellow Robin member, Elaine Ross (Louisiana) spoke for many Robin friends:

"It is indeed a pleasure for me, especially in knowing it would please someone. We have so many things becoming extinct these days—it seems right to share a plant and keep it in cultivation. Besides, I may one day lose mine and may need a cutting from you!"

Over 300 begonias—Rex, rhizomatous, and some canes. We ship leaves, cuttings and plants. Have African violets for sale at greenhouse only at this time. Open all year.

Routh's Greenhouse, Hwy. 65, Louisburg, Missouri 65685. (417) 752-3762.

### And there's fun, too

Sometimes the Robins are an excuse for just plain fun between begoniacs. In a recent Robin, Patrick Worley (California) lamented the difficulty of choosing just the right name for a special begonia hybrid.

Kit Jeans (Tennessee) retorted, tongue in cheek, that names are no problem at all. "Mostly my names come from books I read. And I read a lot!" But it turned out the Aussies one-upped them both, when Bernard Yorke (Brisbane) revealed, "Mickey Meyer uses an Aboriginal Dictionary, whilst I use the Racing Form!"

#### GREATER CHICAGO AREA BRANCH of the American Begonia Society

invites you to its meeting each month  
except December.

2 p.m., fourth Sunday  
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new plants

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mailing list*

## ABS NEWS/ *Nominees chosen for elective office*

Gilbert A. Estrada, president elect for 1½ years and president since the resignation of Nathan Randall in May, will run unopposed for the ABS presidency in 1980-81.

Gil was proposed for the position by a three-member nominating committee which presented a slate that was accepted by directors May 19. Ballots and candidates' biographies will be mailed to members.

The slate also includes Howard Berg and Chuck Anderson, candidates for president elect; Margaret Taylor and Michael Kartuz, first vice president; Norma Taylor and Joan Coulat, second vice president; John Ingles, treasurer; and Arlene Davis, secretary.

One candidate will be elected for each office.

### **Only 150 at banquet**

The Saturday banquet at the ABS con-

vention will be limited to the first 150 members who register for the gathering, "A Seaside Rendezvous," Sept. 4-7 in Long Beach, Calif.

This decision, reached by the convention steering committee May 19, was prompted by limited seating capacity at the Holiday Inn banquet room.

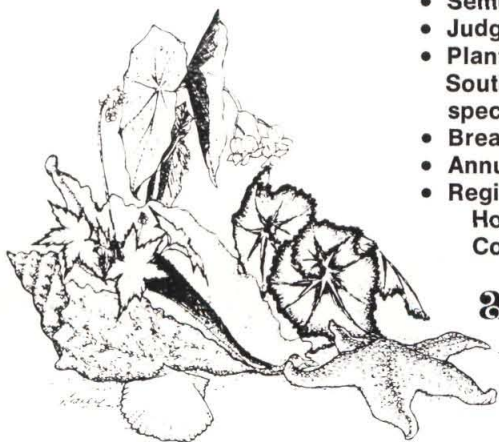
Convention chairman Jean Natter told ABS directors before the committee meeting that arrangements had been completed to hold the convention and annual show at the Holiday Inn, 2640 Lakewood Blvd., Long Beach.

Registration information will be mailed to members.

The tentative program calls for seminars Friday and Saturday, ABS annual meeting at noon Saturday, the banquet Saturday evening, a Sunday breakfast for round robin members and friends, and a Sunday bus trip to the Los Angeles State

## **1980 american begonia society convention**

**SEPTEMBER 4-7 LONG BEACH, CALIF.**



- Seminars\*
- Judged plant show \*\*
- Plant sale, with first distribution of South American and Philippine species
- Breakfast for Robins and friends
- Annual meeting; awards banquet
- Registration deadlines

Hotel rooms—Aug. 15

Convention—Aug. 23

**a seaside  
rendezvous**

\*Registration forms available from Arlene Davis, 13390 Barker Lane, Corona, CA 91720 (send stamped, self-addressed envelope)

\*\*Show rules and classifications available through branches or by request. Send large (#10) envelope, stamped and self-addressed, to: Margaret Lee, 1825 31st St., San Diego, CA 92102



and County Arboretum in Arcadia, where a tour of the grounds will be led by John Provine, arboretum superintendent and an ABS past president.

