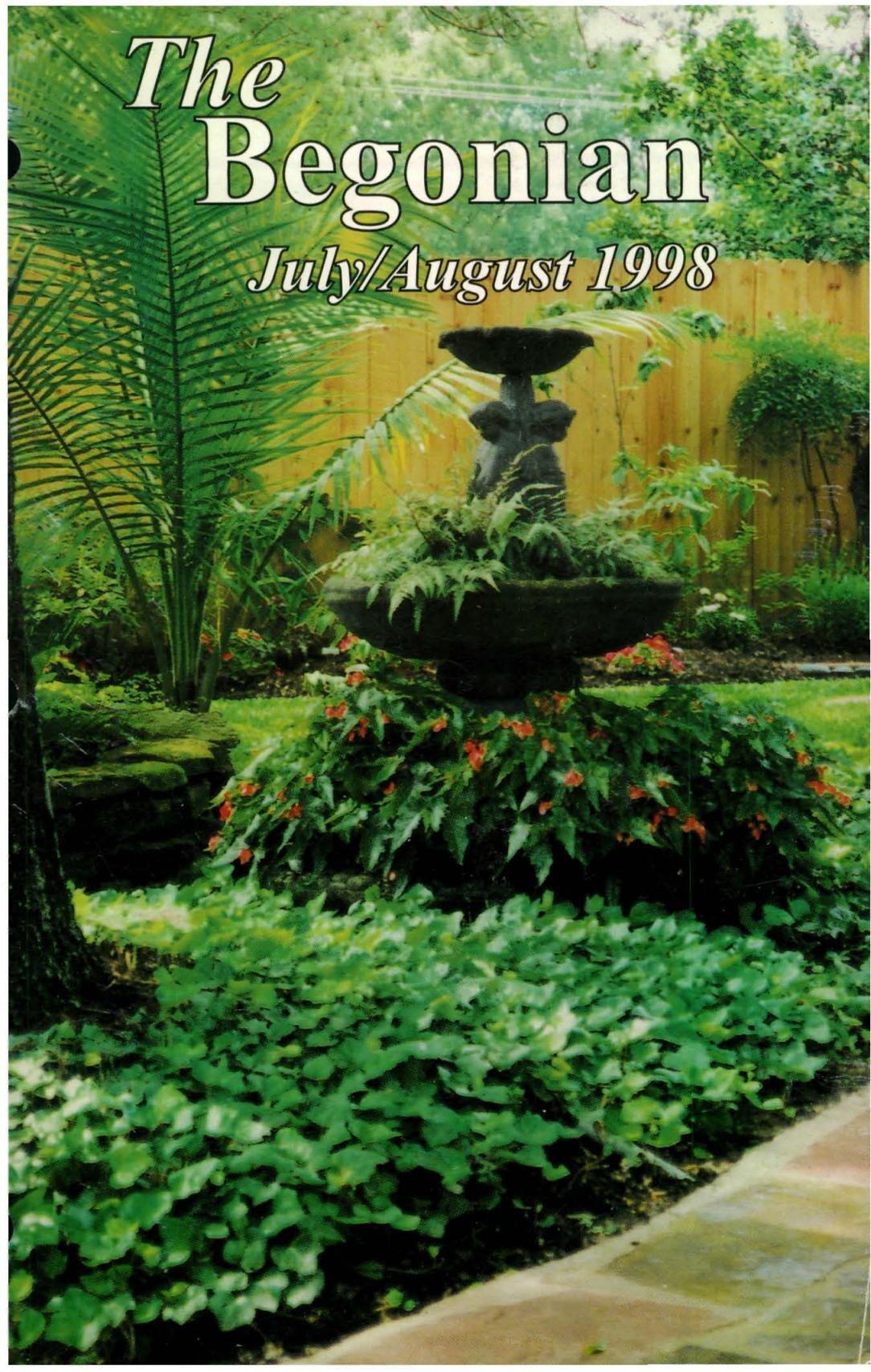


The Begonian

July/August 1998



The **Begonian**

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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.

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Cover

Front: Cane begonias grew happily outside in the gardens visited in 1997 during the Houston ABS Convention. Here, they form the base for this fountain in **Nancy Smith's** garden. Photo by **Joyce Hesse**.

Back: Tuberous begonia flowers drop their petals on a fire prevention pond in Japan's Fuji International Flower Garden in 1996. **Midori Nobusawa**, who took this photo says the nice young couple **Mr. and Mrs. Yamaguchi** (also ABS and SWR members) played the most active part in the establishment and management of this garden before going on to establish their own greenhouse nearby.

Begonias in the Garden

This issue is all about growing begonias outside. First, excerpts from Peter Sharp's seminar given at this year's Australian Convention '98 introduces the possibilities, then Risa Young tells us how Charles Jaros grows outside to perfection in Florida, and lest we believe it can be done only deep in the South--really south in the case of Australia, we see how Johanna Zinn grows superlatively in Virginia and Annette Boree in New York. In conclusion, Brad Thompson gives us some tips to make our efforts, north and south, more effective. Most begonias are versatile and hardy plants, adapting to our conditions with greater ease than might be expected, and many love their vacation in the open.

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Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads **9/98 or 10/98**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

Notes from the President ...

I've been on the telephone quite a bit recently. Delightfully, many conversations end with, "See you in Atlanta!" Our 1998 Convention shall be history by the time these notes reach you, but the level of anticipation has been quite high, and I'm sure that it shall have been as rewarding for those attending from great distance as will be the satisfaction for a job well done by Mary Elizabeth Moultrie and her hard working Convention Committee. Our thanks for helping us to explore a bit of Southern Hospitality.

Also, the second MAL newsletter should have arrived in the mails in late June. John Ingles has forwarded some very nice notes from those eager to be on the subscription list after the spring issue. Elaine Ayers did a nice job of excerpting from E-mail correspondence the varied questions and comments from the many currently sharing begonia pleasantries. The Summer MAL is the last of the 'get acquainted' freebies, so don't forget to sign up with \$5 to John Ingles (address listed on page 158 of the *Begonian*). Please let Elaine know what you need to hear about (She's listed as MAL Chairman on p. 159).

Carol Notaras, while shopping for some new tubers, chatted with Skip Antonelli, who noted that he was sending ABS membership information with orders received by his firm, Antonelli Brothers, in Santa Cruz, CA. Wow! Fully one-third of the new memberships in March and April indicated Antonelli as their contact. Of course, we've notified our Editor that we'll be needing some more tuberous articles to help our newcomers along. And could the next paragraph have been prescient?

Balmy New Zealand must be tuberhybrida heaven. Mike Stevens, from Christchurch, made our acquaintance while at the Sydney, Australia convention. He sent us copies of the Canterbury Begonia Circle's *Begonia News*, which he edits, and we've laughed at grower anecdotes and thoroughly enjoyed the rest of the material although hot and dry Bluff Dale, Texas is not the center of the tuberous world. Their newsletter is published bi-monthly--information on page 144 of this issue on subscribing.

And, lastly, plans are progressing nicely for the September 26 dinner to honor researcher, mentor, hybridizer, and longtime member, Rudy Ziesenhenne, in Santa Barbara, CA. This will be in conjunction with our ABS Board meeting and installation of officers for 1998-99. We'll be communicating with each branch through the National Director on how you may participate, so please keep me informed of recent changes in your officers so we don't disconnect.

Good growing and showing.

~Bruce C. Boardman.

B. edmundoi. Photo by Mildred and Ed Thompson. Seed available from Seed Fund, see page 154, and learn about a wonderful gift from Mildred on page 151.



Begonias in the Open Garden

Australia

by Peter Sharp

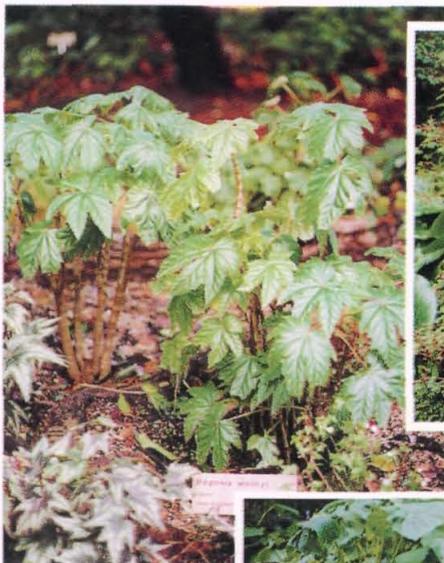
Peter Sharp of the New South Wales Begonia Society gave the presentation entitled "Begonias in the Open Garden" to Convention '98 in Sydney, Australia on April 11, 1998. This presentation covered his experience growing begonias outside in his own gardens, experimental plantings of begonias in the Royal Botanic Garden (RBG) in Sydney, and observations of the gardens of others growers such as Ross Bolwell and John and Dorothy Miller. Following are the final paragraphs from his paper which summarized the lessons learned.

So, what lessons did we learn from our experimental plantings? Firstly, the capacity of begonias to adapt to change, as evidenced by their remarkable diversity brought about through the evolutionary process, has not deserted them. They have in fact demonstrated that they are able to acclimatise to moderate change in a comparatively short space of time. We took advantage of this perceived ability to acclimatise by overwintering all our begonias earmarked for garden planting in the nursery shadehouses. Winter temperatures in Sydney can fall as low as 1° C (33.8° F, *Ed.*), while our summers can reach into the high thirties (near 100°F, *Ed.*) and beyond. This overwintering before plant out proved to be a worthwhile exercise and saved a great deal of time as those plants which died were not repropagated for garden use. The loss rate was in fact surprisingly low and it has been our experience that this acclimatisation process is an ongoing thing and that our garden planted begonias continue to improve as time goes by. Begonias have not lost the

urge to physiologically adapt and fit into changing local conditions!

