

The **Begonian**

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The **Begonian**

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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: **Iris Bird** captured these Non-Stop Tuberous Begonias from Weidners' Nursery grown in a shade garden. Will we see begonias like this in California in September?

Back: **Carol Catalano** took this photograph of B. 'Richmondensis' growing at the home of **Jackie & Harry Davis**, Aptos, CA, in August of 1998.

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President's Notes...

I was listening to the car radio as I travelled homeward from town a few days after Christmas. An interviewer was asking E.O. Wilson, the noted Harvard biologist, about some world happenings that alarmed him. Wilson was one of the first to use the term, "biodiversity," and his alarms were about the lessening of biodiversity around the world. Later in the program I found it was a rerun from 1989 and many of the things he'd feared had actually come to pass.

A day or so later, a live interview program had the British biologist, Richard Fortey, whose book *Life* is subtitled: *A Natural history of the First Four Billion Years of Life on Earth*. This eminent scientist has spent 40 years studying trilobites, sea creatures that disappeared 400 million years ago, except as fossils. You know them: they look a bit like Kermit the Frog, only harder and much older. A twelve year old caller, already a fossil 'nut,' stumped him: how did they reproduce? Fortey had some theories but no hard evidence. And he was thrilled with the question because it is one that has occupied him and his students for much of those 40 years.

During these months of March and April we are preparing for our spring and summer growing seasons. We also have the mundane duty of preparing our tax forms--we must pay Ceasar his due. I would prefer to spend my waking hours empathizing with Wilson advocating biodiversity; or pondering with Fortey what has happened in our lifetimes that will influence the next 4 billion years.

In this scenario of eons, are *begonias* necessary? If you know me, then the answer is obvious: I love living things. I love thorny bushes and succulents; bugs & snails, all kinds of feathered and furred fliers (we've recently had as a guest a sugar glider, a small, flying squirrel-like

Australian marsupial), even rattlesnakes. I marvel at the grace and power of my big red horse as he gallops in the chill morning air - thankful that I'm watching and not on him!

While I've had my adventures, I'm still envious of Scott Hoover's collecting expeditions, Don Miller's searches for new plants, Bob Cherry's discoveries in China, and Jacques Jangoux's gorgeous pictures of begonias in situ, whether in Borneo, Brazil, or wherever he's working.

The point of all these word pictures and flights of imagination is that someone has got to go out and collect! Not just for hybridizing, but to make sure that there is the possibility of repopulating some of the temporarily destroyed and denuded areas that are the results of accidents, greed, or lack of vision. However, our membership numbers and the necessary dues are declining. We say we are the lovers of begonias, they're our special emphasis in life. Please look at your branch membership: how many are not members of ABS? I've noted some new officers that are not on the membership lists; please read your branch constitution and bylaws and tell me how this can be. And tell me how we can make donations to collecting trips with fewer dollars in the bank. Or are you 'members' happy to watch from the sidelines, as I've watched my beautiful horse from a distance, thrilled but really uninvolved?

I saw a stitchery once, so profound that it is deeply imbedded in my psyche: "*We taste the spices of Arabia, but never feel the hot sun that brought them forth.*"

As you ponder your commitment to ABS, you may receive a call from one of the nominating committee members. Mary McClelland, Johanna Zinn, and Ingeborg Foo have accepted the duty of seeding our candidates. Please contact them if you've a recommendation or a petition.

~Bruce C. Boardman

The Begonian

Rudolf Ziesenhenne Donates Older *Begonians* to ABS

For some time now the Back Issues Department has been out of many older issues of the *Begonian* and even some issues of more recent years. When Rudolf Ziesenhenne heard about this shortage, he went through all his stored materials, spent hours of time and immense effort to package and ship all the back issues of which he had copies to Ann Salisbury, the Back Issues Chairman.

Ann Salisbury is organizing these materials and they are ready for members to enter their orders. Available are complete sets and miscellaneous individual issues from the late 1940's up to 1993. So make a list of your heart's desire of missing copies or years you would like to have and send your order on to Ann. Most of these are in excellent condition, Ann reports, and they are going for the bargain price of \$5/year or \$1/single issue. Make your check payable to ABS and then you will owe Ann the amount of postage shown in the upper right hand of your package. If you have a question, write or call Ann at: P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653; Ph: 580-628-5230.

And when you have received your package or even if you don't order any, how about writing a note to Rudy Ziesenhenne telling him how much you appreciate his donation and the effort he put in to make it. Remember, membership dues have been kept low in ABS and they haven't covered the cost of printing and mailing the *Begonian* for a long time. It is such extras of donations and fund raising that have made it possible to date to keep the dues down. **THANK YOU, RUDY.**

Howard Siebold Donates Books

Howard Siebold has generously donated 900 copies of his new book on tuberous begonia growing to the ABS Millie Thompson Publication Fund.

