



The BEGONIAN



May-June 1995

The BEGONIAN

ISSN 0096-8684

Publication of the American Begonia Society

American Begonia Society

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 that will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

The Begonian is published bimonthly by the American Begonia Society, Inc. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the society, its officers, or the editor. Contents, except where labeled otherwise, may be reprinted without limitation, provided credit is given to "The Begonian, magazine of the American Begonia Society."

Membership (subscription) \$17 annually, \$23 first class mail, US, Mexico, and Canada. \$27 foreign surface mail except Mexico and Canada, \$37 overseas airmail. Added member, same household, \$2. Consult Membership Chairman for sustaining, benefactor, life membership dues. U.S. currency only. Back issues (current volume) \$2.50.

American Begonia Society - P.O. Box 471651, San Francisco CA 94147-1651

Membership - Subscription, dues, circulation inquiries, and address changes: John Ingles, Jr., 157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617; (707) 764-5407.

COVER PHOTOS

Front - a towering *B. luxurians*, photographed by Bruce C. Boardman in Green Mountains Botanical Garden, Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia.

Back - Janet Welsh took this shot of *B. acida* in the Begonia Exhibition Greenhouse at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden in spring 1994, before the fire. See "Survivors", p. 80.

IN THIS ISSUE

Special International Issue:

Belgium

- B. valida* 81
From Nature to the Home 82

Australia

- B. 'Alice Faye' 84
Water, Water 85

France

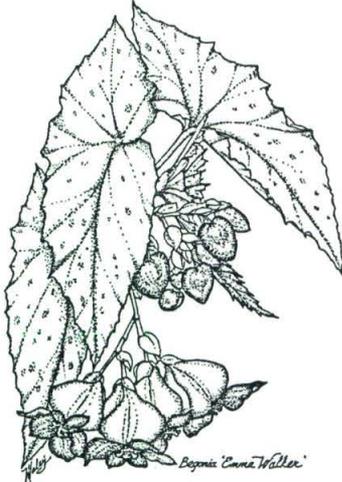
- Fragrance 87

Articles

- Bright Ideas for Branches 78
Think of Sharing 78
Survivors 80
B. 'Cockatoo' 88
B. U177 90
The Ant Condo 91
New Show, New Glory 93

Regular Features

- President's Message 76
Directory Update 78
In Memory 89
In the News 89
Questions 92
Coming Events 95
Bulletin Board 96
Elections 97
Conservation News 98
Round Robin Notes 99
ABS Bookstore 100
Around ABS 101
ABS Minutes 105
ABS Officers 106



B. 'Emma Walker'
B. 'Lenore Olivier' x *B. lubbersii*
Goldie Frost, 1973

drawing by
Pat Maley Belkham

Very Belated Credit

The photo of *B. 'Tamakihada'* on the back cover of the September-October 1994 issue of the **Begonian** was taken by **Mrs. Midori Nobusawa**

Quick!

Check your mailing label: if it says 5/95 or 6/95 your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you!

President's Message

There's no need to tell all of you ABS members that spring is here. I know that you are all prepared and ready.

As I reach the final half of my second, and last, term as your ABS President, I can't help but reflect upon just how little our president can actually effect in the way of changes. Your president's largest duties are presiding over board meetings and appointing chairpersons.

At first, when I came to realize this, I was somewhat disappointed. Over the last year and one half I have come to believe that the founding fathers (and mothers) had probably put together a Constitution and a set of By-Laws the likes of which few other groups have seen. A few members, if they have a problem or want to change something, can organize others that think the same, go through their branch National Director or appropriate chairpersons, and be heard throughout the entire ABS.

The chairpersons and their committee persons are really those who make ABS what it is, one of the best damn plant societies in the world. It helps, too, that we are partial to the best damn plant group in cultivation.

Gene Salisbury

And a message from an illustrious former President, Clarence A. Hall:

Forget the slander you have heard,
Forget the hasty, unkind word,
Forget the quarrel and the cause,
Forget the whole affair because
Forgetting is the only way.
Forget the trial you have had,
Forget the weather if it's bad,
Forget the knocker, he's a freak,
Forget the seven days a week;
You're not a millionaire.
Forget the gray lines in your hair,
Forget the coffee when it's cold,
Forget to knock, forget to scold,
Forget to even get the Blues,
But don't forget to pay your dues.

from the December, 1941 **Begonian** -
a motion enthusiastically seconded by Membership Chair John Ingles, Jr.,
whose address is 157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617

Bright Ideas for Branches

President Helen Spiers of Houston Satellite Branch has initiated two programs that link the branch with ABS members across the country.

The first is "Begonia Buddies", in which Satellites swap cuttings with other "buddy" branches. The newest "buddy" is Pinellas County Branch, described in the Satellite newsletter as "a very active, very interesting bunch whose members were a delight to meet at the last ABS Convention in Oklahoma City. They are excellent growers with several members now trying their hands at hybridizing." The arrival of Begonia Buddy Boxes is always an exciting event for members.

The newest program is the "Satellite Pen Pal". A pen pal participates by mail, receiving the newsletter and an open invitation to participate in Satellite activities when in the Houston area. First pen pal is Julie Mlakar of Shelby, Ohio, an ABS Member-at-Large who will be able to visit occasionally since her sister lives near Houston.

Satellites do other innovative things to spread begonia good will. Recently they hosted a luncheon for employees at the bank where the branch holds its meetings. Each guest was also given a gift begonia (were they warned begonias are addictive?). Members schedule talks for garden clubs, scout groups - anyone who will listen! And by inviting garden writers and editors as speakers, they not only get interesting programs but make contact with publicity sources.

Is it any wonder that Houston Satellite is one of ABS' fastest-growing branches?

Directory Update

Correct address for **Dr. Eric Caterall** of the **National Begonia Society** (England & Wales) is:

7 Springwood Close
Thurgoland
Sheffield S30 7AB
England

Leora Fuentes is the newly elected Director of **Southwest Region**, and will be installed in May. Her address is 13747 Wilderness Point, San Antonio, TX 78231.

Whittier Branch President is **Shirley Real**, 5214 Coringa Dr., Highland Park, CA 90042.

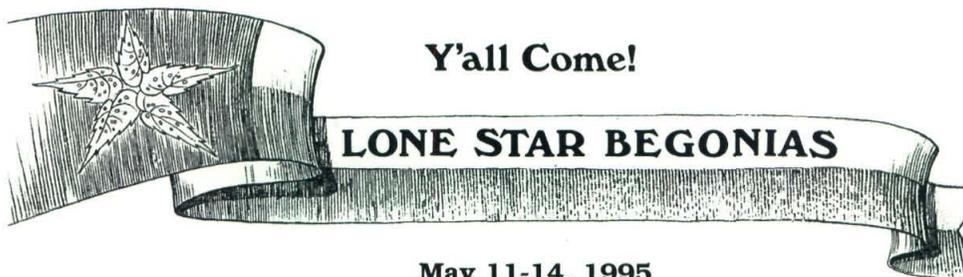
Begonias Thriving? Lots of Bloom?

Think of Sharing!

Research Director Kelton Parker is requesting cuttings of any and all begonias (but especially canes). The address is 3220 Botanic Garden Dr., Fort Worth Texas 76107, ATTN: Kelton Parker. Please mail on a Monday or Tuesday so the cuttings won't sit in heat over the weekend.

The Seed Fund is always requesting seed, especially of species. Please send seed to Ann Salisbury, Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653, and state whether it was open pollinated.

THANK YOU!



Y'all Come!

LONE STAR BEGONIAS

May 11-14, 1995

Southwest Region Get-Together

Show - Sale
featuring SWR hybrids

Tours

Thursday:

Stew's Greenhouses, lunch, and the specialty and antique shops of Comfort & Boerne, TX

Friday :

Historic downtown San Antonio, shopping & lunch on your own at Market Square

Sunday:

John Howell's home and greenhouse - and John will give each visitor a begonia from his Texas-sized collection. Box lunch, and on to San José Mission

Seminars

Don Miller, "Begonias as Herbs"

Bruce C. Boardman, "Begonias Around the World"

and a panel of fabulous Lone Star hybridizers

SWR Annual Meeting - ABS Board Meeting
Awards - Drawings - Auctions

Begonia Boutique - Begonia Books
Begonia Fun
and the famously friendly
SWR hospitality!

Survivors

In the early morning of July 4, 1994, embers from fireworks ignited the Begonia Exhibition Greenhouse at Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

The few begonias that survived the fire, smoke, and intense heat were moved into the production greenhouse that houses the begonia collection; nothing alive remained behind.