Secondly, we learnt that given the right mix of begonias it is possible to produce a pleasing garden planting in which there will always be at least some plants in flower and in which the mix of foliage colours, shapes and sizes will always present a pleasing spectacle. They are in fact a plant for all seasons and all requirements--who needs anything else? But wait, there is one colour missing from the begonias and that is blue. So what about it hybridisers--a blue begonia? In our own garden we do plant some companion plants with our begonias such as a range of ferns and a few blue flowering annuals like lobelia.

Thirdly, we have found that they need minimal care. Give them a well drained garden bed and they are happy. Various conditions of light and shade are necessary according to the requirement of each species and cultivar, knowledge gathered by experimentation as there is no really comprehensive information available. Regular fertilising is a must and routine pruning keeps them in shape. There are of course always some leaf eating pests to annoy us, especially those wretched loopers which particularly favour the *convolvulacea*! In the RBG we have found that the worst pests are the numerous possums which seemed very happy to be presented with such a smorgasbord of new and exciting flavours! They are trapped and relocated to a more fitting natural environment! Diseases are



Do you find *B. foliosa* hard to grow? Try it outside as above, but don't let it dry out!

Above, *B. wollnyi* loves it outside. Right, *B. crassicaulis* sprawls over 3 ft. *B. fuchsioides* is one of the stars of the begonia display bed at the RBG. Captions and photos are by Tamsin Boardman.



seldom encountered in the open garden setting but an occasional visitation by powdery mildew is easily dealt with by Yates Baycor spray, a truly effective semi-systemic treatment for this most annoying fungal disease.

Our fourth lesson learnt is that the old edicts of 'don't overwater your begonias' and 'dry them out between waterings' just can't be observed when they are planted in the open garden, and in fact these cautions only apply to pot grown begonias. In the garden, the begonias must perforce accept all the rain which falls and watering on a large scale can only be accomplished by regular overhead sprays. We have encountered absolutely no problems in this area. In the RBG Fernery there are several *cucullata* which have self sown and are thriving at the water's edge on nothing more than the black plastic pool liner!

We have had brought home to us very clearly that begonias need to be close planted for good results. Whenever I have been able to read about begonias in their natural habitats, it has been apparent that they grow in positions where very little root run is available - rock crevices seem to be one of the most favored. A crowded planting produces good results and abundant growth whereas the begonia planted in solitary loneliness never really seems to do well. The edict of 'don't overpot' holds good in garden culture too.

Finally, a word about what types of begonias do well in the outdoor garden here in Sydney's warm temperate climate. I have already mentioned the success we have had with many rhizomatous types. We have found that the shrub-likes are of immense value in the garden and some which we have used include *B. 'Garcia'*, a Bernard Yorke hybrid, and *B. metallica*, *scharffii*, *luxurians*, *foliosa*, and *acutifolia* amongst the species. The cane-likes of

course are ideal garden subjects and Ross Bolwell has developed a really significant range of cane-like hybrids which thrive in the outdoors. We even have a planting of *B. crassicaulis*, that fascinating thick-stemmed begonia which in the RBG produces masses of flowers on bare trunks before the leaves appear in spring. We have naturally had a number of losses in our experimental plantings including the Papua New Guinea species *B. serratipetala* and *B. 'Exotica'*, and others such as *B. velloziana*, *B. lubbersii* and *B. acetosa*. The *dregei* group from South Africa is proving interesting. Initial trial planting did not do well at all, losing all leaves during winter and reluctantly responding to the spring weather. However, we have noticed that our latest attempt at overwintering these in the shadehouse has been more successful and I am hoping that here again the urge to acclimatise will triumph.

I think that's about enough said on the subject. However, I will conclude by commenting that, as we all know, begonias react rather badly to frost conditions. There are of course some precautions which can be taken in light frost areas such as planting begonias under existing shrubs--they make really good underplantings. Also it is possible to provide simple protective screens or covers during frost periods, and light frosts which cause begonias to lose their leaves do not kill the plants and they will make new growth in the spring. All in all we have found that begonias of all types make excellent garden subjects in frost free or light frost areas. The RBG is fortunate in that they are virtually frost free.

You may write Peter Sharp at 2/238 Jersey Rd., Woollahra, NSW 2025, Australia

A Garden Visit

Florida

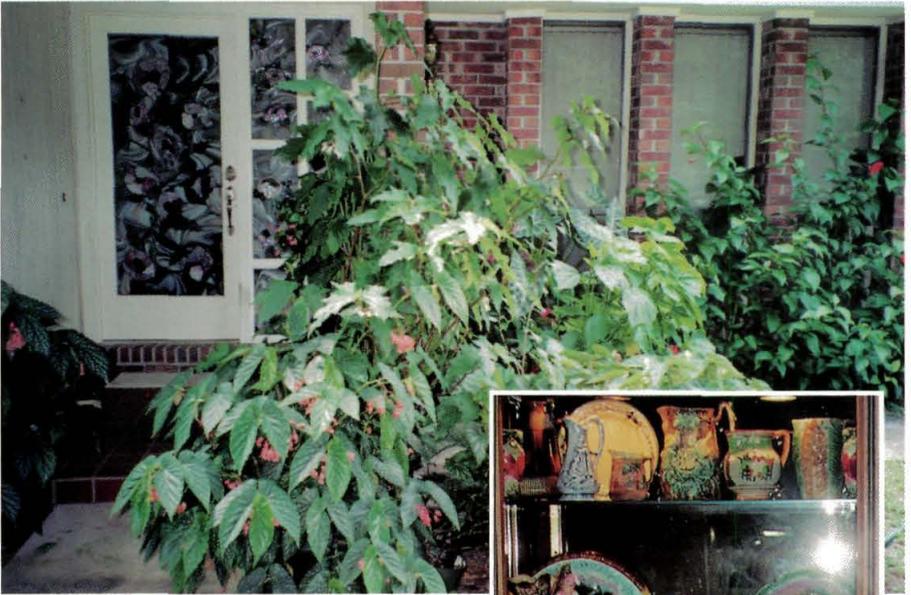
by Risa Young

One day in June, Dale Sena called to tell me that Ann and Chris Fergis had invited Dick and me, Dale and Charles and Helen Jaros to their house for dinner in Mt. Dora the last Saturday in June. Charles wanted us to stop at his house first to see his begonias. Of course we would go! I had heard so much about Charles' fabulous plants, Helene's dolls which she made and their collection of begonia antiques and collectibles and also about Ann and Chris's house in Mt. Dora that they had just finished renovating. I was so looking forward to the adventure.

We left our house early, met Dale at her house, and Dale drove the rest of the way. What I heard about the Jaros' house and the Fergis' house didn't prepare me for what I was about to experience. Unfortunately it was an overcast day with light sprinkles, but that didn't "dampen" our spirits. As we pulled into Charles' and Helene's driveway, we were greeted by huge and I mean huge, begonias growing under the massive oak tree in their front yard. I had never seen such huge leaves on begonias. Charles attributes his growing success to Fafard 2-S (See the *Begonian*, Jan/Feb, page 32, *Ed.*) and Nutricote, and although I have to admit from experience that it is a great combination, there had to be more to it than that. Although the plants I had put into Fafard 2-S and fertilized with Nutricote were looking better than ever, they sure didn't look anywhere nearly so good as Charles' plants. His begonias were in huge pots. I know I keep using the word huge, but it is the only word that accurately describes his plants and the pots they are grown in. He

had two canes on either side of the walkway leading to the front door, one a hybrid of Bob Koehler's and the other one was B. 'Juanita's Jewel'. Both towered over us and both were loaded with blooms. We were welcomed into the Jaros home by a stunning stained glass door depicting tuberous begonias. Upon entering, we were greeted by some of Helene's hand made dolls. They were the most beautiful and lifelike dolls I had ever seen. She only recently took up the hobby of doll making and she definitely has great talent. We then moved into the living and family room to see Charles' collection of begonia trophies and Majolica.

After a quick tour of the house, Dale, Charles, Dick and I headed into downtown Sanford and had lunch and did some antiquing. Then it was back to Charles' house to get a tour of the lathhouse which was totally filled. He has since tripled the size of his shadehouse growing area and last I heard, it was still going to be a tight squeeze getting all of the plants under the oaks into the new shadehouses. Charles attributes a lot of his growing success to the minimum 20 degree variation between night and day temperatures year round, including summer. Even though the temperatures can regularly get into the 90's over the summer, the 20 degree variation makes a difference between Sanford and where I live which is further south. Even though the temperatures can get much colder in Sanford than in Miami, Charles says he finds it much easier to grow begonias in Sanford. Other than the huge oak out front the majority of his yard gets sun, and because he is in the country, he gets



In the garden of Charles Jaros, Risa Young saw huge begonias at the door with its stained glass, under the trees, in the lathhouse, everywhere. And inside she saw more begonias, but this time they were on the Jaros' Majolica collection, right. Photos by Risa Young.



good air circulation. After oohing and aahing and getting some cuttings, we headed out to Mt. Dora for our next adventure.

As we headed towards, Mt. Dora, the terrain changed from flat to hilly, something I'm not used to in our part of Florida. Mt. Dora is a quaint town filled with older "cracker" style houses and loaded with antique shops. So, of course, we had to stop and browse the shops before heading for Ann and Chris's. I had only met Ann and Chris once before at Dale's house, but they treated Dick and I like old friends. Their house was beautifully and lovingly restored. It was with extreme sadness that I recently learned of

Ann's untimely death. From just two meetings and seeing her house in Mt. Dora, I know she will be greatly missed by all who knew her. I'm glad I got the chance to spend some enjoyable hours with her and Chris.