Seminars will include:

Friday—Mabel Corwin on "How to Grow Trophy Winners"; Rudolf Ziesenne, "Mexican Begonia Heritage"; Chuck Anderson and Karen Bartholomew, "Byline Fever: A Seminar on Writing and Photography for *The Begonian*"; Patrick Worley, "Boxed Begonias."

Saturday—Joy Logee Martin, "Begonias of Yesteryear"; Kit Jeans, "Hybridizing Highlights."

The show is planned to open with a members-only preview Friday night and last through the weekend.

Branch donations of plants for the sale and trophies for the show continue to trickle in, and more are needed. See page 114 of the April *Begonian* for details.

### Two new branches form

Two new branches were chartered by ABS directors May 19.

The new branches are the Astro Branch in Houston, Texas, and the Roger Williams Branch of Rhode Island. (Roger Williams founded Rhode Island.)

### Chicago Branch plans show

The Greater Chicago Branch will hold a show and plant sale Aug. 30-31.

The event is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Chicago Horticultural Society Botanical Gardens on Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, Ill.

### Garden Grove show

Garden Grove branch will stage its annual show August 23 and 24 at the Hunt-

ington Center, Edinger and Beach, Huntington Beach, Calif.

Branch members will be selling many new and hard-to-find plants.

### Right dates for S.F. Flower Show

The San Francisco County Fair Flower Show will be Aug. 29-31 with a preview the evening of Aug. 28. Dates listed in the June *Begonian* were incorrect.

### Dr. Barkley gets \$100 grant

ABS directors May 19 voted to grant \$100 to Dr. Fred A. Barkley of Tecumseh, Okla., to pay part of the expenses of his botanical research trip to Mexico last winter.

### Slide librarian resigns

Dennis Maley of El Cajon, Calif., has resigned as ABS slide librarian because of the press of business.

ABS directors accepted the resignation with regret May 19. No successor has been chosen.

### Plant Shop's Botanical Gardens

New Begonia Catalog \$2.00 (incl. postage)—over 100 drawings and 600 plants listed—refunded with first order. Staghorn Poster \$4.00 (incl. postage). Inquire about rare plant catalog.  
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BEGONIA SOCIETY**

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AND PLANT SALE**

**August 30-31**

**9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Chicago Horticultural  
Society Botanical Gardens  
Lake Cook Rd., Glencoe, Ill.**

# ABS—stimulating begonia interest since 1932

The American Begonia Society was born of the Great Depression. In 1932, begonia growing, horticultural classification, and scientific study were in their adolescence. Lots of today's species were undiscovered and hybrids not yet developed.

Against that backdrop, a handful of enthusiasts led by Herbert P. Dyckman met in Long Beach, Calif., on a January evening with the idea of forming an organization to advance the cause of begonias. These plants could be grown outdoors—some year-round—in California.

The group that emerged was called the California Begonia Society. It grew

rapidly and by June 1934 changed its name to reflect a more national orientation. Now, in 1980, the American Begonia Society numbers in excess of 2,000 members around the world.

Each receives the society's magazine, *The Begonian*, and can take advantage of numerous services, including seed sales, a mail-order bookstore, library, and round robin program. (See the inside back cover for a list of ABS services.)

The society's first publication was a mimeographed *Monthly Bulletin* launched in January 1934. It adopted its format as *The Begonian* in July

**Please turn to page 206**

## ASSOCIATED GROUPS/ *Visitors always welcome*

### ALFRED D. ROBINSON BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, 10:30 a.m.

Homes of members

Mrs. Peter P. Lee, Pres.

1852 31st St., San Diego, CA

92102

Margaret Lee, Natl. Dir.

### ASTRO BRANCH

Houston, Texas

### BUXTON BRANCH

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Community College,

50 Oakland St., Wellesley, Mass.

Percy Ehrlich, Pres.