Here again, Howard has spent many years at growing tuberous begonias and in particular in the development of a line of fragrant tuberous begonias. Now, he has taken all this knowledge and expertise and put in the effort to write a book that will help beginners and experienced alike in their growing. To donate all this to ABS is true devotion to begonia growing.

Look for the announcement of the book's availability in next month's issue. **All proceeds** from its sale will go to the Millie Thompson Fund. The Fund is growing to bring you even more publications on begonias! **OUR THANKS TO YOU, TOO, HOWARD.**

Begonia wollnyi, An Adventure in *Begonia* Research

by Jack Golding

The characters of all plants are variable. A careful examination of any *Begonia* will show that no two stems, leaves, inflorescence, flowers, or any other feature, are identical. They are all similar, but are variable within recognizable parameters that define a species. This is recognized by Article 7.1, quoted from the **International Code of Botanical Nomenclature**, 1994, "A nomenclatural type (*typus*) is that element to which the name of a taxon is permanently attached, whether as a correct name or as a synonym. The nomenclatural type is not necessarily the most typical or representative element of the taxon." *Begonia wollnyi* Herzog is an example of a very variable species.

A herbarium specimen is like a plant "frozen" at the time it was collected. Often some vital detail characters of the plant are missing. The additional information to complete the description is found by the examination of herbarium specimens of plants collected at different times. But the best information can come from the continuing observation of growing plants.

My adventure with *Begonia wollnyi* started with the cutting I received from Rudy Ziesenhenné in September 1971. In the preparation for this report, I reviewed the voluminous research reports and correspondence I had these many years with Carrie Karegeannes, Thelma O'Reilly, Jan Doorenbos, Lyman B. Smith, Fred Barkley, Arlene Peck, and Rudy Ziesenhenné.

Theodore Herzog, a German bryologist, during October 1907, collected a *Begonia* in the mountain woods at the

Gorge of Cunuco, Mountain Range of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, at about 800 meters altitude. He named this plant *Begonia wollnyi* and described it in *Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg.*, 7:63, 1909. In 1990 from the herbarium in Zurich, I was able to obtain and photograph the Type specimen, *Herzog No. 86*. This specimen, having only two mature leaves and three male flowers is a poor representative of this beautiful plant and the reason for Herzog's incomplete description.

Robert S. Williams, an American explorer, found an interesting *Begonia* during his 1901-2 travels in Bolivia. He brought back to the New York Botanical Garden herbarium material in fruit only. Plants from the seed of this specimen were grown at the Garden and in January 1906 they were in flower. George V. Nash with H.H. Rusby described and named this plant *Begonia williamsii* in honor of the collector, in *Torreyia*, 6:47, pl. 1906, and *Addisonia*, 1:37, pl. 29, 1916. The characters for this description were taken from both the incomplete Type specimen *Williams No. 600*, and, for the flowers, from the live plants cultivated at the Garden. L.B. Smith and B.G. Schubert, *Revista Univ. (Cuzco)*, 33 (87):84, 1944, with a "?" indicated *Begonia wollnyi* Herzog, 1909 to be a synonym of *Begonia williamsii*. Unfortunately this name is illegitimate because of the earlier homonym, *Begonia X williamsii* B.S. Williams, *Cat.*:24, 1882. Therefore *Begonia wollnyi* is the correct name for this species.

Ernst Ule, a German botanist, collected at the Acre River of Brazil, near the Bolivia border, a *Begonia*, his *No.*

9549. Edgar Irmscher, Bot Jahrb. Syst., 74:605, 1944, described and named it *Begonia acrensis*. L. B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, J. Wash. Acad. Sci., 45:114, 1955, determined it to be the same species as *Begonia williamsii* Rusby & Nash, 1906.

Carrie and I translated from Latin to English the original citations of *Begonia wollnyi* Herzog and *Begonia acrensis* Irmscher. We compared these descriptions with that by Nash for *Begonia williamsii*. Carrie prepared tables comparing from my notes and photos the characters of my live plants with these descriptions. Thelma provided data on the plants she and others on the West Coast (See her report in the Begonian, 63:84-86, 1996) Carrie continued to revise her comparison tables as new data was observed from our growing plants. My original plants died during 1987-89 when I was recovering from my heart surgery and the later move to our present home. After reading Freda Holley's report about *Begonia wollnyi* in the Begonian, 63:37-138, 1996, I requested some cuttings of her plants. From these I grew two plants in our community greenhouse. In December they shed all their leaves and then started to flower in January 1998. The plants have a tuber and none of the plant's leaves are peltate.