Although my begonias are doing as well as they ever have, coming back from Charles' was a sobering experience. I guess the only consolation is, due to lack of space, if I grew plants like his, I would be very limited in the varieties I could grow!

Risa Young grows her begonias at 7811 1st Ave. S., St. Petersburg, FL 33707 and is a member of the Pinellas County Branch.

Begonia grandis ssp. evansiana

Virginia

While taking a walk in the early eighties, my neighbor and I passed a yard/plant sale. Never ones to resist a plant deal, we looked through the perennial section of the plants offered for sale. Imagine my surprise and confusion when I saw a plant marked "Hardy Begonia"! I had grown tuberous begonias in Oregon, and was learning about shrub, rhizomatous, and cane begonias from the Potomac Branch of the ABS, but had not heard of a hardy begonia--especially one as multi-talented as the plant seller claimed it to be.

The gardener claimed that this begonia was truly hardy in the Washington, D.C. area, grew in the shade, and had profuse, fragrant blooms in the fall. Hard to believe, but at fifty cents a clump, I could afford to experiment. Not only did it do all she had promised, but it was an easy care plant, multiplied quickly, and was pest

and disease resistant.

In our garden, *B. grandis ssp. evansiana* grows two to three feet tall from a one to one and a half inch tuber. The leaves are irregularly heart-shaped with cordate bases. Leaves, which can be up to six inches long and four inches wide at the base of the plant became progressively smaller toward the top of the plant. In dappled light, the leaves are a medium green; in brighter light they are a light army fatigue green. Veins and the underside of the leaf are cranberry in color. The stems are green with cranberry nodes, petioles, and inflorescence stalks. Bulbils form in the leaf axils in the fall.

Flowers are profuse, fragrant in the morning, and last several weeks in the garden. Both male and female blooms are present at the same time. Bloom color is a medium pink. There is also a white form,



B. grandis ssp. *evansiana* forms a sea of pink in Johanna Zinn's Virginia garden in its usual form above, but equally as beautiful is the sea of white yielded by this species in its white form below. Photos by Johanna Zinn.



which, in our garden light, is actually a white to very pale pink. In Virginia, blooms may open as early as the third week of August and last through September. Last year, I had some blooms remaining at Halloween.

B. grandis ssp. evansiana needs well-drained soil. The tubers will rot, especially in the winter if the drainage is not good. I lighten our heavy Virginia clay with soil from our compost pile, composted oak leaves, and rabbit manure. The plants grow under oak trees that have been pruned to twenty feet or so and receive dappled sun in the morning and shade the rest of the day. My plants that I grew in full sun were stunted and bloomed poorly. The plant receives one and one-half to two inches of water each week along with the rest of my perennials--via overhead sprinkler if there has not been adequate rain. I fertilize my garden two or three times during the growing season with a hose end sprayer. Pests ignore this plant, as do bacterial and fungal diseases. My garden is mulched with limb chips or coarsely shredded mulch. After Christmas, I put the Christmas tree branches over the begonias for extra protection since we often do not have snow cover. I also grow *B. grandis* in large pots for our show on our north facing front steps.

To propagate, take stem cuttings or plant the seeds and bulbils collected in the fall. In 1996, I adopted this plant through

the ABS Save Our Species program. Since 1982 I have dispersed several hundred plants. If you have a favorite species, you can insure that it will continue to be grown by adopting it, studying it, and dispersing it. Some of the places where I have able to contribute my adoptee are: PTA and public library sales and silent auctions, show sales, seeds and bulbils donated to ABS and AHS, plants given to family, neighbors, friends, co-workers, garden club members, etc.

If you would like to try to grow *B. grandis ssp. evansiana*, seed should be available from the Seed Fund. I also have a supply and will send seeds if requested to do so. Plants may also be available from some mail order catalogues and local nurseries. Plants appear to be reliably hardy in our area (zone 6b to 7). I have talked to someone who grows it in a protected location in New York City. I don't know its southern limits. I would appreciate any information concerning *B. grandis* from those who are growing it so that I can provide it to the ABS Save Our Species Program.

Johanna Zinn's lovely garden is at 4407 Jensen Place, Fairfax, VA 22032-2718. She is a member of the Potomac Branch.



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Begonia cucullata var. *arenosicola*

New York

by Annette Boree

Everyone is familiar with *Begonia grandis* ssp. *evansiana*, the so-called hardy begonia from China. However, I think the reign of *Begonia grandis* as the only hardy begonia in the northern states may have come to an end. Another begonia lives over in my Zone 7 garden each winter. True, this past winter was incredibly mild, but the past four winters were the typical cold, snowy, icy ground-frozen-down-to-there, winters we all have come to expect, if not love, and still the begonia lived.

The begonia is *B. cucullata* var. *arenosicola*. The late Phil Seiden came to a meeting of the Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau (NY) branch several years ago, bearing gifts of begonias he had grown from Seed Fund seed. One was labeled "SF 254." I'm not sure when he got these seeds from the Seed Fund, probably in the late 1980's. The seed was subsequently identified as *Begonia cucullata* var. *arenosicola* and offered in the Seed Fund in J/F 1992. It was described as being from Argentina and "distinguished by the narrowly elliptic leaves, rounded at the tip, narrow unequally cuneate at the base and the larger subentire, roundly obtuse stipules." (Jack Golding. *Phytologia* Vol. 50, No. 5, p. 354.) *B. cucullata* is one of the three or so parents of the whole group of *semperflorens* hybrids.

At any rate, when Phil passed out these seedlings, he urged us to try planting them in the mixed perennial and annual garden, not in the manner of the typical *semperflorens* hybrids as an edging

plant. *B. cucullata* is much taller for one thing, and will easily reach 2 1/2 to 3 feet if not ruthlessly pinched back. I think this species should not be pinched very much; it seems to look better with a loose, graceful, fountain-like shape. It has somewhat elongated, but still immediately recognizable "semperflorens-type" leaves in a bright, light green verging on chartreuse color, with a patent leather shine. Its flowers are pale pink in full sun. It is not a glamorous begonia that is a star player in the garden. Most people would consider it rather plain. Its destiny seems to be in its ability to bring a nice textural contrast to a mixed planting of summer flowers and foliage. It was really smashing with a grouping of matte-leaved scented geraniums (*pelargoniums*) and *nicotiana sylvestris*.

I discovered that *B. cucullata* var. *arenosicola* was hardy quite by accident. As I pulled up the frosted annuals one year, I must have snapped off the top of one of the begonias and left the roots. It came up the next year in a clump about four inches across. Clearly it was not a seedling that had germinated in the spring.

Another unusual thing about this begonia is its drought tolerance even in full sun. Semps seem to be among the most drought tolerant members of the begonia family.

I have given cuttings of this plant to members of the Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau Branch (who had lost their plants over the years) and to members of the Hobby Greenhouse Society asking them to try

them in the outdoor garden, but so far no one has reported back.

This plant is incredibly easy to grow from seed. Seed has popped up in as little as five days and germination seems to be near 100%. The plants will certainly need mulching over the first winter, but after that it might be fun to see how far the limit to its cold tolerance will be. I hope

to have seed for the Seed Fund this summer. I hope a lot of you will try it and let us all know of your experiences. Just think if we could breed its cold hardiness into many of our other begonias! The possibilities are endless.

Annete Boree grows her B. cucullata at 8 Brown Road, Great Neck, NY 11024.

Begonias with their Feet on the Ground

North and South

by Brad Thompson

Like all of you I have carefully cultivated my begonias over the years, giving each its special attention. I have also learned that begonias can be tough plants and can be grown in many ways for many purposes. Most of us have our cherished plants in pots either in greenhouses, special lath houses, or under lights in our homes, but begonias can also serve a purpose in our home landscaping. You can use begonias in your yard for varied purposes, regardless of whether you are growing your begonias in cold northern states or mild climates of the south. The only difference between the different climates is that in the north, begonias serve as temporary parts of your landscaping (as are most of the plants you grow in your yard), and in the south they can be used as permanent focal points. Some of the differences between the two growing conditions are covered here.

The North

As I mentioned, begonias usually give temporary service in your yard in the

north, but growing them outdoors during the warm months will help both you and your begonias. When I lived in Iowa I used begonias and other "indoor plants" in my yard. The benefit was that I was able to increase the size and number of my plants in a short time and provide a tropical effect to the garden. If you are fortunate enough to have Ed and Mildred Thompson's *Begonias The Complete Reference guide* you can see pictures of the dramatic uses of begonias in a northern garden on pages 255 through 265. Most plants moved outdoors in late spring after all frost was past were small plants started indoors during the winter. They also included many larger plants, however, that went outside for a summer rejuvenation. You would not believe how fast they filled out and became even more beautiful. Most of these begonias do wonderfully in those areas where it's too shady for grass, but where impatiens, ferns, gesneriad and other shade plants grow perfectly. In fact these groups of plants make perfect companions to combine in

groupings and beds with begonias. I'm not going to go into too much detail about how you can use and arrange your plants specifically, but I will give you some tips and pointers about using begonias outdoors.

1. Begonias can be planted directly in the ground. Most northern states have wonderful loam soil that begonias will love without too much amending just like your other bedding plants and annuals.

2. When you first move your plants out in spring, you must take into account the lower light they have been receiving indoors and harden them off gradually. I did this by starting them off in pure shade areas on the north side of the house and buildings before moving them into brighter areas. The same is true when you move them back indoors in the fall. Don't be surprised if they go through some shock from the change of outdoors to indoors. It's best to bring in your cuttings and more tender plants in advance of using the furnace a lot. That way they

won't have to adjust to low light and dry air at the same time.