66 Fessenden St., Newtonville,

MA 02160

Anthony P. Croce, Natl. Dir.

### CENTRAL SAN JOAQUIN BRANCH

Dr. William Ireton, Pres.

1702 Camino Primavera,

Bakersfield, CA 93306

William Ireton, Natl. Dir.

### CHEEKWOOD BRANCH

Homes of members

Pam Braun, Pres.

Rt. 6, Pinewood Rd.,

Franklin, TN 37064

### CONNECTICUT BRANCH

4th Monday, Homes of members

Arline Peck, Pres.

Eagle Peak Rd., Pascoag, RI

02859

Priscilla Beck, Natl. Dir.

### DENTON BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 10 a.m.

Homes of members

Mae Blanton, Pres.

118 Wildoak Dr., Lake

Dallas, TX 75065

Glennis Crouch, Natl. Dir.

### DESERT BEGONIA BRANCH

Barbara Rogers, Pres.

8508 Shasta Dr., Tucson, AZ

85730

Barbara Rogers, Natl. Dir.

### EAST BAY BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 7:45 p.m.

Northbra Community Church,

*This directory appears quarterly. If your branch listing is incomplete or inaccurate, please notify the secretary immediately and send a copy of your letter to the editors.*

Berkeley, Calif.

Susan Patrick, Pres.

27406 Grand View Ave.,

Hayward, CA 94542

Glen Maynard, Natl. Dir.

### EASTERN NEW YORK BRANCH

Betty Pullar, Pres.

411 New Karner Rd., Albany, NY

12205

Betty Pullar, Natl. Dir.

### EASTSIDE BEGONIA BRANCH

4th Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

590 116th Avenue N.E.,

Bellevue, Wash.

Dale Greer, Pres.

1704 212th Ave. S.E., Issaquah,

WA 98027

Shelton Fisher, Natl. Dir.

### EDNA STEWART PITTSBURGH BRANCH

3rd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

Pittsburgh Civic

Garden Center

Suzanne Colaizzi, Pres.

115 Lillian Rd., Pittsburgh,

PA 15237

Frank Kerin, Natl. Dir.

### ELSA FORT BRANCH

Helen Green, Pres.

2100 Hunter St., Cinnaminson,

NJ 08077

Gladys Cooper, Natl. Dir.

### FRED A. BARKLEY BRANCH

1st Sunday, Homes of members

Dr. Fred A. Barkley, Pres.

104 E. Highland,

Tecumseh, OK 73475

Dr. Jeffrey Black, Natl. Dir.

### GARDEN GROVE BRANCH

3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m., New

Community Meeting Center

11300 Stanford, Garden Grove,

CA 92643

Gil Estrada, Pres.

7914 Springer, Downey, CA

90242

George Allison, Natl. Dir.

### GLENDALE BRANCH

2nd Tuesday, 8:00 p.m.

Glendale Federal S & L,

401 N. Brand, Glendale, Calif.

Darlene Fuentes, Pres.

2313 Hollister Ter., Glendale,

CA 91206

Dolores Fernandez, Natl. Dir.

### GREATER CHICAGO AREA BRANCH

4th Sunday, except Dec., 2 p.m.

Oak Park Conservatory

561 Garfield, Oak Park, Ill.

Dan Haseltine, Pres.

6950 W. Nelson St., Chicago,

IL 60634

Paul Thomas, Natl. Dir.

### GREATER CINCINNATI BRANCH

Verda Stull, Pres.

5 Burnham St., Cincinnati, OH

45218

Erich Steiniger, Natl. Dir.

### GREATER ROCHESTER BRANCH

3rd Sunday, Homes of members

Betty Fennell, Pres.

1054 Shoemaker Rd., Webster,

NY 14580

Eileen Franklin, Natl. Dir.

### HAMPTON BRANCH

2nd Monday, 7:45 p.m., Parrish

Memorial Hall, Southampton,

NY

Lou Padavan, Pres.