From 1971 to 1973, I thought that *Begonia wollnyi* and *Begonia williamsii* might be different species, because my plant did not have peltate leaves, my male flowers had four tepals and the wings on the ovaries of my plants were triangular. But, it is now clear from the additional information discussed below and my examination of the additional herbarium specimens listed in my companion article "*Begonia wollnyi* Herzog - Emended" that they are the same species.

In the descriptions by Herzog of *Begonia wollnyi*, and by Irmscher for

Begonia acrensis, the leaves are non-peltate (Carrie noted in her examination of its isotype, that the leaves are barely peltate). But Nash for *B. williamsii* described them as peltate. Actually, they are scarcely peltate, the umbo (place of petiole attachment) is only 6 mm from the margin. At the 1973 Eastern Begonia Convention I saw a *Begonia wollnyi* with peltate leaves grown by Arlene Peck from seed obtained from the American Begonia Society. I raised several plants from cuttings she gave me and in March 1974, I observed that on the same plant a few of the older (lower) leaves were peltate, but all the others were non-peltate. I also noted that one of the plants from the original cuttings sent to me by Rudy in 1971 had some peltate leaves. Lyman Smith advised that this was not unique and that other *Begonia* had both peltate and non-peltate leaves (i.e. *B. octopetala*, *B. tropaeolifolia*).

The number of tepals on the staminate (male) flowers are variable. Herzog listed only two broadly ovate to circular tepals and numerous stamens. Irmscher described the male flower with two almost round tepals and few stamens. Nash in his description from a live plant describes the male flowers with two outer tepals and rarely with one or two smaller and narrower inner ones, the stamens are illustrated as numerous. The staminate flowers on the many different plants of *Begonia wollnyi* that I have grown from 1971 through 1998 almost always had two broadly ovate almost circular outer tepals and two narrowly ovate inner tepals. A very few had no inner tepals, or only one. Often in *Begonia* species, the two smaller male tepals fall off early, or are "lost" from the dried specimen; perhaps this has occurred on these?

Herzog's Type specimen No. 86 does not have any pistillate (female) flowers.

Nash in his citation for *Begonia williamsii* described the pistillate flowers with 5 tepals, ovate to broadly ovate, acute 5-6 mm. long and 3-5 mm wide, the inner ones narrower. Irmscher in his citation for *Begonia acensis* described the pistillate flower with 5 tepals almost equal, oval, 7-9 mm long, the outer ones 4.5-6 mm wide, the inner ones 3-4 mm wide. On the plants I have grown the female flowers had 5 variable tepals, ovate to broadly ovate, acute, 6-12 mm long, 4-8 mm wide; other flowers with 5 tepals 7-9 mm long, outer 3 or 4 almost equal, broadly ovate, 4.5-6 mm wide, inner ones, narrower, 3-4 mm wide.

Nash described the ovary with 3 wings, 2 truncate at the apex and narrower than the third with the upper edge ascending, all the wings merging toward the rounded base. The capsule has two wings semicircular or slightly bulging near the apex, the third with a rounded point truncate on the upper side. Irmscher described the ovary with 3 wings, the largest almost rectangular, the angles rounded, and the upper margin descending a little, the capsule 3-winged, the largest wing obliquely

triangular with the upper margin a little concave, the others almost triangular with the upper margin turned downwards, all with obtuse tips. On my plants the ovaries have 3 variable wings, some with 2 wings subequally triangular, the third lunate; others with 2 wings truncate at apex or nearly so and the 3rd narrower, rounded nearer the apex with upper edge somewhat ascending, all rounded converging toward the base of the ovary. On the mature capsules, all angles of the wings are very rounded.

I have not grown *Begonia U176* from La Paz, Bolivia. But, after examining the photos taken by kit Jeans Mounger and Thelma O'Reilly of plants growing in the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens I consider it another variation of *Begonia wollnyi*.

I want to thank all who have contributed plants and information for this report, especially Carrie Karegeannes and Thelma O'Reilly for sharing the many years of enjoyment of our research with *Begonia*. Also, again to Carrie for her review of my preliminary manuscript.

Quick Tips: Propagation

It's time to think about starting new plants for those sales or for sharing later this year. Here's some quick tips to help.

The supermarket containers used to package fresh mushrooms are terrific for sowing seeds or rooting plantlets. They're deep and sturdy and fit on an average windowsill. And, a tried-and-true "recipe" for rooting begonia leaves and cuttings: Mix one part milled sphagnum moss with one part horticultural sand. Water

thoroughly before inserting cuttings; do NOT cover cuttings, but check frequently to keep medium moist. Great for root systems, and almost fail-proof, in my experience.

Karen Lynch
Glen Ridge, NJ

When covering sweater propagation boxes with plastic wrap, moisten the edges of the box with water from a squirt bottle. This will insure a better hold. Also, purchase wide plastic wrap at a restaurant supply store. Covering large sweater boxes with wrap from the market is difficult.