A few weeks later survivors began to make their appearance among the ashes. *Begonias convolvulacea*, *popenoei*, *sericoneura*, *aconitifolia*, 'Orococo', 'Withlacochee', all planted around an elevated pond, returned from the dead. Most amazing was a B. 'Ricinifolia' that grew back - even though the plastic pot had melted.



a touch of green appears in the burned-out shell



Begonias around the elevated pond performed a vigorous comeback



B. 'Ricinifolia'



Photos by Tamsin Boardman

Belgium

*from Le Begonia, journal of the Société
Belge du Begonia*



B. valida

Introduced by: Dr. Von Leutzelburg

Year of Introduction: 1915, at the Munich Botanical Garden

Origin: Brazil

Type: Thick-stemmed

Noted for: growth habit, foliage, and flowers.

photo from the files of Sobbeo Institute of Horticulture, Liege, Belgium

Volume 62 May-June 1995

Out of Nature and Into the Home

by Patrick Blanc

The genus *Begoniaceae* consists of a thousand species scattered in tropical regions. Some species only originated in the tropics and grow now in temperate zones, like *B. evansiana* in China, *B. sutherlandii* in southern Africa, or *B. bulbifera* in Mexico.

But the fact that begonias originate in the tropics does not imply that they necessarily require a major amount of warmth in cultivation.

In essence, two conditions are known to affect their temperature requirements. On one hand, the majority of the species grow as undergrowth on the forest floor, that is to say in a habitat where the average temperature does not exceed 25°C. (the same is true at somewhat higher elevations in an open environment where the average temperature does not exceed 30°C). On the other hand, the majority of montane species grow at higher altitudes (500-1,500 metres) and are generally very rare. Since temperature descends as altitude rises, montane begonias are found most frequently at a temperature of 15-20°C during the day and 12-15°C at night.

Humidity is close to 100% in the high altitude forest floor. In sites more exposed to light, such as certain large cliffs, boulders, rocky places, or the edge of the forest, humidity goes down, especially in the middle of the day, and may not exceed 60-70%.

One of the basic causes of the difficulty of cultivation of the forest floor species in the home is that it is the vigorous species of the edge of the forests (such as the cane-like) that best tolerate the dry atmosphere of the home.

Water is very abundant on the tropical forest floor. But it is important to know that the begonias are not found on soil saturated with stagnant water. Begonias are often rooted in sandy soil covered with dead leaves, near small flows of water, that is to say in a soil moistened by water that circulates rapidly. This is not the same, certainly, for the aeration of the root, as a flower pot sitting in a saucer full of stagnant (or standing) water.

The substrata in which begonias root in nature is always shallow. Numerous species, often of small size, live on rocks in the forest undergrowth. Their roots are only slightly developed and hold on among the always damp mosses covering the rocks.

The species held upright with a unique stem of great size, or cane-like, can root themselves in the soil of the forest floor, in the banks along a river, or at the edge of the forest. In this case, the soil is often more compacted than that along the forest floor, and these large species better tolerate culture in pots in a mix.

Species growing on rocks in more light (such as the those found in Thailand, in Malaysia, and in Borneo on limestone peaks and cliffs) have a thick rhizome held to the surface of the rock by roots situated on the lower face of the rhizome, or have small tubers of some millimetres nestled in the infrastructure of the rock. These species share a period of dormancy (to the point of defoliation) during the dry season, which may last from one to six months.

Light intensity varies greatly in the habitats where begonias are found. In the tropical forests, plants on the floor receive 1% of the total light striking the forest canopy. Species of the forest edge, of the river banks, or of the rocky outcroppings receive about 5-20% of the total light.

In general, the larger a species of begonia (those whose stems grow to 1 or 2 meters, such as the canes, or those whose leaves are large and lobed, like *B. ricinifolia*) require higher light intensity.

Species of the forest floor often have the most velvety leaves, of medium-size more or less, round and with entire margins (that is, not lobed). In other places these species of the forest floor are often rhizomatous and their leaves are arranged in rosettes (*B. pavonina*, *B. decora*, *B. rex*).

In the home, the large species are happiest placed in a window and the smaller species of the forest floor are happier with lower light.

Considering these ideas on the ecology of begonia habitats, it should not be surprising to assert that the easiest species to cultivate in the home are the largest. In effect, the principal limiting climatic factor indoors is low humidity, and the large species of the edge of the forest, with their vigorous stems and their thicker and often waxy leaves, are best adapted to a dry atmosphere.

The temperature and the light do not pose a problem in the home if one remembers not to allow water to remain in the saucers and to use a fan for good air circulation.

The species of the forest floor, despite their great importance in nature, remain little cultivated (except for rex and its cultivars). These species with very decorative leaves can only be grown in the home with

certain precautions: it is best to grow them on the floor where the air is cooler, remembering above all that they are originally from the forest floor of mountains where the temperature is always less than 20°C; and to use, in order to raise the humidity, large plastic saucers filled with pebbles of perpetually damp clay* and to place the pots on the pebbles. Thus excess water will evaporate through the pebbles, creating a more humid atmosphere for the plants.

By taking some care all the diversity of the species of the genus *Begoniaceae* will enrich your homes.

*Translation note: the original calls for *billes d'argile mouillés en permanence*.

Le Begonia appears quarterly in French. For information on subscriptions, contact President Piron Giles of the Societe Belge du Begonia at Bois de l'Ancre 5, 4970 COO-STAVELOT, Belgium.

Australia

from *Begonia Australis*, journal of the Association of Australian Begonia Societies



B. 'Alice Faye'

Cane-like, intermediate hybrid originated by Lyla Kilpatrick in 1988. B. 'Lenore Olivier' x *B. hydrocotylifolia*.

Leaves: glabrous, ovate, margin entire. Basal lobes overlapped. Whole leaf slightly cupped. Approx. 10 x 15 cm. Surface dark green RHS* chart 135A; reverse maroon RHS chart 79A.

Blossom: Deep baby pink RHS chart 168C. Profuse in summer/autumn.

Height at maturity 45 cm.

Bushes nicely when tips are pinched early in the season. Does well under 70% shade cloth. Propagates readily from tip cuttings.

*Royal Horticultural Society color chart

Water, Water, Where and When?

by Peter Sharp

Ever since we started growing begonias we have been advised: "Don't over water! Let the surface of the mix dry out between waterings! Most begonias are killed by too much water!" And we accepted this as the golden rule for begonia growers. In all our talks to Garden Clubs we have stressed this point.

But over the years a nagging doubt has crept in. Surely begonias are succulents, some more so than others? And don't succulents thrive on water? And don't a great many begonia species come from habitats in rain forests where it surely must rain an awful lot? Can they really then be "over watered"?

The doubt began to intensify when we decided to try growing begonias in the open garden. We started off cautiously with *B. cucullata* and *B. schmidtiana* and various of the latter day semperflorens hybrids, together with a selection of cane-like hybrids. They all did well and the summer rains seemed to cause no harm. Next we planted *B. convolvulacea* on a two-metre high lattice where it promptly took over and flowered and flowered and flowered. Some of the rhizomatous hybrids and *B. foliosa* and *B. fuchsioides* joined our outdoor begonias, planted out late summer. All did well and we waited anxiously for winter and the rains. In due course both arrived, in fact we had the wettest winter for many years, and we thought this would be the end of our outdoor experiment.

Happily, not so! Our begonias in the open garden came through it all in very good order. Some of the canes lost most of

their leaves and the rhizomatous types stopped growing, but the others went merrily on their way, growing and flowering as the notion took them. Came the spring, and the canes took off once more. So, what about this "don't over water" bit?

I remembered Kevin Handrek's articles in the 1992 editions of 'Begonia Australis' titled "Some Begonias of Malaysia"* and there it was - "It (our first real live begonia in its natural habitat) was growing in humus collected in cracks in the rock. There were perhaps 20 mature plants and hundreds of seedlings growing in a trickle of water flowing continuously over the rock." Kevin went on to mention many other begonias he found in Malaysia, growing in much the same conditions.

I also remembered an article by Lyla Kilpatrick (which I am unable to put my hands on) in which she asserted that begonias need plenty of water. She, I take it, does not subscribe to this "don't over water" thing! During a recent visit to Phil Clingin at Ballarat Botanic Gardens he mentioned that he also is not a believer in the "grow on the dry side" philosophy.

Just recently we have been involved in the planting out of begonias in the Fernery of the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens. Here the begonias are subjected to the constant misting needed to sustain the fern collection. In particular *B. foliosa* is doing extremely well and has produced plants of some metres in width, falling most attractively over the rocks and dipping fern-like leaves into the water of the pool. Many rhizomatous and shrub-like begonias are also thriving in these conditions and recently

were joined by a dozen of Ross Bolwell's hybrid canes. All seem to like it there!