Box 127, Remsenberg, NY

11960

Mary Burnaford, Natl. Dir.



**HOUSTON TEXAS BRANCH**

4th Monday, 1:00 p.m., Garden Center, 1500 Herman Dr., Houston, Tex.

Mrs. B. A. Russell, Pres.  
5926 Jackwood St., Houston TX 77074

Gwen Brunka, Natl. Dir.

**JACKSONVILLE BRANCH**

3rd Monday, 7:30 p.m.  
Agricultural Ctr.,  
1010 North McDuff Ave.  
Ann M. Helton, Pres.  
334 Brunswick Rd.,  
Jacksonville, FL 32216  
Mary Harrell, Natl. Dir.

**KNICKERBOCKER BRANCH**

2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Horticultural Society of New York  
128 West 58th St., New York, N.Y.  
Marjorie L. Mack, Pres.  
75 Henry St., Brooklyn, NY 11201

Ed Grasheim, Natl. Dir.

**LONG BEACH PARENT BRANCH**

2nd Sunday, 1:30 p.m., Great Western S & L  
6330 E. Spring St., Long Beach  
Loretta Salzer, Pres.  
4702 Ocana Ave., Lakewood, CA 90713

Muriel Perz, Natl. Dir.

**LONG ISLAND BRANCH**

2nd Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.  
Planting Fields Arboretum  
Oyster Bay, Long Island, N.Y.  
Mrs. Martha Graham, Pres.  
55 Duryea Rd., Melville, NY 11746

Marie Donnelly, Natl. Dir.

**MIAMI BRANCH**

4th Tuesday, 8:00 p.m.  
Simpson Memorial Garden Center  
55 South West 17th Road, Miami, Florida  
Charles J. Jaros, Pres.  
2621 N.W. 23rd Court, Miami, FL 33142

Charles J. Jaros, Natl. Dir.

**MINNESOTA BRANCH**

2nd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Homes of members  
Dorothea Lillestrand, Pres.  
2100 W. 108th, Bloomington, MN 55431

Pat Burdick, Natl. Dir.

**MONTEREY BAY AREA BRANCH**

4th Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.  
New Monterey Neighborhood Center  
Lighthouse and Dickman Sts., New Monterey, Calif.  
Florence Peckman, Pres.  
1249 Buena Vista Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950  
Leslie Hatfield, Natl. Dir.

**NORTH LONG BEACH BRANCH**

2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.  
Mercury S&L  
4140 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach  
Edith Van Landingham, Pres.  
6925 Lime Ave., Long Beach, CA 90807

D. G. Sullinger, Natl. Dir.

**ORANGE COUNTY BRANCH**

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Fullerton S & L, 2310 E. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim  
Cruz Sandoval, Pres.  
2221 Evelyn Dr., Anaheim, CA 92805

Margaret Taylor, Natl. Dir.

**PALM BEACHES BRANCH**

2nd Monday, Home S & L  
Opp. Palm Coast Plaza, W. Palm Beach, Fla.

Mrs. Frances Hunter, Pres.  
201 Potter Rd., W. Palm Beach, FL 33405

Paul Lowe, Natl. Dir.

**PALMETTO BRANCH**

Lucille Peden, Pres.  
4 Wildwood Dr., Greenville, SC 29607

John McWhorter, Natl. Dir.

**PALOMAR BRANCH**

2nd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Vista Recreation Center  
Ingebor Foo, Pres.  
1050 Melrose Way,

Vista, CA 92083  
Mabel Corwin, Natl. Dir.

**POTOMAC BRANCH**

4th Sunday, 2:00 p.m.,  
National Arboretum  
Blandensburg & R. Sts., N.E., Washington, D.C.  
Maxine Zinman, Pres.  
Rte 1, Box 73, Boyce, VA 22620

Carrie Karegeannes, Natl. Dir.

**REDONDO AREA BRANCH**

4th Friday, 7:30 p.m., R. H. Dana School Cafetorium  
135th St. and Aviation Blvd.  
Hawthorne, Calif.  
Evelyn Isaac, Pres.  
2022 Bataan Rd., Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Diane Fries, Natl. Dir.