Michael Kartuz
Vista, CA

Begonia wollnyi Herzog - Emended by Jack Golding

Begonia wollnyi Herzog, Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg., 7:63, 1909.

TYPE: *Herzog No. 86*, Bolivia in mountain woods at the Gorge of Cunuco, Mountain Range of Santa Cruz, at about 800 meters high, October 1907 (Z!), **Plate 1**. Beck No. 4822, Bolivia, District of La Paz Province Nor Yungas, Caranavi about 15 km toward Puerto Linares, going up by the River Yarna. 850 m. on a gradual descent with cultivation and the rest of the vegetation. September 15, 1981 (US! No. 2916541). Liesner, Gonzales & Stergio, No. 12648, Venezuela, State of Portuguesa, 30 KM west of Guanare by air, along Rio Tucopido, 200 to 300 m alt. 9°2' N, 70°1' W. (MO! No. 3100802). Steyermark, Liesner, & Aymard, No. 127054, Venezuela, State of Portuguesa, Tropical and transitional forest, stony brow of hill above bridge over Maria River, NE of Boca de Monte, 28-32 km NNE from Guanare, Lat 9°18-19' N, 69°42-43' W, Nov. 2, 1982 (MO! No. 3213837). Steyermark, Liesner & Aymard...No. 127239, Venezuela, State of Portuguesa, Forest in the valley of the Quebrada Algarrobo, at a tributary of the river Morador 7 km NE to the Boca de Monte 22 km NE of the ford of the river Suniguapo 45 km to the NE for the subtropical Guanare Ospino and the place Las Marbo east of Guanare Lat. 9°19'N, long. 69°41'30"W, alt 400 m, Nov. 3, 1982, (MO! No. 3213840). Delasto & Lopez, No. 12940, Venequela, State of Cojedes, Dept. San Carlos, Cigarrón, on bank of the river San Carlos, 230-300 m alt. Nov. 28, 1986 (MO!, No. 3440256).

Begonia williamsii Rusby & Nash, Nash, Torreya, 6:47, pl, 1906, non *X williamsii* B.S. Williams, 1882,---Nash, Addisonia, 1:57, pl.29, 1916,---L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, Revista Univ. (Cuzco), 33(87):84, 1944 = *Begonia wollnyi*, Herzog, 1909.

TYPE: *R.S. Williams No. 600*, bolivia among moss on a damp shady bluff, north of San Buena Ventura, at 420 meters, Nov. 14, 1901 (NY!), **Plate 2**. No. 2795 Cultivated plant from seed of Williams No. 600 (NY!). Bang, No. 6409, Bolivia (MO!). O.E. White No. 920, Bolivia, Bopi River Valley, 900 m, Aug. 26, 1921 (NY!). B.A. Krukoff No. 10492, Bolivia, District of La Paz, Province of S. Yungas, Basin Rio Bopi, San Bartome (near Calisaya) alt. 750-900 m, July 1-22, 1939 (NY!).

Begonia acrensis Irmscher, Bot. Jahrb. Syst., 74:605, 1949, ---L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, J. Wash. Acad. Sci., 45:114, 1955 [= *williamsii* Rusby & Nash, 1906, non *X williamsii* Williams, 1892];---Revista Univ. (Cuzco), 33(87):84, 1944, = *Begonia wollnyi* Herzog, 1909

TYPE: Ule No. 9549, Brazil: Rio Acre, Seringal, S. Francisco, by a wooded stream, June 1911 (B). ISOTYPE No. 1615242 (US!).

Begonia U176 Begonian 58:59, pl., 1991, C. & J. Luer, Vasquez No. 1773, Bolivia, District of La Paz, Province of N. Yungas, 49 km, Coroico-Caranavi, 880 m. (SEL);. In litteris, J. Golding to R. Siebert SEL., March 27, 1991 = *Begonia wollnyi* Herzog, 1909.

Emended J. Golding

Herba tubere. Folia vulgo non-peltata raro peltata. Inflorescentiae dichasiis compositis floribundae, bisexuales. Flores staminatae, tepalis 4, exterioribus 2 late ovatis, interioribus 2 anguste ovatis raro uno vel nullus, staminibus numerosis. Flores pistillatae, tepalis 5, variabilibus, exterioribus 3 vel 4 ovatis et late ovatis, interioribus angustioribus; stili 3,



Plate 1, *Begonia wollnyi* TYPE Herzog No. 86.