3. Don't be afraid to keep your begonias in pots and use them outdoors. The potted plants can also be used in groupings. A good idea is to place any plants that you use in beds on a brick or inverted pot to keep the pots off the soil. This will keep pests such as earthworms (Yes, earthworms are a pest in potted plants; they will eat the roots when they run out of decayed material.) from invading your pots and also allow proper drainage from the bottom of the pot. In Iowa, I used to have a redwood picnic table that did double duty as a plant stand indoors during the winter. (I placed the benches

Johanna Zinn also uses pots of begonias to enhance her Virginia garden. Then, these can easily be transported to shows. Here we see pots of, from the top left, B. 'Mirage', B. grandis ssp. evansiana, an unknown begonia, a B. listada hybrid, center B. minor, and down front B. 'Emerald Jewel'. Photo by Johanna Zinn.



on top with lights under the table and benches.) and as an outdoor plant stand during the summer.

4. If you do plant your begonias directly in the ground remember it is very easy to bring in soil borne pests with your plants if you dig up the whole plant with the garden soil. A good way to avoid this is to bring only cuttings in for the winter. You probably aren't going to have room indoors for all the humongous plants you'll have by the end of summer anyway. This will also be a great time to share cuttings with your friends and neighbors. If you really feel you have to bring the entire plant of some special ones, try removing all the soil and rinsing the roots with water or use a soil pesticide. When I brought in entire plants, I also did my pruning then because the plants suffered less shock during the transition with less foliage to support.

The South

In the south many of the same tips as above apply, but of course, in areas where there is little or no frost we have many more options. I do hope I never have to go back to growing in the northern climate. All or most of our begonias can be permanent outdoor residents and used even more dramatically. Since buying my own house, I have gradually planted the majority of my plants in beds in the ground (This does cut down on the number of show plants I have now.) and they grow many times faster than begonias kept in pots. I have also encountered different problems and solutions than when I grew outdoors in Iowa.

1. Many southern states have much poorer soil conditions than the northern states, especially here in southern California where you have your choice be-

tween adobe clay and sand. Peat or a soil conditioner added to the soil will help your begonias grow much better.

2. In most areas begonias will benefit from raised beds because of the additional drainage. Here, cold weather and rain often come at the same time which begonias hate. There's nothing worse than cold, wet feet. Raised beds help keep your plants from sitting in water. Rhizomatous begonias in particular will appreciate the extra drainage. I created my raised beds by enclosing areas with scalloped bricks and adding mix to raise the soil level. This gave me beds that were slightly raised 5 or 6 inches. You have to make sure conditions are the best you can make them before planting because once they're in the ground, it's not easy to move them around.

3. Avoid planting your begonias permanently under deciduous trees unless you can be diligent about picking up fallen leaves. Wet and soggy leaves on top of your begonias won't help them. You also have to take into account the change in light once the leaves have fallen. This isn't too much of a problem along a coastal area, but it may be in inland areas where the sun is hotter. I have begonias planted under an apricot tree and besides the pain of falling fruit in the summer, I had to deal with a ton of falling leaves last fall. One thing you can do if you want to plant under a tree is use some bird netting to catch the leaves before they fall on the plants. It's hard not to use begonias under trees because they grow so well in that light where many other plants won't. John Howell in San Antonio, TX has an impressive planting of rexes and other begonias under a huge tree in his front yard. It really makes his yard so I guess it is worth the picking-up-leaves effort.

4. Almost all begonias will grow well in the ground from rexes to canes,

but different areas do suit different plants. I've seen pictures from Florida where they used *B. 'Silver Jewel'* as a ground cover. We couldn't do that in dry California, but we have just as many plants that do well here especially the canes. I've put some trailing scandent begonias in the ground and they pretty much act as ground covers. Begonias in some southern states may need more sun than they would in the north. Most of my canes are in full sun in the morning and late afternoon so this also has to be taken into account when deciding what and where to plant. They would grow in less light, but wouldn't bloom as well. I have managed to find begonias that will grow in every light condition I have in my yard: semps in the

sun, canes and shrubs in part shade, and rhizomatous in shade. They look great too. I know for sure because people keep stealing the begonias I've been planting outside the fence along the street.

5. Potted plants can be used in amongst the plants in the beds to fill in after pruning, but remember to place them off the soil.

I hope I've given you some ideas and tips about growing your begonias in your garden landscaping.

Those of you who have been missing Brad give him a welcome back! You can write him at 2436 W. Lomita Bl.#1, Lomita, CA 90717 or E-mail him at Btbegonia@aol.com. You may also visit his web pages at <http://members.aol.com/Btbegonia/index.html>.

Pronunciation of Begonia Epithets for The Begonian, 65: July-August 1998

by Jack Golding

acetosa ay-se-TOH-suh
acutifolia uh-kyew-ti-FOH-li-uh
bowerae BOW-er-ee
cardiocarpa kar-di-oh-KAHR-puh
carricae kar-REE-ee (named for Carrie Karegeannes)
chlorosticta klo-ro-STIK-tuh
crassicaulis kras-si-KAW-liz
cucullata kyew-kul-LAY-tuh
cucullata var. kyew-kul-LAY-tuh,
arenosicola uh-ren-oh-si-KOH-luh
convolvulacea kon-vol-vyew-LAY-se-uh
deliciosa de-lis-i-OH-suh
dregei, syn. DREG-e-eye,
partita par-TEE-tuh
echniosepala ek-in-oh-SEP-a-luh
edmundoi ed-mun-DOH-eye
Exotica (hort.) ex-OT-ti-kuh
foliosa foh-li-OH-suh
francoisii fran-SWAH-i-eye (French)

fuchsioides fyew-si-o-EYE-deez
gehrtii GEHRT-i-eye
glabra GLAYB-ruh
goegoensis goh-goh-EN-sis
grandis GRAND-iz
 ssp. **evansiana** e-van-si-AY-nuh
hemsleyana hem-slee-AY-nuh
heracleifolia her-ak-le-eye-FOH-li-uh
hirtella hir-TEL-luh
kenworthyae ken-WORTH-i-ee (named for Eva Kenworthy Gray)
listada lis-TAH-duh
lubbersii LEWY-ber-si-eye
luxurians lux-YEWR-i-ans
malabarica mal-a-BAR-i-kuh
manicata man-i-KAY-tuh
manicata 'Crispa' man-i-KAY-tuh, KRIS-puh (a cultivar)
masoniana MAY-son-i-ay-nuh
mazae MAH-zee
metallica met-TAL-li-kuh
minor, syn. MEYE-nor, ni-TI-duh (nitida is a synonym)
nitida
mollicaulis mol-li-KAW-lis

Continued on page 159.

Fluke or Nuke?

by Wally Wagner

In 1969 I set out to create a small black, star-leaved begonia by crossing *B. bowerae* with a Susie Zug hybrid that I got from Doug Frost named B. 'Eppley'.

In 1972 I selected and named one of the seedlings B. 'Bethlehem Star.' It had velvety leaves as black as a moonless night plus a bright star in the sinus. It was registered in 1975 as #519.

About the same time that I was making my *B. bowerae* cross, Chester Nave of San Leandro, California was crossing *B. kenworthyae* with *B. bowerae*. Both of us were surprised to find some of our seedlings with spiraled leaves. Mr. Nave's cross produced B. 'Bowtique'. I selected several from my cross, with spirals, and named them: 1. B. 'Apache' with velvety black leaves with valleys of dark green down the veins, eyelashes on the edges, and double spirals at both leaf lobes. 2. B. 'Comanche' with earthtone colors of black, dark green and copper; eyelashes on the edges, and spirals on both lobes. 3. B. 'Stallion' with a basic pattern of green with ice green veins and a random pattern of black all over like an Indian "Paint" horse.

They were registered in 1975 as numbers 518, 521, and 520, respectively.

Until my hybrids and those of Chester Nave were introduced the only spiral leaved begonias were the B. 'Erthrophylla' sports and some Rex begonias. So, you can see how excited we were, especially since none of the parents had any history of spiral leaves.

Were these spirals a fluke of nature or something else?

Many years later I found a small article on the back pages of my local newspaper noting that in 1969 a nuclear test

in Nevada "went awry" and created a radioactive cloud that hung over California for several months! Could this cloud have caused the spirals?

It would be interesting to repeat the crosses and see if any spirals surface, but B. 'Eppley' apparently has been lost for some time.

In 1975 Rudy Ziesenhenné introduced his cross of B. 'Bowtique' x *B. carrieae* called B. 'Lospe-tu'. The spiral carried forward to Rudy's hybrid. So, if you want spiral-leaved begonias, I suggest you use B. 'Apache', B. 'Comanche', B. 'Stallion', or B. 'Bowtique' as parents!

I would like to hear from readers who know the whereabouts of some of the other hybrids from the same cross, namely B. 'Bronc', B. 'Mt. Man', B. 'Mustang', B. 'Stampede', and B. 'Longhorn.'

You may write Wally Wagner at 4560 39th Ave. NE, Salem, OR 97305 with your theories or call him at 503-393-8227. He is a member of the Cascade Branch.

*Below is B. 'Bethlehem Star'. Photo by Ed and Mildred Thompson (See note on Page 151 of this Begonian.). You may see B. 'Comanche' and B. 'Apache' on p. 152 of their book **Begonias The Complete Reference Guide**.*



Conservation News

by Tamsin Boardman,
Conservation Chair

As I write this in mid-May, we are blanketed in a thick haze that covers Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. We're under a health alert: current instructions are to stay indoors if possible and avoid exercise. Alabama and New Mexico are said to be affected too. Forest fires in Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras are being blamed. The crud in our air certainly brings home the universal impact of environmental destruction.