**ROGER WILLIAMS BRANCH**

Rhode Island

**RUBIDOUX BRANCH**

4th Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
West Riverside Memorial Auditorium  
4393 Riverview Dr., Rubidoux  
Claire Husted, Pres.  
13597 Indiana, Corona, CA 91720

R. H. Terrell, Natl. Dir.

**SACRAMENTO BRANCH**

3rd Tuesday, 7:45 p.m.,  
Garden Center  
3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, Calif.  
Shirley Wilson, Pres.  
2160 Stacia Way, Sacramento, CA 95822

Joan Coulat, Natl. Dir.

**SALINE COUNTY BRANCH OF KANSAS**

4th Monday, 1:30 p.m., Homes of members  
Mrs. Sam Gilmore, Pres.  
536 Crestwood Rd., Salina, KS 67401

**SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH**

1st Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.,  
Garden Center  
Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way  
Dolores Dupre, Pres.  
417 Hazelwood Ave., San Francisco, CA 94127

Susan Muller, Natl. Dir.

**SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH**

2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Los Angeles State and County Arboretum  
501 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, Calif.

Cecelia Grivich, Pres.

2808 S. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91006

Ellie Skinner, Natl. Dir.

**SAN MIGUEL BRANCH**

1st Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Casa del Prado, Rm. 104, Balboa Park, San Diego  
Pat Maley, Pres.  
1471 E. Madison, El Cajon, CA 92021

Paul Lee, Natl. Dir.

**SANTA BARBARA BRANCH**

4th Saturday, 7:30 p.m.  
Louise Lowry Davis Recreation

Center

1232 De la Vina St.  
Phyllis Mautino, Pres.  
420 Calle Palo Colorado, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Keith Mautino, Natl. Dir.

**SANTA CLARA VALLEY BRANCH**

3rd Thursday, 7:45 p.m.  
Allstate Savings, Payne & Saratoga Aves., San Jose  
Mary Margaret Rafferty, Pres.  
18531 Ravenwood Dr.  
Saratoga, CA 95070

Joseph McMahon, Natl. Dir.

**SEATTLE BRANCH**

3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Bethany Lutheran Church, 7400 Woodlawn Ave., N.E.  
Dorothy Williams, Pres.  
21519 92nd Ave. W., Edmonds, WA 98020

Anton Soder, Natl. Dir.

**SOUTH SEATTLE BRANCH**

4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.,  
Wm. Moshier Field House  
430 S. 156th St., Seattle  
Joanne Slosser, Pres.  
16419 3rd Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166

Herbert Briggs, Natl. Dir.

**SOUTHWEST REGIONAL ASSOCIATION**

Robert Hamm, Dir.  
3817 Jo Ann 15-D, Wichita Falls, TX 76306

**TACONIC BRANCH**

Mrs. John V. Steiner, Pres.  
Bulleet Hole Road, Mahopoc, NY 10541

Mrs. John V. Steiner, Natl. Dir.

**TAMPA BAY AREA BRANCH**

3rd Saturday, 1:00 p.m.  
University of So. Florida,  
Student Chapel Bldg.  
Stefan K. Brown, Pres.  
4011 N. Howard, Apt. 101,  
Tampa, FL 33623

Dora Lee Dorsey, Natl. Dir.

**THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD BRANCH**

1st Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Senior Citizens Bldg., 420 Santa Clara St., Ventura, Calif.  
Barbara L. Schneider, Pres.  
3774 Vineyard, Oxnard, CA 93030

Velma Montgomery, Natl. Dir.

**WESTCHESTER BRANCH**

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
Westchester Women's Club  
8020 Alverstone St., Los Angeles  
Arnold Krupnick, Pres.  
11506 McDonald, Culver City, CA 90230

Clair Christensen, Natl. Dir.

**WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH**

2nd Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.  
Northway Mall Community Room  
North Hills, Pittsburgh, Penn.  
Genevieve Allison, Pres.  
221 Schaffner Rd., Butler, PA 16001

Agnes Hodgson, Natl. Dir.