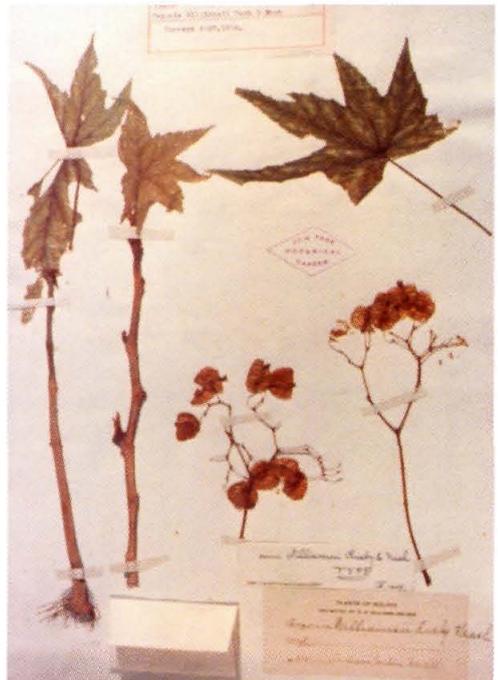


Plate 2, *Begonia williamsii* TYPE,
Williams No. 600

biramosi, , apicibus bifidis, paginis stigmaticis torsivis ad basin et extris inter ramos elevatis, ovaria trilocularia, triangularia, alis variabilibus, 2 maximis subequalibus triangularibus, cetera lunata vel triangularia; aliis alis, rectangularibus supra margine truncata vel subelevatis, a centro marginibus rotundatis convergentibus versus basin ovarii, angulis omnibus parvis rotundatis, placentae bifidis, undique ovuliferae. Capsulae maturae angulis omnibus alarum valde rotundatis.

Tuberous herb. Leaves, **Plate 3**, usually non-peltate, but a few on the same plant may be peltate with the umbo (place of petiole attachment) 2.5-6 mm from the margin, unequally 4 to 6 lobed. Inflorescence, **Plate 4**, a compound dichasium, bisexual, with many flowers, staminate flowers appearing first and the pistillate flowers later. The staminate flowers, **Plate 5**, with two broadly ovate almost circular outer tepals, 15 mm long, 13 mm wide; and two narrowly ovate inner tepals, 8-9 mm long, 2.5-3 mm wide, rarely with only one or no inner tepal, numerous stamens. Pistillate flowers, **Plate 6**, with 5 variable tepals, ovate to broadly ovate, acute, 6-12 mm long, 4-8 mm wide; other flowers with 5 tepals 7-9 mm long, outer 3 or 4 almost equal broadly ovate 4.5-6 mm wide, inner ones, narrower 3-4 mm wide, styles 3, bifid with stigmatic surface spiraling from apex, continuous at the base, undulating between the two branches, but elevated approximately halfway to the apex as a partial hood. Ovary, 3-celled, 11.5 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, wings variable, some with 2 wings subequal triangular, third lunate, others with 2 wings truncate at apex or nearly so and the 3rd narrower, rounded nearer to the apex with upper edge somewhat ascending, with the margins rounded from the center converging toward the base of the ovary, all angles a little rounded, placenta bifid bearing ovules on both sides. On mature capsules all corners of the wings are very rounded.

This emendation is drawn from the citations and herbarium specimens noted above. The observations of cultivated plants were from plants grown by J. Golding, from a cutting obtained from Rudy Zieshenne in Sept. 1971. His plant was grown from seed from Edgar Irmischer's collection in Weihenstephan, Germany, collected by Jan Doorenbos of Netherland and offered in the American Begonia Society Seed Fund Listing in the *Begonian*, 37:180, 1970. Observations also of: plants grown from cuttings from Arlene Peck in 1973 of her plant grown from seed from the ABS Seed Fund; plants grown by Carrie Karegeannes and Thelma O'Reilly; and plants grown from cutting obtained from Freda Holley in 1997.

A set of photographs by Jack Golding of the various characters of *Begonia wollnyi*, observed from 1972 to 1998, are filed in the U. S. Herbarium.



Plate 3: *Begonia wollnyi*, March 1974 Older



Plate 4, *Begonia wollnyi*, inflorescence, April 1973

**Plate 5, *Begonia wollnyi*, staminate flowers. Figs. 1 & 3
July 1972, Figs. 2, 4, & 5 Feb 1998.**



fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3

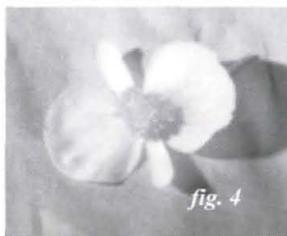


fig. 4

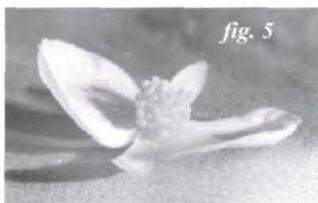


fig. 5



Plate 6, *Begonia wollnyi*, pistillate flowers. Fig. 1 Feb. 1998, figs. 2, 3, & 4 Aug. 1972, fig. 5 March 1998, fig. 6 July 1979, fig. 7 Aug. 1992

Begonia versicolor

by Wallace W. Wagner

Begonia versicolor is a rhizomatous begonia from central China. It was discovered by Dr. Edgar Irmscher in 1939. It requires a terrarium culture, preferring to grow in long fiber sphagnum moss.