So, what is special about the condition in which all these begonias are doing so well? Quite obviously it is that they are all growing in extremely well-drained soil, and in the case of the Malaysian begonias in very little soil at all, and all are receiving plenty of water. My conclusion is that begonias need, or at least can tolerate, a lot of water, so long as they are well drained and never are left with wet, cold feet.

So, our watchword from now on is: "Water your begonias as often as they need it, but ensure that drainage in their pots or garden beds is as near perfect as you can make it."

This fact has been brought home to us since we moved to city living and have been buying commercial potting mixes. We bought the most expensive that sported the Australian Standard logo. It looked OK, but in a very few weeks broke down to give a slush in the bottom of the pots, which very effectively killed many of our begonias. What started off as a seemingly free-draining potting mix quickly became a slushy water retainer. It was not over watering, just poor drainage, that killed them. We now mistrust all the manufacturers and propose to use minimal quantities of their mixes combined with such things as peat moss, perlite, and properly composted pine bark chips. Our search for the well-drained mix goes relentlessly on!

*The Kevin Handreck articles "Some Begonias of Malaysia" were reprinted in the **Begonian** (May-June, September-October, and November-December 1992).

Peter Sharp edits the newsletter for the New South Wales Begonia Society. His address is 2/283 Jersey Rd., Woollahra 2025, New South Wales, Australia.

It happened at a show in New South Wales, Australia...

Did you hear about the beautiful begonia on display at our Exhibition with the grower's name prominently displayed? Just say it was "Alfred Jones" - the number of people who came to the sales table demanding an "Alfred Jones" was quite remarkable! And they wondered at our inability to supply!

**BEGONIAS, GERANIUMS, EXOTICS
FERNS, OXALIS, CACTI, HERBS**
new Full Color Catalog...\$3.00
LOGEE'S GREENHOUSES
(Est. 1892)
Dept. B, 55 North Street, Danielson,
CT 06239

LAURAY of SALISBURY
Begonias, Gesneriads, Orchids
Cacti & Succulents
432 Undermountain Road, Rt. 41
Salisbury, CT 06068 203 435-2263
Usually open daily, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
1995 Catalog \$2.00

Important Notices from two of our advertisers

Rudolf Ziesenhenne regrets that he has run out of rex seed and will be unable to fulfill orders again until after the next flowering.

Because of a severe, unusual, and unpredicted freeze in central Florida in March, **Sunshine State Tropicals** will be slow in filling orders - but will start shipping again as soon as freeze recovery permits.

France

from *le petit bégo-fil*, newsletter of Assoc. Francoise de Amateurs de Begonias
(via the Members at Large Newsletter, translations by Françoise Fairchild)

Fragrant Begonias

by Dominique Benoit

The first time I saw the flower cluster of *B. 'Lucerna'*, my first begonia, my first reaction was to bury my nose in it. And to take it out immediately, disappointed because it had no scent. I still liked the satin-like quality and the color of its leaves, its brilliant and profuse flowers, but it lacked... fragrance.

As a result, as soon as I started my collection, I looked for scented begonias. The first one must have been *B. solananthera*, and I found that it was smelling really nice, like violets. Then there was *B. 'Bettina Rothschild'*, which surprised me because it smelled like a rose, and I did not know it was scented.

Since then, I have had fun searching for even the most fleeting fragrances. For instance, *B. minor* (syn. *nitida odorata*), *B. 'Sweet Magic'*, *B. masoniana*, *B. 'Honey-suckle'*, *B. venosa*, *B. egregia*, *B. dichroa* are an enchantment every time they bloom.

Of course, some begonias will "flash" their scent only at certain times of day or at a certain stage of bloom. Often, female flowers emit their scent when they are ready to be pollinated, thus attracting pollinating insects.

Heat and the enclosed atmosphere of a room or a greenhouse also seem to make their scent stronger.

For instance, the beautiful *B. minor* 'Alba' that was so fragrant in my veranda completely lost its scent when I set it outside, in a draft. But if the weather turns sultry, if a storm threatens and the air is still, it regains all its scent.

Sometimes, too, you must wait until the plant reaches a certain strength or maturity, until it is fully grown.

This is why I continue to smell my favorite plants at any time of the day, and I am often pleasantly surprised.

If your *B. solananthera* does not smell, if *B. 'Sweet Magic'* is sulking, set them in a warm place, away from drafts, and you will find that when the flowers open you can smell their fragrance more than one meter (three feet) away.

Do not be discouraged; this fall, on a sunny day (they were so few!), after growing *B. 'Lucerna'* for over ten years, I discovered that, after all, it had a slight scent!

Other begonias are scented or said to be: *B. lubbersii*, *B. malabarica*, *B. kellermanii*, *B. echinosepala*, and *B. heracleifolia*.

A tip from France on cleaning pots: soak in a pail of detergent water for one week - that does it, no scrubbing!



B. 'Cockatoo'

Text & photo by Mildred Swyka

B. 'Cockatoo' is a 1981 Patrick Worley cross of a semperflorens cultivar x B. U014. The plant in the picture was placed outside in a tall urn-shaped planter, along with several other begonias. It overtook all of the others, producing long stems that hang down. Blooms are very large and a brilliant red, so beautiful!

As soon as I brought it indoors for the winter the blooms lightened to a dark pink. Red or pink, the flowers are delightfully abundant. B. 'Cockatoo' is one of the prettiest begonias I have ever grown.

Mildred Swyka lives at 1147 Bethel Church Rd., Middletown, DE 19709.

IN MEMORY

The San Francisco Branch mourns the passing of **Carl Meyer**, a long-time member and Past President of this branch. With his wife Anne, he was a top begonia grower for the past 50 years.

Carl was the Chairman of the 1952 ABS Convention, a lavish event in San Francisco and still remembered. An interested member to the end, Carl talked on Rex begonias at our Begonia workshop of 1994. He will be missed!

- Susan Muller

The Sacramento Branch lost a good friend, **Tish Hall**. Tish gave tirelessly of her time and was always there to back up her husband Clarence, a Past President of ABS. She worked quietly and diligently behind the scenes. Clarence planted for the soul and she for the stomach. Her vegetable gardens were outstanding. And she was one great cook, who readily shared recipes with anyone who asked.

We were also saddened to hear of the passing of a very dear friend, **Mary Vipond**. She was a Past President and often chaired our annual show's Judges' luncheon. She was an enthusiastic member always willing to help, and was extremely active in the planning and running of the 1978 National Convention held here in Sacramento.

- Joan Coulat

In the News...

Alice Nierenberg of Mentor, Ohio and her begonia collection were featured in the Plain Dealer Garden section on February 3rd. The article titled "Barrister finds begonias beguiling" was by Suzanne Hively, and included photos of Alice, a few of her choice begonias, and her light garden, and information on ABS as well as on growing different types of begonias.

England's fabled *Chelsea Flower Show* this May will have a display entry of begonia species and hybrids by ABS members **David Rhodes** and **John Rockliffe**.

New! "Schultz-Instant"
BLOOM plus
with Micronutrients
Great For
roses
tomatoes
azaleas
houseplants
bulbs
violets
shrubs...

"Schultz-Instant"
ULTRA PURE • CONCENTRATE • SOLUBLE
10-60-10
BLOOM plus
with Chelated Iron,
Zinc, & Manganese
Plant Food for
Flowering & Bedding Plants
IDEAL FOR ALL
INDOOR
AND OUTDOOR
FLOWERING PLANTS

ask for it in floral & garden departments
Schultz Co. St. Louis, MO 63043

Our Horticultural Correspondent poses a question of his own...

B. U177

is it truly a species?

by Greg Sytch

A most intriguing species, B. U177, classified as cane-like and introduced from the Philippines, has been in cultivation for many years now. It has a habit of sending up tall, bamboo-like shoots that rarely branch. Beautiful clusters of bright pink blossoms appear starting in fall and only cease with the heat of late spring.

Is U177 truly a species? I ask because my recent efforts to self-pollinate it proved unsuccessful, despite fresh male flowers and perfect conditions. Then when I brought this up with a friend, he told me that as far as he has heard no one has been able to "self" it. *This is what leads to my question.*

We have seen before field collection of a naturally occurring hybrid. Most notable is B. U002, thought to be a result of *B. solimutata* and *B. thelmae* getting their acts together. When I have tried to self U002, I have been unsuccessful. Now comes U177: from what I have seen, there is no pollen available on the male flower. Why?

One reason could be that the conditions are not right. However, I grow in Florida in a greenhouse; one would think that my conditions are ideally suited to this variety and very similar to the climate of the Philippines. Surely somewhere from October through May my greenhouse resembles this begonia's natural habitat.