Forest fires of 1997 were disastrous for people, animals, and plants; an estimated two million acres of rainforest in Southeast Asia alone, more than that in Brazil, still more worldwide. Up in smoke went forests that served as homes to indigenous people and some of the rarest animals and plants on the globe. People in respiratory distress crowded hospitals; survivors lost their land and livelihood, some their health. This year apparently will be worse. Fires in Mexico and Central America and fires in Southeast Asia rage out of control.

So many reasons are cited for the fires and the haze: drought, El Nino, slash-and-burn agriculture, overpopulation, logging, extension of cattle into areas inappropriate for grazing. A big part of the problem is attitude; there's always more land, "wilderness" is evil and must be conquered, land should be "productive"--as if the forests, air purification system for our world, with their bounty of diverse plants providing food and medicine as well as beauty were not productive!

We in ABS can't save the world. We are, however, the group best suited to do our bit for the planet by helping save a tiny and beautiful part of the world eco-

system, begonias. Grow the species. They're the foundation for all the begonias we enjoy today.

Quick Takes

From Australia: Begonias collected in China by Bob Cherry and in Southeast Asia by Michael Ferraro are growing well in cultivation in New South Wales and Queensland. Samples were displayed at the Convention in Sydney, including a large-leaved rhizomatous type whose stems are eaten in its native land--they're said to be good for arthritis. At risk of angry letters accusing me of cannibalism, I'll report that I tried about two inches of stem; in tiny bites it was sour but palatable; a larger chunk, however (popped in as I tried to finish before the start of the next seminar), filled my mouth with acidity--if you get some, I suggest munching it slowly in small increments.

PALS (Protectors and Lovers of Species), project of the Queensland Begonia Society, is off and running under Barry Mann. We'll be sharing information (the Manns are members of ABS' Adopt-A-Species project).

Species Listing Project; John Howell maintains a list of all begonia species in cultivation among ABS members. This list gives us an idea of which species are common in cultivation, which rare, which unknown here. If you haven't sent John your species list, please do so now! His address is 129 Trillium, San Antonio, TX 78213-2514. Last call: we'll publish the list in the next issue.

Adopt-A-Species Project: Adopt a species you are particularly fond of growing and receive a quarterly newsletter. Write Conservation Chair Tamsin Boardman, P.O. Box 69, Bluff Dale, TX 76433; or phone (254) 728-3485.

Directory of Begonia Societies

*All information is the latest available to us
at the time of publication.*

International Societies

Australia

Association of Australian Begonia Societies Ross Bolwell, Chair, 226 Annangrove Rd., Annangrove, NSW 2156

The Victorian Begonia Society, Inc. Mrs. Margaret Wright, 74 Railway Place, Macedon 3440, Ph: (03) 5426 1298

Victorian Begonia Society Melbourne Study Group
Contact: Mr. Graham De Caen
(03) 9772-9686

The N.S.W. Begonia Society, Inc.
Mrs. Jean Whitten
15 Carlo Close Kincumber 2251
Ph: (02) 4369 2967

The Queensland Begonia Society, Inc.
Mr. Peter Henderson, 79 Chuter Street, Stafford QLD 4053
Ph: (07) 3359 4319

South Australian Begonia Society Inc.
Mrs. Myrnie Jennings, 4 Kinnaird Crescent, Highbury, SA 5089
Ph: (08) 8264 6490

The Begonia Society of Western Australia
Mrs. Shirley Lancaster
7 Corser Street, Kewdale WA 6105
Ph: (08) 9361 4564

Belgium

Societe Beige du Begonia
Piron Gilles, Pres., Chemin de Lancre,
4 B-4970 Coe, Belgium

Canada

British Columbia Fuchsia & Begonia Society
Loma Herchenson, Pres. 2402 Swinburn Ave. North, Vancouver B.C. V7H 1 L2

Canadian Begonia Society
Eleanor Elston
4 Superior Ave., # 18, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M8V2M4, Ph: 416-255-1544, E-mail: eelston@globalserve.net
Society Web Page at: <http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/4369/>

England and Wales

The National Begonia Society
Colin. Nicklin, 33 Findern Lane, Willington Derbyshire, DE65 6DW

Email Contact: Derek Telford,
Derek@dtelford.demon.co.uk

France

Assoc. Francoise de Amateurs de Begonias
Mme. Agnes Cazaux, Presidente
Association Francaise des Amateurs de Begonias, Domaine de Bontemps, 31470 Fonsorbes, France

Japan

Japan Begonia Society
Mr. Naoyuki Vernura, 27-10 Higashi-Ohizumi, J-Chome, Neriam-Ku, Tokyo 178, Japan

Scotland

Scottish Begonia Society
C/o-260 Bellfield R. Coalburn
Lanarkshire, Scotland M1100NQ, ULK

United States

*Guests are welcome at all meetings.
Contact the National Director listed below
for time and place of meetings or other
information.*

Regional Group

Southwest Region

Gene Salisbury, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa,
OK 74653, Ph: 580-628-5230.

Branches

California

Alfred D. Robinson Branch: Margaret
Lee, National Director, 1852 31st Street,
San Diego, CA 92102, Ph: 619-239-3196

Doug Frost Branch: Joyce Hesse, 636 S.
Gilbuck Dr., Anaheim, CA 92802-1322.,
Ph: 714-778-3546

Long Beach Parent Chapter: Herbert
Wilkinson, 16281 Mercier Lane, Hunting-
ton Beach, CA 92647-3309,
Ph: 714-840-8217.

Monterey Bay Area Branch: Leslie
Hatfield, 3025 Kennedy Ct., Marina, CA
93933-3614, Ph: 831-384-6519 (Area code
408 until July 11.)

Orange County Branch: Mary Sakamoto,
6847 E. Sycamore Glen Dr., Orange, CA
92869, Ph: 714-633-6997

Palomar Branch: Eleanor Calkins, 910
Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027-1708, Ph:
760-746-4743

Palos Verdes: Jeanne Jones, 1415 Via
Margarita, Palos Verdes, CA 90274-2143,
Ph: 310-378-7527

Sacramento Branch: Morris Mueller, 163
Hartnell Street, Sacramento, CA 95825-
6609, Ph: 916-927-4921

San Francisco Branch: Carol Notaras,
2567 Green Street, San Francisco, CA,
94123-4629, Ph: 415-931-4912

San Gabriel Branch: Elaine Baxter, 21234
E. Rimpath Dr., Covina, CA 91724-3378,
Ph: 626-339-3445

San Miguel Branch: Eleanor Calkins, 910
Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027-1708,
Ph: 760-746-4743

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Ziesenhenne, 1130 N. Milpas St., Santa
Barbara, CA, 93103-2336,
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Wingfoot Way, Aptos, CA 95003-5444,
Ph: 408-688-0357

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CA 93004-1558, Ph: 805-642-3198

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Ph: 310-929-3975

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Rocky Mountain Branch: Andrew Conely,
4575 Elm Ct., Denver, CO 80211-1442, Ph:
303-455-7845

Florida

Florida West Coast Branch: H. Alton Lee,
5813 19th Ave. S., Gulfport, FL 33707-
4023, Ph: 813-343-5402

Fort Lauderdale Branch: Sylvia Ben, 255 S.W. 87th Terrace, Plantation, FL 33324-2602, Ph: 305-964-3828

Jacksonville Branch: Mary Bucholtz, 1560 Lancaster Terr. #1008, Jacksonville, FL 32204, Ph: 904-353-9111.

Miami Branch: Bob Cochran, 951 SW 99th Street, Pembroke Pines, FL, 33025, Ph: 305-654-9649

Palm Beaches Branch: Virginia Jens, 922 Upland Rd., West Palm Beach, FL 33401-7550, Ph: 407-835-3845

Georgia

Greater Atlanta Branch: Mary Elizabeth Moultrie, 3710 Cochise Drive, Atlanta, GA 30339, Ph: 770-436-5932

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Greater Chicago Branch: Daniel Haseltine, 6950 West Nelson Street, Chicago, IL 60634-4613, Ph: 312-637-1535

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Bessie Buxton Branch: Wanda Macnair, 177 Hancock Street, Cambridge, MA 02139, PH: 617-876-1356

New York

Knickerbocker Branch: Beth Castellon, 485 Ashford Ave., Ardsley, NY 10502-2120, Email: Rcastellon@NYBG.org

Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau Branch: Sol Schwartz, 143 Hewlett Neck Rd., Woodmere, NY 11598, Email: SOL7@juno.com.

Ohio

Western Reserve Branch: Sara Jane Pearman, 2120 Hampstead R., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118, PH: 216-321-5528, Email: pearman@cma-oh.org

Oklahoma

Fred B. Barkley Branch: Diane Horne, 3601 Oakhurst Drive, Midwest City, OK 73110, Ph: 405-732-1083.