Leslie Woodriff called it the "Fairy Carpet" begonia because of the velvety appearance of its dark green leaves, frosted with silver and covered with thick red hairs, especially down the veins. Leaf size varies from 3" to 7" depending on how it is grown.

The backs of the pink flowers are covered with dark red hairs, as are the ovaries of the female flowers.

Leslie Woodriff once described benches full of *B. versicolor* in his greenhouses in Harbor, Oregon. They were grown in pots on the bench. Harbor is on the coast of southern Oregon where the climate is moderate and moist. Most of us grow *B. versicolor* in an enclosed container.

I fertilize by spritzing the leaves once a month with 1/4 strength 10-10-10 liquid fertilizer. Since the plants are grown under lights, they grow fast and need some fertilizer because the moss provides very little nourishment.

If the moss shows a white crust it is getting too much fertilizer and the moss

may need to be leached by submerging the moss in water and then removing the water. The process may need to be repeated several times to get rid of the salt.

B. versicolor's worst enemy is heat. It does not like the hot weather of summer. I have lost many a *B. versicolor* due to summer heat. I keep mine in the coolest part of the house and only run the lights at night when the temperature is cooler.

Even though *B. versicolor* has been around since 1939, it has never been in wide circulation and has seldom been advertised in plant catalogues. More begonia fans should grow it since it is easy to grow provided it gets good light but not sunlight, and it is kept cool.

I have not seen everybody's catalog recently, but I know it is available through Cloudy Valley Nursery and Kartuz Greenhouses.

Give *B. versicolor* a try. It is a beautiful begonia. By growing it you will not only be able to admire it's beauty, but you will also be helping to save a species.

Wally Wagner grows B. versicolor at 4560 39th Ave. NE, Salem, OR 97305 and you may also E-mail him at: wwwno1@earthlink.net

Another New One from Australia! Get yours today!

The Begonian Index 1941-1998

Prepared by Pat Williams, South Australian Begonia Society.

Please note: The index was published in 1998, but only covers items in The Begonian through 1997.

To purchase, send your check for \$12 which includes postage made payable to the American Begonia Society to:

Ann Salisbury
P.O. Box 452
Tonkawa, OK 74653



Above, *B. versicolor*. This photo by Don Miller originally appeared in the *SWR/Region Begonia Leaflet*, June/July 1998 issue. To the right, Midori Nobussawa's lovely closeup of *B. versicolor*'s ovary shows the red hairs described by Wally Wagner.



Cloudy Valley Nursery

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Rhizomatous Begonias: Care

By Maria Holmes

Bringing Your New Begonia Home...

Rhizomatous begonias are interesting plants: Spectacular. Varied. Cantankerous and difficult to grow. But there are a few simple actions you can take that will insure a high rate of survival with these beguiling beauties.

Humidity is the Key...

Many well-meaning begonia enthusiasts kill off their new rhizomatous begonias soon after bringing them home. “Darn, I must have over watered another one!” mutters the grower. But, this is often not the case. I think THE SHOCK of bringing one of these rhizoids home to a new climate is simply too much for many of them. Let me explain...

The new plant most probably came from a place where the environment was hotter or colder, wetter or dryer, or sunnier or darker than your back yard. This often proves to be too much for such delicate vegetation. But, it’s easier than you think to compensate for this.

When I bring a new plant home, I put it in a plastic bag or clear plastic box in a relatively dark, protected spot for a week or so. I mist the plant with water, or water and Superthrive (tm) for extra humidity. Every day, I open the container a little. I gradually move the plants into an area with more light. Since I’ve been doing this, I’ve only lost two or three plants, which is infinitely better than the mass suicide situations I used to encounter. Remember to keep the container out of direct sunlight since this mini- “greenhouse” will trap heat and quickly turn your

plant to a brown mush. The two best places I’ve found to purchase plastic boxes are Pic and Save and Target.

Even Weak Plants Can Survive...

In case you bring a very small plant home from somewhere, there are other measures you can take to ensure its survival. Understanding that infant plants are more delicate than older ones, you might want to keep the plant in a darker and/or more protected spot than the others. Keeping it in a plastic bag or box with a little extra humidity for as long as needed also helps.