A second reason might be that the pollen could only be viable for a very short period of time; yet I am constantly checking the blossoms at all stages, to no avail.

I have tried crossing B. U177 with other species and cultivars, using it as both male and female parent, again to no avail. When brushed with pollen, the female flower drops its tepals and begins to swell, darkening rapidly and acting as though seed has set. The stem shrivels, and the pod becomes completely dark with dark, fresh seeds inside. Sowing has proved only that the seed will not germinate, leading me to believe that it is sterile.

A sterile species? How does it reproduce, and where exactly is it from on the islands?

Anyone out there with any success in pollinating B. U177, or with a clue to its behavior, drop me a note. We'll compare and see if an answer to this dilemma can be found.

Send your clues on this mystery to Greg Sytch, P.O. Box 1033, Port Richey, FL 34673.

(Ant Condo, con't.)

ceased, and I have not seen ants inside since. They took my eviction seriously. The ants that had opted for luxury highrise living in my terrarium decided they would rather face the downpour outside.

*Phyllis Bates is past editor of the **Begonian**, and the first director of the U# project for the Nomenclature Committee. She and husband Ed won the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award in 1983. Her address is 554 Arden, Encinitas CA 92024-4501.*

The Ant Condo

by Phyllis Bates

For pleasure, decoration, and everyday inspection I keep a mini-greenhouse on a shelf at my dining room window. It is a 15-gallon aquarium with the standard two panel top. The plants in it are chosen because they are special in some way. Some can't tolerate the outdoor humidity some might simply get lost in a garden setting, some are new propagants, and some are there to be admired.

All of them are planted individually so that I can rearrange them or exchange them with others that may be in bloom. Most often the potting medium is a peat and perlite mixture.

Most of you will be aware of the gloomy and rainy weather that we Californians experienced during the winter months. Even when it was not raining, the skies were gray. When several successive sunshine-filled afternoons smiled on us in late January, both people and garden delighted in it.

Alas, it was a short interlude, and heavy clouds loomed. Very early one morning I noticed a little soil along the side wall of the terrarium. I had other things to take care of and I really didn't pay much attention to the terrarium until the next morning.

The pile of soil was much bigger and growling by the minute! A colony of ants was working with great speed to create a new home. They were a huge number and were involved in several coordinated operations. They were transferring the soil from every pot to their mound. I could see them moving tiny grains of perlite along a pot rim as the roots of the fern became

exposed. I even thought I saw one of them waving to me from his post on a *B. prismatocarpa* bloom. Our aims were at cross purposes. We were at war!

First I moved the pots nearest the mound to the kitchen sink. This turned out to be a really stupid move. I soon had ants all over my arms and sweatshirt. However, I washed as many ants down the drain as I could with the dish spray hose. Brushing, shaking, and squirming I got the sweatshirt off and scattered ants to the wind on the back deck.

Meanwhile, the orderly activity in the terrarium had reached a frenzied pace. I traced the line of movement to the back corner and found the path along the back of the shelf and along the window base. I sprayed the outside point of entry with a pyrethrum-based insecticide, which I hoped would discourage reinforcement troops. Then I carried all the rest of the pots to the sink and hosed them. Even as I left the pots to drain, I had the feeling that there were still dripping wet ants sputtering and shaking their fists at me.

Next, back at the terrarium, I scooped the mound of soil and ants into a small container. In its midst I found an extraordinarily large ant, the queen of the new colony.

After the cleaning process, I decided not to repot every plant after all. I put a few granules of insecticide on each pot and topped off each with new potting soil. In a little plastic disposable lid I put more of the granules to attract and kill any further intruders. It took a day or so before all activity (con't. bottom of previous page)

Begonia Questions

Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

Mildew has once again reared its ugly head upon the Begonia world, as it so often does during the cooler winter months. I have had a rash of letters lately telling of the progression of some type of disease, most likely mildew, and asking what to do for it. One such letter went as follows:

Q. I am having trouble with mildew and I wonder if you can help me out? I've used Lysol, baking soda, flowers of sulphur, and others, but to no avail - unless I didn't stay with anything long enough. I am now using Ferti-Lome for roses and this seems to be the best treatment thus far. Someone told me canes are particularly vulnerable to mildew, and if you once get spores into the house, you'll never get rid of it. I do hope this is not the case. Since you're in Florida, I realize growing conditions there vary greatly from those here, but if you've ever lived elsewhere, our experience with this plant malady will have a more comparable basis. I would appreciate any input from you.- Illinois

A: Mildew is a common malady that affects begonias during cooler times of the year, and may linger even if weather warms up. If steps are not taken to combat mildew, it can be dreadfully difficult to defeat.

My experience in Florida and in New Jersey (where I lived the first 26 years of my life) are not really different, except our mildew season here is short because the weather warms much more quickly in spring.

All of the remedies you have tried will work to a degree, if kept with for a period of time. The disease will not disappear with treatment, because once a leaf is affected it is doomed. Hopefully new growth will be

free of disease, lush and crisp. If this is the case, continue spraying every two weeks until warm weather arrives.

While there is no real "answer" to mildew, what I use works well, and I grow thousands of plants all together in one yard and a few greenhouses. The recipe is:

- 1 capful liquid copper
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 quarts distilled water
- 1 pinch fertilizer (your choice)

Spray this over the entire collection, trying to get under the leaves as well. Repeat after a week, then every two weeks until new growth looks fresh and free of mildew. Then re-apply treatment once per month, year round, as prevention. Prevention is your best method: remove all debris from the growing area (pots, soils, and doors) and spray with Lysol over the floors, benches, pots, even windowsills. This will give you a fresh start. Also remember to remove any affected leaves that display the characteristic spots and splotches, as the leaf will eventually die anyway. Continue regular care, and by the time the weather warms, your problems should be over.

Begonia problems? Drop a note to Greg Sytch, P.O. Box 1033, New Port Richey, FL 34673, or call (813) 841-9618.

New Show, New Glory for Palm Beaches Branch



by Elizabeth Mateus

The Horticultural Society of South Florida is a newly formed society, with plans for a library of tropical plants. Their inaugural event - the Palm Beach Tropical Flower Show - was launched February 3-5, 1995, on a site that could not have been more beautiful: five acres along the waterfront in downtown Palm Beach.

Sixteen cartoon-character topiaries were trucked down from Disneyworld in Orlando and assembled at the site. An 18-foot dancing topiary hippo from Fantasia greeted visitors as they entered the show. Also displayed were the new Lion King

topiaries, proving that the Disney creative brilliance continues to evolve. These are without a doubt the cleverest topiaries I've ever seen.

After experiencing the Disney whimsy and magic, visitors were free to explore a multitude of model gardens put together by the best of area landscapers and nurserymen, a series of mini-landscapes brimming with tropical exotics, and reflecting the theme of the show: Paradise in Full Bloom.

Some 50 plant and garden accessory vendors lined the waterfront. The Food

Court offered a choice of Greek, American, or Italian food. One tent was devoted to a display of newly developed plant varieties.

Speakers in the Garden Theater, including our own Charles Jaros, lectured throughout the three days of the show. Charles spoke about - what else? - begonias.

A multi-category judged show was held, and members from the Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and Palm Beaches Branches of ABS entered a good selection of begonias and aroids. Charles Jaros and Mary Bucholtz were the begonia judges. (See Show News, next column, for winners.)

Eleven plant societies participated with displays. After two months of planning, meetings, phone calls, trips to Miami, truck rentals, and hours of assembly work, the Begonia Society of Palm Beaches was rewarded with the American Horticultural Society's Bole Memorial Gold Medal. We are very proud of the award and very grateful to all the members of the Fort Lauderdale and Miami Branches who helped us in so many ways.

The show was a tremendous success. We talked to literally thousands of people, handed out countless flyers on our meetings and on begonia culture, and did our best to raise awareness and appreciation of our favorite plant. We're already planning for next year!

Elizabeth Mateus, winner of Best of Show with *B. hatacoa* 'Silver' at the 1993 Convention in Miami, is National Director for Palm Beaches Branch. Her address is 2353 Carambola Rd., West Palm Beach, FL 33406.

Show News Around the Country

The **Knickerbocker Branch** exhibit at the *New York Flower Show* won a first prize blue ribbon, and member **James Pearson's** *B. serratipetala* took a first with glowing comments on the judges' card: "so difficult to grow...such a magnificent plant."

A Special Recognition Award went to **Jack Golding** for his begonia display, which included Begonias 'Magdalene Madsen', 'Jack Golding', 'Erythrophylla', 'Charm', and Rex and Hiemalis Rieger cultivars.