**WHITTIER BRANCH**

1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Palm Park Community Center  
5703 South Palm Avenue,  
Whittier

Gertrude Blackstock, Pres.  
15311 Elmbrook Drive, La Mirada, CA 90628

Dorothy Kosowsky, Natl. Dir.

**WILLIAM PENN BRANCH**

4th Tuesday, noon, Homes of members  
Mrs. Herbert S. Webster, Pres.  
"Millbridge" 13 Summit Dr., Bryn Mawr, PA 19010  
Mrs. Lancelot Sims, Natl. Dir.

## More history

Continued from page 204

1938.

ABS maintains 54 branches across the U.S. Members discuss begonia culture, learn about new plants, and stage demonstrations and shows. The first ABS branch was established in Ventura, Calif., in 1937—now named after pioneer western plantswoman Theodosia Burr Shepherd.

A year later, an Eastern Branch was formed at Pomfret, Conn. This spawned numerous branches in the

eastern U.S. and widespread interest in the East in begonia culture under artificial light and in greenhouses, as well as an abiding interest in scientific and technical aspects of the genus.

There are large concentrations of members in the East, California, Florida, Texas, the Pacific Northwest, and other areas, plus active members in less-populated regions. Several hundred members are in other countries. More than half of ABS' members are at-large—they have no branch affiliation.

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## ABS SERVICES

These services are available to all ABS members. For names and addresses of department heads and other officers, see inside front cover.

**AT-LARGE MEMBERS**—Services for members who don't belong to branches are handled by the members-at-large director. Contact him for details. If you are interested in finding a branch or starting one in your area, contact the branch relations director for help.

**THE BEGONIAN**—The monthly journal of the society publishes how-to articles, scientific information, and ABS news. Articles on a member's personal experiences with begonias are welcomed, as are black-and-white photos of begonias and color slides suitable for use on the cover. Contact the editors. Individual copies of *The Begonian* more than a year old are available from the back issue sales chairman (75 cents). A full year is \$6.50 for any year in the 1940s, \$5 for any year from 1950 through 1978. Back issues less than a year old are ordered from the membership secretary for \$1 each.

**BOOKSTORE**—Books on begonias and related subjects can be purchased mail-order from the bookstore librarian. Contact him for a list of books available. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The bookstore also sells reproductions of antique begonia prints.

**JUDGING DEPARTMENT**—The judging department offers a course by mail with which you can learn to become an accredited begonia show judge. Also available are a booklet on point scoring, information on fuchsia and fern judging, and other requirements to become a judge.

**LIBRARY**—Books about begonias and gardening may be borrowed by mail from the lending library. Contact the librarian for a list of books and the procedure.

**NOMENCLATURE**—The nomenclature department monitors newly published findings on begonia names as well as handling official international registration of new begonia cultivars. Registrations are published in *The Begonian*.

**RESEARCH**—The research department conducts a Grow and Study project in which members experiment with various begonias and compile their findings. The department also has other activities, including the review of requests for ABS backing of outside projects. For details, contact a co-director.

**ROUND ROBINS**—Members exchange information about begonias and their culture through a packet of letters which circulates among a small group of growers. There are dozens of these packets—called flights—on many specialized subjects. To join one or more, contact the round robin director.

**SEED FUND**—The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund offers seeds of begonia species and cultivars by mail. New offerings are listed in *The Begonian*. Donations of seed are encouraged. Please contact the Seed Fund Director.

**SLIDE LIBRARY**—A series of slide shows on begonias and begonia growing can be borrowed by mail for showing at meetings and seminars. New shows are under preparation. Contact the slide librarian for fee information.

**SPEAKERS BUREAU**—The speakers bureau maintains a directory of speakers on begonias and related subjects. Contact the director.

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## BEGONIAN MINI-ADS

**Exhibition Manual.** Supplement of The Thompson Begonia Guide. 100 pages. Price \$4.95, optional binder \$3.50 including shipping. N.Y. residents add state tax. Thompson, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968.

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