Wheatheart Branch: Gene Salisbury, P. O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653-0452, Ph: 580-628-5230

Oregon

Cascade Branch: Kathy Goetz, 935 W. Isabella, Lebanon, OR 97355, Ph: 541-258-7517, Email: goetzk@dnc.net

Texas

Alamo Branch: John Howell, 129 Trillium, San Antonio, TX 78213, Ph: 210-341-6041

Astro Branch: Tom Keepin, 4513 Randwick Dr., Houston, TX 77092-8343, Ph: 713-686-8539

Dallas Area Branch: Charles McGough, 1603 Walnut Street, Commerce, TX 75428-3347, Ph: 903-886-3268

Mae Blanton Branch: Opal Reck, 106 E. Weatherford Street, Weatherford, TX 76086, Ph: 817-594-8312

Satellite Branch: Helen Spiers, 1423 Laskey Street, Houston, TX 77034, Ph: 713-946-4237

San Jacinto Branch: Charlise Hancock, 4407 Village Heights Ct., Pasadena, TX 77505, Ph: 281-998-0953

Virginia

Potomac Branch: Carrie Karegeannes, 3916 Lake Blvd., Annandale, VA 22003-2319, PH: 703-280-2114

Growing Organic

by
Tamsin Boardman

Anything bugging you out there? Literally, I mean: bugs, real live ones, munching on your begonias? Here are some suggestions for dealing with the summer invasion:

First, bear in mind that an estimated 90% of all insects are beneficial. Zapping the battle zone with chemicals kills the good guys, too. Remember also that some insects will survive even the fiercest attack and breed rapidly; their offspring will be resistant to the chemical you used. So think ladybugs, emerald lacewings, trichogramma wasps. Inviting them in is like supporting the police force. They help you control the “baddies”, and they’re available through mail-order if, like us, you live ‘way out’ in the country.

Then think health. Healthy plants aren’t as likely to attract pests in the first place. Meet your begonias’ needs for temperature range, light, water, food, and you’ll avoid most problems. Yes, I’m aware that’s harder than it sounds, particularly for begonias; their diversity guarantees diverse cultural needs. Your plants can help here: watch them for clues. Drooping and pale leaves are a clear indication of watering problems--if the plants isn’t too dry, it may be too wet (your finger is the guide here); if the soil is just right, the plant needs feeding. Lanky growth is a sign that more light is needed; so are weak stems (but some begonias, like

salicifolia and *echinosepala*, naturally arch). Burned or curled edges indicate too much light, or too much heat--perhaps both. Really *look* at your plants--they’re trying to tell you what they need. Also, close observation will reveal problems before they get out of hand.

To keep your begonias happy and healthy this summer, provide good air circulation. Move your plants around as needed--a spot that was perfect in winter is different in summer. Keep feeding regularly, in small doses; constant feed at every watering works great with begonias. However, slow-release pellets may release too rapidly in hot weather when watering intensifies.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness in begonia growing, too. Keep litter, dead leaves, spent flowers cleaned up and tossed into the compost pile.

In dry areas, raise humidity by bunching the begonias together and spraying the area around them; or group them around a pond or pots of water. In our area it’s safe to spray the leaves. In humid areas, keep pots apart and keep the air moving.

If pests are still a threat to your begonias, try garlic/pepper tea; put 2 large bulbs of garlic and two hot peppers through a blender. Strain, and pour the liquid into a gallon jug. Fill the jug with water; this is your concentrate. Add 1/4 cup of concentrate per gallon of water and use as a spray. Always shake well. (Thank you to Howard Garrett, “the Dirt Doctor”, for the recipe.)

When all else fails, go to insecticidal soap. Or try equal parts of baby shampoo, antiseptic mouth wash, and chewing tobacco tea (1/2 pack of chewing tobacco in the toe of a nylon stocking simmered in a gallon of boiling water for 10 minutes) - Bob Lindgren of Westchester Branch calls this “Spring Tonic”. These

will ring a death knell for your policemen, but are less detrimental to the health of your plants - and you - than the chemicals.

Something New on Begonias...

Excerpt from "Letters to the Editor", April/May 1998 issue of *Begonia News*, newsletter of the Canterbury Begonia Circle, New Zealand.

from Brian Wingate

"I wrote to Antonelli Brothers purchasing a packet of 800 seeds in the hope of getting perhaps 200 to germinate....

"Having sown the seed I waited, and if there really are 800 seeds in a packet then 799 must have germinated...

"...Our woodman spotted my begonias last year and wanted some tubers so I gave him six at the beginning of the season which had budded up, and gave him all the instructions on how best to grow them.

"He has just begun to deliver our winter wood and our conversation went something like this: 'How're your begonias, Kevin?' "They're doing really well.' 'Did you do as I told you?' 'No, I had some four litre plastic pots, I cleaned them up and drilled holes in them.' 'What mix

did you use?' 'I didn't buy any, couldn't afford to. I put some soil in my barrow and sprinkled on some Nitrophoska Blue and mixed it up and planted the tubers. You know one plant has ten blooms on it and the others are just as good, could you spare me some more tubers next season?' I made no further comments apart from the promise of more..."

Begonia News, a 20 page journal (black and white; dedicated to tuberous begonias, lots of cultural information, descriptions of named varieties) is published six times a year and is available to US tuberous begonia fanciers at \$10 per year, which includes airmail postage. Editor Mike Stevens writes that personal checks in US dollars are okay. His address is **47 Burnside Cres, Christchurch 8005, New Zealand. Phone/fax: (03) 358 4126; E-mail: istevens@chmeds.ac.nz**

Quick Tip

When propagating rex begonias keep the propagation box in a cool, but well-lit spot.

Michael Kartuz



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Meet B Barnett...

If we asked the mirror, “Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the most devoted begoniac of all?”, the answer would have to come back B Barnett, volunteer at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. B, that’s right just “B”, works there with the begonias five days a week, all day long; and she has been doing it for three years. No pay, except the reward of working with begonias.

This former teacher, retired after 25 years with primary schools, chose to work at the Botanic Gardens with begonias because that was what she had at home. She truly loves the begonias, but says meeting all the begonia people who are all special with their good humor and good character is another kind of reward. B takes care of her mother who is bound to a wheel chair and says that working days with begonias is “just great therapy and keeps the world level.”

When ABS board members met in Ft. Worth in January of this year, B was everywhere showing us plants and answering questions. Since this was Saturday, she even put in “overtime” on her “off” day so we could stay longer in the greenhouse.

Her favorite begonia is B. ‘Sophie Cecile’, but she also likes B. U093 and B. U059 for species, calling them “show-offs.” She has just begun to hybridize and is hoping to create some new beauties.

We think B deserves a big round of ABS applause as well as the appreciation of all of us who love the Species Bank at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens!

~FH



Round Robin Notes

*Virginia Hamann,
Round Robin Director*

#16 Eastern General: Bill Voss (VA) has hybridized a tuberous begonia with spotted leaves.

#2 Tuberous Begonias: Mike Solub (CA) finds less fertilizer is used when growing under lights. He also has 6" fans hooked on to each shelf, running off the light stand's timer. The appearance, growth habit of plants is much improved. **Campbell Watts (IA)** cut down on fertilizer and increased lights which made bushy growth, pictures of blooms were sent in robin, they are beauties. **Stacy Bishop (ID)** has discovered pot clips that attach to any flat surface. Pictures show pots attached to house, side of garage and trees. Everywhere Stacey looks is a "bouquet of plants"! Close-ups of blooms are also breathtaking. **Monte Richards (SD)** also sent pictures of double frilly tuberous in lovely colorings of pink and yellow. **Dolores Hogan (IL)** was given a tip to debug plants before bringing them indoors...1/4 cup ammonia to 1 gallon of water, it worked!

#20 Photography: Tamsin Boardman (TX) sent pictures of *B. ravenii* and *B. roxburgii* taken at the Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens. **Mary Bucholtz (FL)** had pictures showing the pink sprays of blooms on *B. 'Boomer'* against its deep green leaves with red backs. Members also like to catch pictures of top of leaf and bottom.

#12 Begonias & Companion Plants: Russ Hammer (FL) has aloes in bloom in his yard. He has a succulent collection that is used in landscaping. Canna lilies are also being grown by all members. So many new hybrids to choose from. **Elaine Ayers (OH)** has Rex begonias in bloom that are grown in flower beds then scooped up and potted in the fall.

#25 Midwest Growers II: Lois Schneyer (MI) asks which is best clay or plastic pots? A question from the Master Gardener's test, the answer is that it doesn't make any difference. But growers in #25 believe clay give the roots air and keeps them from being water logged, where plastic can maintain a wet, cold, soggy soil if not watched carefully.

#57 Mini Begonias/Terrarium Culture: Cynthia Bishop (CA) grew species seed VN/C#5 and did a watercolor drawing of the plant in the letter, it loves the covered bench with humidifier going and warmth from 8' fluorescent light tubes, she uses a heating cable at night.

#14 Semperflorens: Rose Shumate (KS) tells that *B. 'Woolly Bear'* (syn. for *B. subvillosa* var. *subvillosa*, Ed.) is in bloom, 12" tall. It requires a lot of water.

#6 Odd-Rare-Unusual: H. Alton Lee (FL) is experiencing monsoons during a normally dry season. He is surprised that his plants are not rotting or folding up. *Episcia 'Cleopatra'* rooted in a propagation box along with cuttings of *B. 'Iron Cross'* (a synonym for *B. masoniana*, Ed.) and *B. U089*. **Daniel Haseltine (IL)** is hoping that *B. versicolor* has set seed.

#9 Growing Under Lights: Mary Bucholtz (FL) has a Reiger begonia in bloom for the second time. Mary's *B.*

partita (syn. for *B. dregei*, Ed.) has outgrown its terrarium and is now growing in the open under lights. She hopes it will tolerate the heat of summer; cuttings will be taken for back up plants. **Mike Gratton (VA)** likes this mix: 5 quarts Pro Mix, 1 quart perlite, 1 cup superphosphate, 1 cup bone meal and 1 cup ironite.