B. 'Benitochiba' win 'Best of Division' for **Peggy Fratus** at the *Palm Beach Tropical Flower Show* in February, and **Palm Beaches Branch** was rewarded with the American Horticultural Society's Bole Memorial Gold Medal for their begonia display. Blue ribbon winners included **Elizabeth Mateus** for Begonias 'Mad Hatter' and 'Wild Pony', and **Bob Cochran** of Miami Branch for Begonias 'Pink Surprise', 'Washington Street', *lindleyana*, and U.192.

Begonia growers from three counties got together to make the *Fort Lauderdale Branch Show* a big success. In a field of 135 entries top honors went to **Peggy Fratus** of the Palm Beaches Branch for B. 'Benitochiba'; runner-up was **Daisy Farm**, with B. 'Silver Curl'. **Bob Cochran** took Sweepstakes with 16 blue ribbons, and **Fran DeMare** was runner-up with 9 blues.

Coming Events

May 6-7: Miami Branch Show & Sale at Fairchild Tropical Gardens.

May 11-14: "Lone Star Begonias - Y'all Come!" Southwest Region Get-Together 1995, at Seven Oaks Inn, 1400 Austin Highway, San Antonio, TX. Show, sale, seminars, tours, and plenty of begonia fun, featuring the famous SWR hospitality. Hosted by Alamo Branch.

June 10: South Bay Branch Plant Sale and Begonia Display, at Dana School Cafetorium, 135th & Aviation in Hawthorne, Los Angeles County, CA.

July 15-16: Westchester Branch Show and Sale at Fox Hills Mall Center Court, 6050 Sepulveda Blvd. at Slauson Ave., Culver City, Los Angeles, CA. Saturday 10 am - 7 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

July 21-22: Canadian Begonia Society Show, "The Enchanted Garden", to include plant sale and **Judging School**. At Sherway Gardens, 25 West Mall-Fountain Court, Etobicoke, Ontario. Show will be modeled after those of Scotland and England, with boards of tuberous begonias, and classes for other types. Registration for the Judging School is \$20 Canadian, or \$40 for those wishing to take the qualifying exam to become judges.

Sept. 10: Alfred D. Robinson Branch Show and Sale at Quail Gardens

deadline for next issue is May 15

August 31-Sept. 2:

"Begonia Super Stars" 1995 ABS Convention

Hosted by Doug Frost Memorial Branch and featuring the "Begonia Walk of Fame" highlighting winners of the Alfred D. Robinson Medal. Radisson Plaza Hotel, directly across from Orange County Airport.

Did you see the tuberous begonias on the cover of Horticulture magazine for April 1995?

BULLETIN BOARD

ABS News

Appointments

ABS Bookstore and Back Issues are being combined, with **Betty Benningfield** as Chair. Betty's address is P.O. Box 969, Anahuac, TX 77514.

Margaret Lee has been appointed as Chair of the **Nominating Committee**. Her address is 1852 31st St., San Diego, CA 92102. **Mary Bucholtz**, 1560 Lancaster Terrace #1008, Jacksonville FL 32204; and **Joan Coulat**, 4111 De Paul Court, Sacramento CA95821 were appointed to assist on the committee.

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund is being handled temporarily by **Ann & Gene Salisbury**, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 75653. It is hoped that a new Chair will be ratified by the Board at their next meeting, and announced in the next issue.

Planning Ahead for the Holidays

Joan Coulat will be contacting branches about extending holiday greetings in the November-December **Begonian**. Greetings must be in to Joan by the end of August to make printing deadlines - it's a big help if you anticipate the deadline!

ATTENTION, National Directors

The ABS Constitution provides for each branch to be represented on the Board by a National Director (the position may also be called National Representative). The National Director is a voting member of the National Board, and serves as the liaison between the branch and the Board.

Each National Director should be receiving Minutes of each Board meeting from the Secretary, and is responsible for reporting to the branch on Board actions. Presenting members' concerns to the Board is also the responsibility of the National Director.

In effect, the National Director *is* the two-way communication system between members and the national Board. (Members at Large are represented also, by the MAL Chair).

In order for this system to work, the Secretary needs to know who you are! Please notify Arlene Ingles, 157 Monument Dr., Rio Dell CA 95562-1617 when your branch elects a new National Director. (Arlene is a wonderful lady, but not, alas, psychic - please help her out!)

Awards Reminder

Deadline for nominations for ABS' top awards is **June 1st**. Please consider your nominations carefully and submit names and the reasons you believe the person (or begonia) deserves the award to **Awards Chair Mary Sakamoto**, 6847 E. Sycamore Glen Dr., Orange, CA 92669..

For a list of requirements and previous winners see the **Begonian**, March-April 1995, p. 54.

ELECTIONS: Schedule, Nominations

The Nominating Committee has submitted the following members for consideration as our officers for the coming fiscal year:

President: **Ann Salisbury**
1st Vice-President: **Bruce C. Boardman**
2nd Vice-President: **Shelley Andros**
3rd Vice-President: **Michael Kartuz**
Secretary: **Margaret F. Fisher**
Treasurer: **Carol Notaras***
*incumbent

Margaret Lee (Chair), **Joan Coulat**, and **Mary Bucholtz** served on the Nominating Committee.

Additional nominations may be put on the ballot by petition, signed by at least 15 members of ABS and received by the Secretary by **May 3**.

Ballots will appear in the next issue (which will be mailed by **June 17**; a second ballot will be mailed separately to two-member households). Ballots must be returned to the Ballot Counting Committee by **July 21**. Ballots will be counted **July 22**, and all candidates and current Board members notified of results by **July 31**.

Installation will take place on **Sept. 2** at the Banquet of the 1995 ABS Convention.

About the Candidates

Ann Salisbury has been a member of Barkley Branch (OK) since 1986. She has served as Vice-President, Newsletter Editor, Show Chair. On the national level she was Registration Chair and Treasurer for the 1994 ABS Convention as well as being in charge of printing; and has been Advertising Manager for the **Begonian** for 3 years and handled Back Issues and holiday greetings for 2 years.

Bruce C. Boardman is a member of Dallas Area Branch (TX) and former National Director for Southwest Region. He has served as ABS 2nd Vice-President for 2 years, is currently Conservation Chair, and has worked on the **Begonian** staff for 8 years.

Horticulturist **Shelley Andros** is a member of Orange County Branch (CA), and has been their membership chair for two years. She is also the newly elected Vice-Director of Southwest Region.

Nurseryman **Michael Kartuz** is well-known as a grower and hybridizer of begonias. A member of Buxton Branch (MA) for many years, he now resides in Vista, CA and is a member of Palomar Branch. He has served as ABS 2nd Vice-President for the past year.

Margaret F. Fisher is Registration Chair and Treasurer for the 1995 ABS Convention. She is a member of Orange County Branch (currently Vice-President and helping with the newsletter) and also of Doug Frost Branch (currently treasurer). Her ABS and branch work includes lots of stints in shows and sales, and she was Boutique Chair for the 1992 Convention.

Carol Notaras is immediate Past President of ABS and has been our Treasurer for the past two years. She is an active member of San Francisco and Sacramento Branches, a volunteer with the tuberous begonias at Golden Gate Conservatory, and was Convention Chair in 1989.

*Ballots will appear in the next issue.
Please do not duplicate the ballot.
Two-member households will receive a
second ballot by mail.*

Conservation News

From Scott Hoover via Thelma O'Reilly comes word of the finding of the first begonia of the Martin Johnson Memorial Expedition to Sumatra. There's no name attached to it yet, probably for reasons that will become apparent below...

Begonia species are variable, a fact that has been pointed out often in these pages, most recently by Freda Holley ("Variety is the Spice", March-April 1995) and Jack Golding ("Begonia Species are Variable", January-February, 1992).

Our belief in the variability of begonia species was reinforced in March, when we hit the begonia trail in Panama. With the help of ABS member Roberto Brin (known to many of you from his talks at ABS Conventions in Miami, Florida and San Antonio, Texas, and to others through his many seed contributions to the Seed Fund and his articles in the **Begonian**) we were able to locate many begonia species in their beautiful native habitats.

The excitement was mixed with regrets, not only because many begonias are found in protected areas where no collecting is allowed (and rightly so) but also because several of the begonias grew in such thick undergrowth that photographing them was impossible.

One species that did cooperate with the camera was *B. tonduzii*, seen everywhere in the mountains of Amistad National Park on the Costa Rica border. Amistad means friendship, and this magnificent reserve has an equally large and impressive counterpart on the Costa Rican side of the border. Together they provide home to thousands of species of plants and animals in one of the world's richest biological treasure troves - ferns, bromeliads, orchids,

and peperomias were prominent and beautiful along paths and clinging to tree-tops, and birds plentiful, colorful, melodic; a highlight for us was a good long look at a male quetzal.