Do not overwater the plant, because baby rhizomatous begonias are even more sensitive to water than their more established siblings. One good way to determine if a plant needs water is to pick up the pot and feel how heavy or light it is. By doing this often, you will soon develop a sensitivity as to when a plant is dry and requires watering. You can, of course, put your finger a half inch or three-quarters of an inch into the soil. If it’s cool to the touch, there’s still water down here. With older plants in larger pots you may want to put your finger three-quarters of an inch down into the soil to check for wetness. If it’s dry that far down, you can go ahead and water.

One last help for very young or particularly sensitive plants is to seal them, pot and all, in some sort of terrarium and put them indoors under a fluorescent light. While this may sound like a lot of work, it’s well worth the effort to put up a fluorescent fixture in the garage or spare bedroom. Some plants do not winter well,

even in Southern California's mild weather, and an indoor setup will keep them robust through the damp, cold winter. It's also comforting to have one's treasured plants nearby so you can enjoy them *without having to go outside in the drizzle or icy fog*. Most nurseries and hardware stores' garden shops have one or more books which discuss terrariums and indoor gardening.

Soil Can Make the Difference...

I report all my rhizomatous begonias in my own soil mix once I get them home.

Priorities

by Donna Zody

Have you ever been amazed, or amused, by your friends' or even a family members' priorities? Some people love travel, fine cars, computers, and clothes while others put their hobbies first. Growing begonias is a priority for me.

The Begonian editor, Brad Thompson, (Jan/Feb 1997) wrote a compelling article entitled "Growing Under Lights," which I couldn't get out of my mind. Having a grow light setup became a priority. A whole year later, I was able to buy a "used" three tray stand. It fit nicely against a blank wall in the office, opposite the computer, illuminating the room without need for other light. I added a neat little vaporizer to keep the plants misted. The ambiance of the room was a delight...a wall of green plants, the lights, the window, the computer keeping me in touch with friends, the nice balance of humidity, and an inviting chair.

Last week, our daughter, who had taught me everything I know about using the computer, arrived for the holidays and

Others' soil mixes may hold more or less water than yours. Your own soil causes the new plant to dry out at about the same time as your other plants, making watering uniform.

The last safety measure for rhizomatous begonias is to take a leaf and propagate it.

Maria Holmes is our Quick Tips Editor (Don't forget to send her yours!). She lives at #144, 760 W. Lomita Blv., Harbor City, CA 90710-2517 or E-mail her at mariaholmes@world.att.net.

to help with updating the computer. With little abandon, she announced, "Mom, your plants and that vaporizer have to GO. We need to find another place for that setup...some *other* room, perhaps!

"Whatever for?" I asked incredulously.

Her priorities emanated forth in word and body language, "Because the humidity in here is absolutely deadly for your computer's components...all of it...the monitor, keyboard, the hard drive everything! Your system cannot exist in this environment, it's that simple," she admonished.

My plants die of over-watering, the computer suffers from over-hydration, so maybe I need to re-examine my priorities. On the other hand, there *are* desks in other rooms. It's tough to choose between one's priorities.

Oh, Donna, haven't we all felt the frustration of rearranging our furniture and our lives for the sake of our begonias or our computers! Donna lives in Houston and is President of the San Jacinto Branch. You may E-mail her at ydoz@aol.com. This article appeared first in the January edition of her branch newsletter, the San Jac Begoniatic.

Growing Organic

by Tamsin Boardman

Spring may be the time when a young man's fancy turns to love, or perhaps to baseball, as one wag suggested. But for begonia growers, spring means getting the begonias outside for summer camp under the trees.

Spring can also mean it's time to prepare the flower beds for *semperflorens*, or, if you're lucky in your climate, tuberous begonias. There are some nice, natural ways you can make the beds healthy and comfortable for your begonias and the summer workload easier on yourself.

Additives to consider while forking over a new bed or reworking an unsatisfactory old one are: *compost, for improving and fertilizing the soil; *lava rock or rock phosphates, which will, paradoxically, help soil retain moisture *and* improve drainage; *corn gluten meal, which adds nitrogen *and* inhibits growth of seeds (don't use this, of course, if you're growing your semps from seed); *corn meal, a fertilizer and bacteria killer; *epsom salts, for mineral-poor soil; *sugar, or dry molasses, to stimulate microbial activity; *and, of course, as much high-quality mulch as the budget will stand.

Keep adding mulch throughout the year; it insulates from both summer heat and winter cold. Use a good mulch: it deteriorates and adds to the nutrients in the bed. Cheap mulch compresses and keeps water from getting to the soil--or floats away like the money you wasted on it. Either way, you need to keep adding to the mulch layers.

Your properly prepared bed will save you hours of work later, when the sun is hot and you'd rather do something other than weed and feed. Plus, your plants will be better protected from the

extremes of heat or cold, and require less water (a BIG consideration in most of the southwest).