#22 Propagation/#5 Hybridizing Combined: **H. Alton Lee (FL)** tells of propagating *B. chlorosticta* (Once known as ex-Kew) which is sometimes easy to propagate and at other times impossible perhaps due to improper moon signs? *B. 'Calico Kew'*, a cross of *B. goegoensis* and *B. chlorosticta* is easier to grow and propagate than either parent. He is trying spring propagation even with rain and cloudy weather. **Freda Holley (AR)** has nice seedlings from her November plantings. One she is watching is *B. 'Immense'* crossed with *B. manicata var. crispa* and *B. manicata*. One plant has grown at quadruple the rate of the others. Freda also increased the lights on the seedlings and believes they are growing a little faster. When collecting seed from her begonias, Freda uses baby food jars which are marked with a permanent marking pen.

#53 Rhizomatous Begonias: **Vickie Jackson (LA)** sent around pictures of an educational display she put together for a local flower show. She set up containers of soil mixes, a terrarium, and potted plants showing different stages of growth. Another display has *B. 'Orococo'* in a french wine basket with marigolds...oolala! **Mary Bucholtz (FL)** says her favorite bloomers are *B. 'Red Bellybutton'*, *'Spaulding'*, *'Bethlehem Star'*, and *'Cleopatra'*.

In Memory

On December 31, 1997 **Roy Yewell** passed away at Seton hospital in Daily City, CA. Roy and his wife became very active ABS members over 40 years ago in Southern California. When his wife passed away, he moved to the San Francisco area where he lived with a niece. For the past 12 years, he was a very enthusiastic supporter of our activities from our flower shows and sales to holding officer positions and handling the propagation and nomenclature tables these last several years. He and his wife had many cultivars named after them. He will be missed very much.

Carol Notaras

Bobby Lee Dodd, a long-time member of ABS and SWR/ABS, died on April 30, 1998. He lived in Oklahoma City and was a member of the Fred A. Barkley Branch which he had served in various offices including Show Chairman and newsletter editor. He had served ABS as 3rd Vice President and was a prime mover behind the 1984 ABS Convention in Dallas. He was a horticulturist who grew masses of begonias and other tropicals and was a gifted and humorous speaker, giving a helpful and memorable seminar at the 1987 ABS Convention on growing begonias in the heat. In recent years Bob had dedicated most of his volunteer hours to the Oklahoma City Zoo and a fund is being established in his honor for the support of the new Children's Garden there which will be named for him. Contributions may be sent to this fund in care of his wife **Thelma Dodd** at 540 NW 32nd Street, Oklahoma City 73118.

Sources

Sources could be located for the following begonias that were featured or pictured in this issue. Numbers following each begonia refers to the source list below. Information is latest available to editor.

- B. *crassicaulis* 4, 6
- B. *foliosa* 4, 5
- B. *fuchsioides* 4
- B. *grandis* ssp. *evansiana* 5
- B. *gehrtii* 3, 4
- B. *masoniana* 3, 4, 5, 6
- B. 'Mirage' 1, 2, 3, 6
- B. *wollnyi* 3

Sources:

1. Sunshine State Tropicals, 6329 Alaska Ave., New Port Richey, FL 34653, Ph: 813-841-9618
2. Kay's Greenhouses, 207 W. Southcross Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78221-1155
3. Golden Hills Nursery, P.O. Box 247, Macdoel, CA 96058, PH: 530-398-4203
4. Kartuz Greenhouses, 1408 Sunset Dr., P.O. Box 790, Vista, CA 92085-0790
5. Cloudy Valley Nursery, 935 W. Isabella, Lebanon OR 97355, Ph: 541-258-7517
6. B & K Tropicals, 5300 48th Terrace North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709, Ph: 813-522-8691.

Remember, suppliers, to be listed as a source be sure the editor has your latest listing of begonia offerings.

Report from the New England Tropical Conservatory

by Mary Fuqua

The New England Tropical Conservatory (NETC) put begonias on display at two flower shows this spring--the New England Spring Flower Show, March 7-15 and, a week later, the Second Annual Tropical Flower show in Bennington, VT. Both shows were cosponsored with the Horticulture Program of the Southwest Vermont Career Development Center. The American Begonia Society provided generous support for both shows. NETC and local businesses provided additional funding and in-kind services.

Our exhibit at the New England show illustrated how home gardeners can contribute to the preservation of plant species through growing them in the home. It depicted a hobby greenhouse, attached to a living room, full of species begonias and aroids along with some of the cultivars that have been derived from them. It appealed to both the general visitor, who enjoyed the attractive, "homey" life-style, and to the expert gardener who saw species not usually displayed in this venue. The exhibit would not have been possible without the help of members of the Buxton Branch, who provided plants, monitored the exhibit, and took charge of daily watering and maintenance. The exhibit itself was designed and built by students in the drafting and horticulture



Terrarium exhibits and *B. masoniana*.
 Photo by Wanda Macnair.

programs at the Career Development Center.

In Bennington, we displayed our collection of species begonias and aroid species against white lattice screens with accompanying information about the species and cultural requirements. For the second year, Wanda and Dick Macnair brought in some of their terrarium begonias for display and maintained an ABS Information Stand. The University of Vermont presented an educational exhibit on protection of endangered species. The day was complete with workshops, music, a gardener's marketplace and food court. Snow and ice limited the turnout, but we were not discouraged. The quality of exhibits and the layout and traffic patterns of the show were better than last year. Press coverage, before and after the show, was excellent. We look forward to continuing these spring shows in 1999.

The following article is taken from *Begonia*, the magazine of the Japanese Begonia Society, January/ March 1998, #182, back cover. Translation is by Akira Tanaka.

Introducing A New Species... 22. *B. sp. China*

by Yumika
 Yamaguchi



An acquaintance of Maruyama, a director of JBS, imported this species to Japan from China. This plant resembles *B. hemsleyana* in style, but it differs in the characteristic of white dots on the surface of the leaf.

I have not seen blossoms even now. The leaf blade is 18 c.m. (7 inches, Ed.) in average diameter, larger than the *B. hemsleyana* we grow in Japan. I think this plant is a variation of *B. hemsleyana*.

A Note from Gene Salisbury about Seeds from Scott Hoover's Collecting Trip to Sumatra

Listed below are the numbers one (1) through thirty-four (34), which correspond with the containers of the seed pods. The last time Ann and I had distributed, there was a certain amount of discussion regarding the amount of seed distributed. As you note from the list, some of these varieties probably will have no seed being distributed other than that to be test grown. We wanted all to know in advance the disposition of the distribution of this. More about this when we know more. (*U numbers will be assigned by Thelma O'Reilly at a later date.*) Any questions, please contact me.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. abundance | 18. 1 pod |
| 2. no seed pod | 19. 1 pod |
| 3. no seed pod | 20. no seed pod |
| 4. no seed pod | 21. 9 pods |
| 5. no seed pod | 22. 2 pods |
| 6. abundance | 23. abundance |
| 7. no seed pod | 24. fair amount |
| 8. 1 pod | 25. 5 pods |
| 9. 3 pods | 26. abundance |
| 10. 1 pod | 27. 12 pods |
| 11. fair amount | 28. 8 pods |
| 12. 1 pod | 29. 20 pods |
| 13. 10 pods. | 30. 8 pods |
| 14. 7 pods | 31. 6 pods |
| 15. 10 pods | 32. 14 pods |
| 16. fair amount | 33. 1 pod |
| 17. no seed pod | 34. 2 pods |

Editor's Notes...

This issue completes my first year as editor and I wish to express my gratitude to all those contributors who have helped fill those 240 pages. So many helpers

are an editor's blessing! Please keep the articles coming and *remember* to send me Atlanta photos by July 20. I shall try to meet the priority of readers as indicated by last year's survey so the emphasis will be on the begonias and those photos will be especially needed.

A very special gift has been received by the *Begonian*. **Mildred Thompson** is sending many slides and photos from her collection to be on file for use in the *Begonian*. You see a couple in this issue and you will be seeing others in the future. A really big THANK YOU from all of us who will be enjoying them.

Corrections: Your editor can too subtract! The correct introduction date for B. 'Dearest Mae' on page 116 was 1998.

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*Above, Best of Show winner, the species **B. paulensis**. Photo by Tamsin Boardman. Right, master grower of both species, Gene Salisbury. Below, Best Species winner **B. gehrtii**. Photo by Mary Bucholtz.*



Stars of the Southwest Region Get-Together

The Southwest Region Get-Together sponsored by the Fred A. Barkley Branch in Oklahoma City in April was outstanding with great tours and seminars. The show and plant sale were knockouts. Complete coverage of all can be found in the **Begonia Leaflet**, June/July issue, but the stars of the show have to be mentioned here. They were Best of Show *B. paulensis*, and Best Species, *B. gehrtii*. Both these look-alike species were grown to perfection by master rhizome cultivator Gene Salisbury. In the interview with the editor below, he tells about his experience in growing these winners.

Q: Gene, both these beautiful species have a reputation as difficult to grow. Congratulations on two such show winners. Did you find them difficult?

A: For a long, long time everything was difficult! I've learned that most plants have a little something different about them. *B. gehrtii* really likes no water on its rhizome. Both need very open soil. I like to grow them in a shallow bowl. Both are difficult to be around; that is, the leaves are easy to damage and must be handled with care. Of course, I'm blessed with this great greenhouse (See the *Begonian*, J/A 1996, p. 152.).

Q: To most of us, these look just alike; how would you describe the differences?

A: I think the leaf shape is drastically different, even the edges. The texture of *B. paulensis* is thinner and more pliable; *B. gehrtii* is thick and not the least bit, pliable.

Q: About how long did it take you to grow each of these into show plants?

A: Both these were seed grown by Dorothy Caviness and came to me as young plants. I've had this *B. paulensis* about four years and *B. gehrtii* about six years.

Q: Was this the first show for these plants?

A: This was the first show for *B. paulensis*, but *B. gehrtii* was shown before at a branch show a couple of years ago.

Q: Did you use any special grooming techniques just before the show?