B. tonduzii responded, begonia-like, in a multitude of ways to different conditions. In places it was small, dainty, almost silver-leaved; in other sites it grew in a shrub-like form that reached at least 10 feet in height; in still others it was tall but with a weak stem, winding its way across more vigorous plants in a vine-like way; and finally, we also saw it hanging down from trees, for all the world like a form of ivy or hoyo. Many specimens were in bloom - huge sprays of flowers held on long stalks (sometimes upright, sometimes pendulous) - but others quite close by and of equal size showed no signs of flowers past, present, or future.

Also varied were the appearances of *B. quaternata*, hairy-leaved, glabrous, or in between, with small white flowers, or large hairy deep pink ones - individual plants existing side-by-side looked like distant cousins bearing only a mild family resemblance. No wonder it is so hard to figure out in the field whether a plant is a new species or one known for centuries.

There's another fact about field collecting: it's not for sissies.

While a number of begonias were spotted in road cuts from the 4WD truck windows the roads necessitated grabbing the hanging straps to save the spine: there is considerable "shakin' of the bacon" even at 5 to 10 km/h. On trails off the road there is a great deal of climbing, descending, clinging to narrow perches, crossing of mountain streams stepping upon slick and (con't. on p. 103)

ROUND ROBIN NOTES

Virginia Hamann, Round Robin Director

#8, Tuberous Begonias:

Howard Siebold (WA) likes to prepare tubers for winter storage by washing, drying, and then inspecting them for rot. To save a tuber, he cuts away rotten spots and dusts with sulphur or a fungicide.

While most members are preparing for winter, Ken Mackey (NZ) is potting up and starting his tubers for summer growing. He is testing a new potting soil that is 80-83% bark, plus other additives to get a 6.7 pH. So far, his plants love it! Another test is using Diazinon and Susson Green mixed into soil to see which combats the grub of the vine weevil that destroys sprouts of begonias.

#12 Kusler & Other Canes:

With fall approaching members were bringing canes indoors before cold weather. Elaine Ayers (OH) started in September so that plants could adapt to the greenhouse. Rhodora Buss (IA) also brings her canes indoors in mid-September to avoid leaf drop.

Tips from members: B. U168 will go dormant in winter unless grown under lights run for 24 hours! Then it will continue growing. Cuttings started in aluminum pans seem to root faster than those in clay pots. It is thought that aluminum absorbs bottom heat better. Several cuttings can be placed in the pans to save space.

\$57, Mini-begonias & Plant Talk:

Barbara Mooney (VT) grows everything on heat mats under lights. Mildew is treated with a mix of water, Lysol, and Physan 20. Clara Tuoto (CA) grows her small begonias in fruit-ripening bowls. She says "Making wish lists from catalogs is a good way to forget the chill of winter".

#55, Species:

Sharon Holtzman (OH) uses unmilled sphagnum moss to line her terrariums; there is no need of other drainage material as the moss allows air circulation to the roots. She prepares the moss by pouring boiling water and liquid soap through it to clean away unwanted insect pests.

#31, Southwest Growers:

Mae Blanton (TX) says that *Begonias versicolor* and *rajah* are tougher than we think. When treating *B. versicolor* for soil mealy bugs, she removed the plant from the moss it was growing in and found its roots had been destroyed. The plant was sprayed with an alcohol-water mixture, and replanted in fresh milled sphagnum moss. It rewarded Mae with new growth.

#14, Semperflorens:

Cathy Czaplá (VT) brought her semperflorens indoors to winter over. They adjusted to indoor conditions, as she is using new Vita-lights; she also brought the plants in earlier this year.

Fish emulsion is used by members for better growth.

#45, Greenhouse Growing:

Elaine Ayers (OH) resolves to do more research into the *whys* of plants growth: such as, why did rhizomatous leaves from Florida turn bright red? Perhaps a reaction to an alcohol spray for bugs? She uses Keiki grow paste on cuttings and leaves; so far they are doing very well.

Marilyn Dubé (OR) enjoys the Round Robins and says, "Folks who don't belong to a Robin don't know what they are missing, there is so much good advice in them."

#15, Cold Climate Greenhouse Growing:

Members are enjoying their greenhouses. Some winterized using bubble-pack liners. Fiberglass seems to be a favorite material for greenhouses, also. Proof they're successful is seen from the lovely pictures sent around.

#13, Canes:

Elaine Ayers (OH) likes sweater boxes best for propagation. She puts 2" of soil in the bottom of the box, sets the little pots on the soil, sets the box on heat mats, and puts on the lid. The soil is easier to keep watered. Better still, if box and mat are placed under lights this method works with cane cuttings.

John Keller (NY) grows in his basement with a halide light set-up. Canes are in constant bloom.

Cynthia Bishop has moved from Loomis north to Macdoel, California. Her growing temperatures are now in the 40's instead of the 60's, and her canes are growing and blooming better in the cooler temperatures. Tender plants are grown on heat mats on her greenhouse floor. Since her growing environment is cooler now, Cynthia says it is like starting over again.

I would like to invite members of ABS to join a Round Robin! This is an excellent way for those of you who do not have a local branch to meet, through letter, other ABS members. There are topics on Canes, Rhizomatous, Tuberous Begonias, also Robins on General Culture, Terrarium Growing, and growing other plants besides begonias (there are orchid, gesneriad, and tropical plant enthusiasts). Bonsai growing is also an interest of many members.

When you write to me requesting to join a Robin, tell me of your interests so I can find a Robin just right for you. You can join as many Robins as you wish.

The average length of time for a "flight" is 3 months, some taking up to 5 months to get around. I can either find a place on a Robin in flight for you to join, or put together a new Robin when enough requests are received.

My address is Rt. 1, Box 10, Chester, IA 52134, and I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

New!

in the ABS Bookstore

Index to Registered Begonias

listing by John Ingles, Jr., of all registered begonias

from Australia:

Index to the Begonian

updated index by Pat Williams covering articles from 1941 through 1993

Know Your Begonias

by Jack Krempin; 534 color photos, description, care, propagation

Write for complete listing of Book Store offerings and prices:

Betty Benningfield
P.O. Box 969, Anahuac TX 77514

AROUND ABS

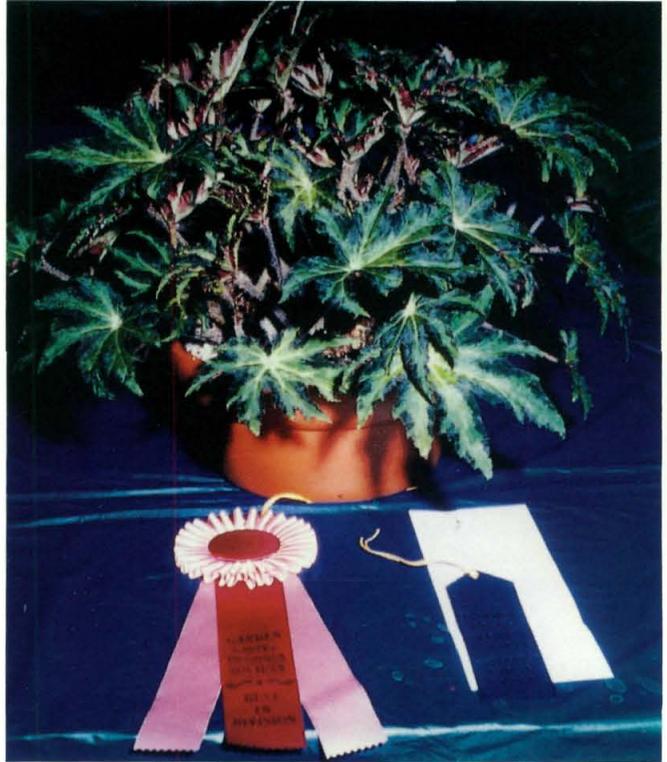
Notes from our Newsletters

Happy Birthday to Monterey Bay Branch, celebrating 24 years of begonia fun in February!

Plant of the Month for February's The Shade House, (newsletter of the Doug Frost Branch, edited by Brad Thompson) was B. 'Peggy Frost':

Begonia 'Peggy Frost' is a rhizomatous begonia created by Goldie Frost. She crossed the medium-leafed, lobed B. 'Persian Brocade' with a large-leafed, cleft B. 'Dr. Jim' and produced a giant-leafed, cleft begonia. It has star-type leaves that are dark bright green with black/brown edges and markings. This is a very striking begonia and won "best rhizomatous" at several of our local shows when grown by Shelley Andros (those are Shelley's ribbons in the photo).

B. 'Peggy Frost' makes a good subject for hybridizing because of its ease of culture, which it passes on to all of its children. I myself have used it as a parent on almost all of the rhizomatous begonias I have named. The only problem I have encountered with this plant is that it does seem



somewhat susceptible to wetness and to cold in the winter; but this is true of most of the rhizomatous begonias, so that shouldn't dissuade you from growing this marvelous plant.

The flowers come in spring and are light pink, as are most of the rhizomatous flowers; but 'Peggy Frost' is a very heavy bloomer, and puts on an excellent show of blossoms. The plant stays full and com-

pact, as do the flower stalks (some very beautiful rhizomatous begonias have less-than-beautiful flower spikes that are tall and rangy), which make the plant almost perfect for shows. Goldie deserves a pat on the back for creating this lovely, easy-to-grow plant.

Many branches support begonia collections at local botanic gardens and arboretums. Dallas Area Branch had a fun-and-work-filled day with Kelton Parker at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden in February, taking cuttings and putting them down to root as well as the more mundane chores such as cleaning benches and stacking pots. With rhizomatous begonias in riotous bloom, a gray day outside turned into tropical spring in the greenhouse!

Most begonia fans are also fond of other things - frequently, one of those other things is food! Reading newsletters from across the country often means a goodly collection of recipes, as branches publish the makings of their favorites. So you can imagine the delight of Barkley Branch members when talented cooks Thelma and Bob Dodd showed up at the February meeting not only with food, but with - surprise! - a copy of their new cookbook, "Home on the Range", for every Barkley member. Lest readers get too carried away with calories, the book contains the tip "Remember, bigger snacks mean bigger slacks."

Miami Branch started the year with a BANG! In fact, things almost got out of hand: there were so many cars in front of the their new meeting place, Simpson Memorial Garden Center, that a neighbor, sure something nefarious was going on, called the Miami police: "Little did they know it was Begoniacs there for our monthly good time. With the police satisfied and the neighbors at ease we got on to the business at hand: BEGONIAS!"

'Twas a California branch that had a photographer from the local paper show up and take pictures of their meeting. Quoth the speaker (also newsletter editor): "Well, the picture appeared and although I didn't particularly like my picture, I was gratified to see the pleasant expressions on the faces facing me as if they were actually enjoying my talk! It was wonderful publicity for our club, too." (Judging from the quality of the newsletter, it's a cinch the members weren't just pretending to enjoy the talk.)

The next item is a condensed from an article in *Begonias Begorra*, newsletter of the Orange County Branch (edited by Brad Thompson):

Our plant of the month is B. 'Josephine', a Brad Thompson hybrid released last year from a cross between B. 'Jumbo Jet' and B. 'Amelia'. B. 'Josephine' grows full and compact, is very free blooming, and requires very little work to achieve a nicely shaped plant. Leaves are bright green with a wavy edge and large white spots. Flowers are medium pink and are held in a tight ball cluster; they are fairly large for the size of the plant.

B. 'Josephine' makes either a nice full basket or a compact upright plant. If grown upright it may require staking although it will probably not get over 1 foot tall. It has the vigor of 'Jumbo Jet' while retaining the size of the more temperamental 'Amelia'. It requires good light, either morning or afternoon sun, is not bothered by heat, and doesn't seem to be mildew-prone. B. 'Josephine' may not be as spectacular as a B. 'Looking Glass' or a B. *exotica*, but its ease of culture and clean look will make it a good choice for a show plant or accent plant in your garden, and always elicits comments from people who see it.

Doesn't B. 'Josephine' sound enticing? Watch for it at the 1995 Convention!

(Conservation News, con't.)

springy fallen logs or mossy rocks to get into the variety of begonias that one assumes must be just ahead. We were birding, also, and the camera clunked against the binoculars, sweat by-passed the eyebrows to eye-glasses creating psychedelic effects, and body heat welling out of your collar fogged oculars and view-finder instantly when you raised the equipment close to your face. A mis-step and fall generated considerable metallic racket; fortunately most everything was cushioned with rainforest duff - or boggy seeps. Altitude has its effects and our trail guides would stop discreetly to point out some bromeliads or identify a distant bird call to let us have a 'blow'.

It was all very exhilarating, creating wonderful memories from the experience. But you must discard your expectations of high productivity and efficiency: Mother Nature does not yield her secrets instantly. Even now, some weeks later, there are new and deeper understandings surfacing that transcend the sighting of a superbly beautiful bird and a cache of blooming begonias.

- Tamsin & Bruce C. Boardman

GESNERIAD CORRESPONDENCE CLUB

RON & LOIS KRUGER, EDITORS
207 WYCOFF WAY WEST, EAST BRUNSWICK
NJ 08816 Membership \$5 US; \$6.75 Canada; \$12
foreign; Braille \$5 (*all payable US funds to Ron
Kruger*) includes a bi-monthly newsletter; seed &
tuber funds, round robins; listing of pen pals with
various plant interests.

**CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF PLANT
FRIENDSHIPS!**

Pacific Horticulture

**The color illustrated quarterly
for keen gardeners**

\$12 a year
(\$14 Canada & Mexico,
\$16 elsewhere)

P.O. Box 485, Berkeley, CA 94701

THE AMERICAN IVY SOCIETY INC.

AIS is the International Registration Authority for Hedera, provides sources for new and unusual ivies, publishes three ivy newsletters, *Between the Vines*, and one *Ivy Journal* a year with reports on research hardiness testing, life-sized photos of ivies. Each member also receives an ivy plant.

Membership: General \$15; Institutional \$25; Commercial \$50
Information: The American Ivy Society, P.O. Box 2123, Naples FL 33939-2123.

HOUSEPLANT MAGAZINE - Enjoy indoor gardening, travel, humor, hydroponics, tips for better growing, and information about your favorite houseplants - all in one delightful, full-color magazine. 1995 Discount subscription rate to ABS members. One year for six issues \$15.95 US/\$19.95 Canada & Mexico/\$24.95 overseas. US Funds drawn on US Bank only. For VISA/MC orders call 1 (800)892-7594; or mail to HOUSEPLANT MAGAZINE, 340 Beverly Pike, Suite 2, Elkins, WV 26241.

BEGONIAN MINI-ADS

Mini-ads are a service to our members. The charge is \$1.25 per line per insertion with a minimum of \$5 Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to ABS and mail to:

Cynthia Bishop
P.O. Box 247
Macdoel, CA 96058
(916) 398-4023

Deadline for next issue is May15

BEGONIA CUTTINGS AND PLANTS.

Send \$2 for expanded 1995 list. Kay's Greenhouses, 207 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78221.

SOUTHWEST REGION, ABS: Annual Get-Together, show, sale; newsletter. Membership \$7, family \$10. Send to Marie Harrell, 317 N. 12th St., Donna, TX 78537.

"VICKI'S EXOTIC PLANTS" Beautiful Begonias, Episcias, and Hoyas. Large variety of each. Please send \$1 for list to 522 Vista Park Dr., Eagle Point, OR 97524.

BEGONIAS, FERNS, SHADE PLANTS.

We are now open to provide you with quality plants...Come visit. Send \$2 for plant list. Golden Hills Nursery (Cynthia Bishop), P.O. Box 247, Macdoel CA 96058. (916) 398-4023.

BEGONIAS: THE COMPLETE

REFERENCE GUIDE by Mildred L. and Edward J. Thompson. 884 pages, 850 illustrations (165 in color). Culture, classification, and history. \$20.00 to ABS members. To order autographed copies write: THE THOMPSONS, P.O. Drawer 5039, Southampton, NY 11968. Prices include shipping. Foreign orders \$5 additional for shipping via Surface Mail.

BEGONIAS, HOYAS.

Cuttings only. Send \$1 for list to B & K Tropicals, 5300 48 Terrace N., St Petersburg, FL 33709; (813) 522-8691.

BEGONIAS, 1995: newest Texas hybrids.

'MS Twitt, and many more. Send \$2 for list to Stew's Greenhouses, 30631 Blanco Rd., Bulverde, TX 78163. Ph. 210-980-9439.

BEGONIAS, GESNERIADS, RARE FLOWERING PLANTS.

1995 catalog \$2.00, free to A.B.S. members. KARTUZ GREENHOUSES, 1408 Sunset Drive, Dept. B., Vista, CA 92083-6531.

BEGONIA SEEDS:

over 700 species & hybrids. Send \$1 with SASE for monthly listing available after May 1, 1995 to: Diana H. Gould, 5600 Laguna Park Dr., Elk Grove, CA 95758.

Join the NATIONAL

FUCHSIA SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP \$15 per year includes bi-monthly FUCHSIA FAN. The new A to Z on Fuchsias abridged version \$6.95 plus \$1 shipping (CA residents add 42c tax). Mail to: National Fuchsia Society, 11507 E. 187 St., Artesia, CA 90701.