A: No, not just before the show. I just gave them a little touch-up. I try to keep close to my plants, keep them shaped up and growing year round. I get to each one several times a year for grooming and a checkup.

Q: Gene, we are all going to want plants like these. I understand that *B. gehrtii* is one rhizome whose leaves cannot be propagated for new plants. What about *B. paulensis*?

A: That's correct, *B. gehrtii* forms roots but no new plant. I haven't tried *B. paulensis*, but I have heard that it can be propagated from a leaf. I'll let you know later this year. I'm going to try it.

Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Listing

The San Miguel Branch, San Diego County
Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

*The seed fund is a service to members only.
It is a privilege of your membership.*

DISCLAIMER: The seeds distributed by the Seed Fund are identified as received from the donors. The Seed Fund cannot guarantee that the identification is correct. When you find that seeds received from the Seed Fund do not develop into the plant expected, please notify the Seed Fund so that a warning can be published for others who may have received seeds from the same batch. Each offering will be identified by a code and that code should be used whenever writing to the Seed Fund about seeds. The descriptions published are from the literature and apply to the name used for the seed offerings. Thank you!

The Seed Fund would appreciate receiving donations of any fresh seed. Our supply is very limited at this time. Thank you! Please be careful to identify open pollinated seeds and keep them separated from known self-pollinated seed. Thank you!

Packets of species seeds are \$1.50 each and all packets of hybrid seeds are 50 cents each, except rare seed are \$2.00 per packet. California residents please add 7.75% sales tax.

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Mexico only: 1-12 packets, \$1.15; 13-24, \$1.51; 25-36, \$1.87; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.50; 49-60, \$2.81.

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The CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND is a project of the **San Miguel Branch** of the ABS in San Diego County, California. Donors of seeds in this issue are **Freda Holley** and **Jackie Davis**.

Please send your order with payment to:

**AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
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Eleanor M. Calkins, Coordinator
910 Fern Street
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Species Seeds

JA98-1: *B. cardiocarpa*

JA98-2: *B. deliciosa*

JA98-3: *B. edmundoi*

JA98-4: *B. glabra*

- JA98-5: *B. hirtella*
 JA98-6: *B. mazaе*
 JA98-7: *B. manicata*
 JA98-8: *B. mollicaulis*

Cultivar Seeds

- JA98-9: *B. odorata* 'Alba'
 B. 'Lotusland' Hybrids
 Mixed Rex hybrids

Warning: The plants grown by members of the San Miguel Branch from seeds distributed as MA98-3 *B. francoisii* do not appear to match the description from the literature. (The translation of the original description will be carried in the next issue of the *Begonian*. Ed.)

DESCRIPTIONS

JA98-1: *B. cardiocarpa* Liebmann from Central America; upright rhizomatous; glossy green leaves on long petioles; white flowers on long petioles.

JA98-2: *B. deliciosa* Linden from Borneo; medium growth, bushy; deeply lobed olive-green grey spotted leaves; red beneath; large soft pink flowers, desc. in *Hortus Third*.

Below, B. deliciosa.



JA98-3: *B. edmundoi* Brade from Brazil; shrubby to 2 feet, dark erect thin brittle stems; dark green upper and red under leaves, dentate margins; large flowers white with pink margins; desc. in *Begonian* 1979: 31-3 and *Hortus Third*.

JA98-4: *B. glabra* Aublet from Central America; scandent species forming roots at nodes; heart shaped leaves, pale green flowers; desc. in *Hortus Third*.

JA98-5: *B. hirtella* Link from Brazil; herbaceous annual to 2 feet; green leaves with soft hairs, oblique heart shaped with scalloped margins; white flowers on stems from the leaf axils; all parts somewhat hairy; see *Begonian* 1941: 10-11 also *Hortus Third*.

JA98-6: *B. mazaе* Ziesenhenné from Mexico; shrubby; ovate leaves, dark green chatoyant with red-brown blanket stitched edges and brown markings, red underneath; white to pale pink flowers; desc. in *Hortus Third*.

JA98-7: *B. manicata* Brogniart from Mexico; succulent rhizomes sometimes erect; distinctive collar of coarse red hairs at top of petiole; ovate green leaves with toothed ciliate margins; pink flowers on long stems; desc. in *Hortus Third*.

JA98-9: *B. odorata* 'Alba' Tall growing, green leaves; white flowers; confusing history of the name, sometimes said to be a variety or a cultivar of *B. minor* (syn. *nitida*); See *Begonian* 1945: 127.

News: Branch, ABS, and International

Estelle Sullivan, a **San Jacinto Branch** member, recently entered the Collector's Showcase put on by the Gulfcoast Gardener's Forum and captured the sweepstakes with, what else, a collection of five begonias.

This year's **Miami Begonia Society Show** was a big success with 121 entries. **Joyce Pridgen** was the big winner, taking Best of Show with *B. malabarica*, Sweepstakes, Showing is Sharing, and six division awards. This Branch also has a nice tradition of selecting Branch Life Members from among those who have given long term service. This year's honorees were **Shelby Cochran** and **Alma Crawford** of whom, **Bob Cochran**, editor of the Branch newsletter *The Miabegonia* says, "These two ladies are not just good growers who are dedicated to begonias, they are my mentors in the love of growing begonias and more. Moreover, one is my Mother and the other might as well be."

The *Knickerbocker News* of the **Knickerbocker Branch** carries a quote and a sketch from the literature on one species in each issue. In April it was *B. heracleifolia* and in May *B. popenoei*, both by Standley and Williams from the *Flora of Guatemala*. What a nice learning device!

The **Monterey Area Branch** members share seedlings. In April **Jackie Davis** brought tuberous seedlings of a scented tuberous begonia and **John Fear** shared his babies from the ABS Seed Fund.

The entire Spring *Bulletin* of **England's National Begonia Society** arrived from **Derek Telford** via the Internet, 22 single spaced pages! Now, that's E-mail ... and

perhaps, the wave of the future. It was chock full of news about shows (and there were many mentioned), growing problems and solutions, and members. The emphasis as you might guess was on the tuberous for which the English are justly noted, but from **Jeff Rhodes** came information about his interest and growing efforts with species of which he now has over 48. He finds them more difficult to grow, but also more interesting.

The April/June edition of *Begonia*, the bulletin of the **Japanese Begonia Society** has a beautiful cover photo of *B. 'Sorcerer's Apprentice'* along with a lengthy article about this hybrid from Logees. Oh, to read Japanese! But fortunately for us, **Akira Tanaka** is providing translations of some of the articles (See page 150.) and you will be getting other excerpts from *Begonia* in the future.

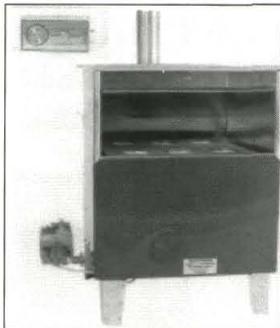
From Australia, we hear that the '98 Convention was a great success. The editor has been provided with papers presented by Peter Sharp; you have excerpts of one in this issue and others will be coming in the future. Six attendees came from the US including **Carol** and **Peter Notaras**, **Tamsin** and **Bruce Boardman**, and **Jeanne Jones**.

The name of this column has been changed to reflect these communications with begonia growers from all over the world. The Internet group set up by **Kathy Goetz** has members from many countries. (For information on how to join, see last issue's *Begonia Bytes* column.) The better our communication with begonia lovers everywhere, the better will be our knowledge of begonias.

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COMING EVENTS

- July 11, 1998 Potluck Meeting of the Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch (CA) at Eva Pratt's home, 3 p.m. . Call 805-642-3198 for info or E-mail at: Bubba@thegrid.net
- July 18-19, 1998 Westchester Branch 17th Annual show and Plant Sale, Westchester Christian Church, 8740 La Tijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA. Sat.: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun: 12 Noon to 4 p.m. . For information call Janet Brown at 310-670-4471 or Ramona Parker at 310-324-8803.
- July 18, 1998 Joint meeting of the Long Beach Parent Chapter (CA) and Orange County Branch (CA) at Sherman Gardens. Call National Directors (see page 141) for information.
- July 25/26, 1998 Doug Frost Branch Show and Sale, UCI Arboretum, Irvine, CA. Call 714-898-2362 for information.
- August 23, 1998 Sixth Annual Begonia Show and Sale, Bewitching Begonias will be presented by the Palos Verdes Begonia Society at the South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula, on Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission to the Garden is \$5; seniors 62 and over admitted for \$3. For more information call 310-830-4707
- August 28, 1998 San Francisco Branch Show and Sale. For info, call National Director.
- August 29, 1998 The long Beach Parent Chapter Begonia Show & Sale, Paramount Methodist Church, 16635 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA. For Information, call 563-866-6053.

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Seed Fund.....Eleanor Calkins, 910
Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027-1708

Slide Library.....Charles Jaros
200 Maureen Dr., Sanford, FL 32771

Continued from page 137.

odorata	'Alba'	o-dor-AY-tuh, Al-buh
paulensis		paul-EN-sis
popoenei		poh-poh-en-OH-eye
ravenii		RAY-ven-i-eye (named for Peter Raven)
roxburghii		rox-burgh-i-eye
salicifolia		sal-i-si-FOH-li-uh
scharffii		SCHARFF-i-eye
serratipetala		ser-ra-ti -PET-a-luh
subvillosa		sub-vil-LOH-suh
velloziana		vel-loh-zi-AY-nuh
versicolor		ver-si-KOH-lor
wollnyi		WOHLL-ni-eye



American Begonia Society

157 Monument
Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617

Address Correction Requested

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Please! Send Atlanta photos to the editor by July 20!