LOS ANGELES FERN SOCIETY

INVITES YOU TO JOIN

GROW HARDY AND TROPICAL FERNS
MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:
]SUBSCRIPTION TO THE LAIFS JOURNAL
(6 ISSUES) WITH FERN LESONS
]SPORE STORE]BOOK STORE]SUPPLY STORE
]LENDING LIBRARY]GENERAL MEETINGS HAVE
LARGE PLANT TABLES]DOWNEY STUDY
GROUP
]SOUTH COAST STUDY GROUP

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

January 28, 1995

The meeting was held at the De Anza Inn, Monterey, California, and called to order at 1:30 p.m. by President Gene Salisbury. The Aims and Purposes were read by Margaret Lee. Minutes of the last meeting were read by Secretary Arlene Ingles and approved as read. Treasurer Carol Notaras reported balances in checking of \$5,431.79 and savings of \$47,160.88 for a total of \$52,592.67.

Committee Reports

Awards - Mary Sakamoto asked that letters of nomination for the top three awards be sent to her as soon as possible.

Back Issues - Ann Salisbury reports there are 5,000 back issues and she is sending various branches what they need to give away at their shows. If you are having a show, contact her and she will send back issues for cost of postage.

Branch Relations - Mary Bucholtz sent word that she has had inquiries from Ohio and Massachusetts.

Conservation - Bruce Boardman advised that Scott Hoover is getting ready for another trip to Indonesia February 28. The "Save Our Species" newsletter #3 will go out soon. There is \$1507.30 in the Conservation Fund that had been donated previously for Scott Hoover's trips. Martin Johnson left in his will to ABS and to the Thompson Begonia Museum the sum of \$2863.40 each, with Scott as contact for both organizations. The Board voted to give the money to Scott if the Thompsons gave their portion.

1995 Convention - Herb Wilkinson presented the Show Schedule and it was approved. The theme is "Begonia Super Stars - the Walk of Fame of Begonias." The subject of people attending seminars and other activities without paying the registration fee was discussed. It was made clear that the registration fee is required to attend seminars and take tours; showing plants and attending the show does not require registration.

Entries and Classification - Leora Fuentes is working on new forms to be used at the show.
Historian - Norma Pfrunder is interested in get-

ting any branch news you can send her. Check the **Begonian** for her new address.

Public Relations - Russ Richardson sent in a report regarding ads.

Membership - John Ingles has sent out new ZIP code listings to all branches.

Slide Library - Charles Jaros has been very busy this year. Tapes of the last Convention were taken by Tom Keepin and John Ingles, are being edited, and will be available soon.

Reports from branches were sparse. Garden Grove has changed its name to Doug Frost Branch in memory of an outstanding hybridizer and grower, and a founder of the branch.

We have been looking into liability insurance that will cover branch shows at malls, etc. A letter to branches will be forthcoming as to this coverage.

We have had some problems with our mailing service on airmail overseas delivery of the **Begonian**. Ann Salisbury has been temporarily handling airmail overseas mailing.

The Book Store has a new booklet, "Index to Registered Begonias." In June Back Issues will be combined with the Book Store, with Betty Benningfield as Chair.

Houston, Texas will be the site of the 1997 ABS Convention.

The ballot for the amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws has been determined to be null and void. It was printed incorrectly in the **Begonian**. It will be presented at a future issue. The "Guidelines for Conventions" has been updated, with the name changed to "Guidelines for National Annual Shows and Related Activities," and approved by the Board.

Announcements:

The new official mailing address for the American Begonia Society is:

P.O. Box 471651

San Francisco, CA 94147-1651

The Nominating Committee is Margaret Lee, Chair; Joan Coulat, and Mary Bucholtz.

The next Board meeting will be at the Southwest Region Get-Together in May in San Antonio, TX. The meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Arlene Ingles,
Secretary

Elected Officers

President.....Gene Salisbury
P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa OK 74653
(405) 628-5230

Past President.....Carol Notaras
2567 Green St., San Francisco CA 94123

1st Vice-President.....Mary Bucholtz
1560 Lancaster Terrace #1008, Jacksonville FL 32204

2nd Vice-President...Bruce C. Boardman
P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale TX 76433

3rd Vice-President.....Michael Kartuz
1408 Sunset Dr., Vista CA 92083

Secretary.....Arlene Ingles
157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617

Treasurer.....Carol Notaras
2567 Green St., San Francisco CA 94123

Appointed Chairmen and Directors

Audit.....Paul Tsamtsis
1630 F St., Sacramento CA 95814

Awards.....Mary Sakamoto
6847 E. Sycamore Glen Dr., Orange CA 92669

Ballot Counting.....Shelley Andros
740 Lamat Rd., La Habre Heights CA 90631

Book Store & Back Issues.....Betty Benningfield
P.O. Box 969, Anahuac TX 77514

Branch Relations.....Mary Bucholtz
1560 Lancaster Terrace #1008, Jacksonville FL 32204

Business Manager.....John Ingles, Jr.
157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617

Conservation.....Bruce C. Boardman
P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale TX 76433

Convention Advisor.....Martha Chesnut
3232 N. W. 47th, Oklahoma City OK 73112

Convention Chairman.....Herb Wilkinson
16281 Mercier Lane, Huntington Beach
CA 92647

Entries/Classification.....Leora Fuentes
13747 Wilderness Point, San Antonio TX 78231

Historian.....Norma Pfrunder
3135 Severt Lane., Eureka CA 95503

Horticultural Correspondent....Greg Sytch
P.O. Box 1033., Port Richey FL 34673

Judging.....Maxine Zinman
Rt. 1, Box 73, Boyce VA 22620

Long-Range Planning.....Kay Tucker
207 Southcross, San Antonio TX 78221

Members-at-Large.....Thelma McRae
5471 S. Libby Rd. #15, Paradise CA 95969

Membership.....John Ingles Jr.
157 Monument, Rio Dell CA 95562-1617

Nomenclature.....Carrie Karegeannes
3916 Lake Blvd., Annandale VA 22003

Parliamentarian.....Margaret Lee
1852 31st St., San Diego CA 92102

Public Relations.....Russ Richardson
1854 Chancery Lane, Chamblee GA 30341

Research.....Kelton Parker
3220 Botanic Garden Dr., Ft. Worth TX 76107

Round Robin.....Virginia Hamann
Rt. 1, Box 10, Chester IA 52134

Slide Library.....Charles Jaros
2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami FL 33142

OPENINGS
Begonian Editor
Seed Fund Director

BEGONIAN STAFF

Editor: Tamsin Boardman, P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale TX 76433; (817) 728-3485

Nomenclature Editor: Jack Golding

Editorial Assistants: Phyllis Bates, Bruce C. Boardman, Kit Mounger, Mary Weinberg

Advertising Staff

Mini-Ads: Cynthia Bishop, P.O. Box 247, Macdoel CA 96058

Display Ads: Ann Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa OK 74653

Plant Society Ads: Wanda Macnair, 177 Hancock St., Cambridge MA 02139

Help Available from ABS

These services are available to all ABS members. For names and addresses of department heads, see preceding page. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope when you write.

Members at Large

Members who do not belong to branches are represented at Board meetings by the Members-at-Large Director. MAL members receive a quarterly newsletter and work on projects by mail

Back Issues

Back issues of the **Begonian**, also current issues for branch use at shows, etc.

Bookstore

Books about Begonias! And more! Write for complete list.

Judging Department

Certifies accredited judges though judging schools and correspondence course.

Nomenclature Department

Monitors newly published findings on Begonia names. Handles official international registrations of new Begonia cultivars and publishes these registrations. Gathers information about and assigns numbers to unidentified species.

Research Department

Works on problems relating to begonia culture.

Round Robins

Members exchange information about begonias and their culture through packets of letters that circulate among a small group of growers. There are dozens of these packets, called flights, on many specialized subjects.

Seed Fund

The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund offers seed of begonia species and cultivars by mail. New acquisitions are discussed in the **Begonian**.

Slide Library

Write Slide Librarian for list of slide programs and videos.

Member Input Opportunities

Conservation Department

wants lists of species grown by members

Nomenclature Department

wants photos and information on "U" numbers members are growing from seed.

Research Department

solicits suggestions on projects and participation in research.

Seed Fund

seeks donation of seed and photos of plants grown from Seed Fund seed.

Slide library

requests individual slides of begonias as well as complete slide programs.

**See also "Openings", preceding page.
Participate. You can make a difference.**



American Begonia Society

157 Monument

Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617

Address correction requested

Non Profit Org.
U.S.POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 3735
Dallas, TX