Feeding is simplified, too. The roots should have all the nutrition they can stand; all you need to do is foliar-feed now and then. Liquid seaweed and fish emulsion are the classic ingredients for foliar spraying among organic growers. Add compost tea, garlic, and/or pepper (whirl the mess through a blender) if pests are a problem.

One little appreciated benefit of a properly prepared bed is the extension of the growing season. Plants not only do better, but can be put in earlier, taken out later, than in a poor bed.

In addition, an organic bed can extend the climate range. If you're growing a plant that is marginal in your area, you'll magnify its chances of survival. Last summer I weakened. Seeing a dozen nonstop tuberous begonias at the irresistible price of \$6, I tried six outside, six in the air-conditioned house. I was pleasantly surprised at how well they did, even outside in our record heat and drought. Planted in what some call "black gold," oak leaf compost, they received sun in the early morning and very late afternoon--and they bloomed! Wow! Had the deer seen fit to leave the outsiders alone, I'd have photographic proof. This year I'll try again, with fencing.

Quick Tip

If you use oak leaf mold in your planting mix, buy an extra bag now and let it sit for six months or a year. This gives it extra time to compost, which makes for a much better addition to your mix.

Teri Dykzeul
Torrance, CA

Conservation News

by Tamsin Boardman,
Conservation Chair

The word "species" can have different meanings. Our Random House Dictionary gives 6 (each with subheadings). The Oxford English Dictionary (short version) gives 14 (each with subdivisions). Newcomers to the world of begonias might well wonder what a "species" is - isn't it any specimen of begonia?

When we in ABS speak of species, we're talking about begonias found growing in nature. The habitat may vary - rainforest, desert, near water, even in a cave - but the plants there sprang up on their own, unattended by humans. These natural species are variable; in any given population, some plants may have darker flowers, larger leaves, or stronger markings. But they have more characteristics in common than differences, and they "come true" from seed (this means that seed from a self-pollinated species begonia will produce offspring all looking like the parent).

In the *Begonian* we distinguish the species begonias by giving them names in botanical Latin and writing the names in italics: *B. aconitifolia*, for example. Sometimes the botanic name honors an individual: *B. ludwigii*, *B. thelmae*.

Cultivars, also known as hybrids, are plants that are created by hybridizers. When the hybridizer plants seeds from the cross he has made between two different begonias, he plants seeds that come up with myriad characteristics; he chooses the ones he likes best, and, if the plantlets are truly distinctive, sends them out to be tested by other growers. With luck some will be outstanding; these will be named by their creators or by their growers:

B. 'Silvermist', B. 'Cotton Candy', for example. These names are always started with a capital letter and enclosed in single quote marks.

Names can still be confusing, however, for in the early days hybrids were often named in Latin too: B. 'Fuscomaculata' and B. 'Ricinifolia' certainly sound like species - but they're not.

When we write of saving the species, it is the plants found in nature that we are concerned about. As the forests that are the "lungs" of our planet fall to chainsaw and bulldozer, begonias are among the hundred of thousands of plants and animals that face extinction. We can't stop the destruction. But we can try to save, in cultivation, some of the jewels of the rainforest, our species begonias.

One of those species jewels is:

B. johnstonii

B. johnstonii is a native of Africa, being found in Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) and Kenya. Discovered in 1866, it is a distinctive begonia easily recognized by the scalloped margins outlined in maroon on its bright green leaves.

For show purpose, the Thompsons classify *B. johnstonii* as thick-stemmed, bare-leaved, medium-leaved (4"-6" at maturity). The leaves are ovate, with acuminate tips and a slight overlap at the base. Petioles are small, but persistent. The flowers - if you get any - are pink, and sprawl rather carelessly from the stem. Within its class *B. johnstonii* is one of the tallest growing to between 3 and 4 ft. The Thompsons suggest *B. johnstonii* "for the advanced grower." They also note that it has stout stems that do not branch naturally, and is one of "the most difficult to train into an attractive plant;" they suggest very early pinching to induce branching.

If you're not growing for show, however, you can loosen up a bit and allow *B. johnstonii* to have its way. This means it will grow straight up. Any shrubby appearance will have to come from shoots.* But you will be growing the plant the way it grows in the wild, and you may be surprised to find that after the awkward "teen-age" stage, it turns out to be a handsome specimen. Certainly no one else on the block will have one.

Generally, the thick-stemmed varieties require bright light. Conditioned gradually, most will enjoy several hours of morning sun even in summer.

Keeping them through the winter isn't as easy; space can be a problem, complicated by the need for very bright light and warmth (thick-stems freeze easily and irreparably, those stout stems turn to mush).

Overwatering is also irreparable; the thick stems evolved to survive periods of drought. Good drainage is essential, as is paying close attention to water needs. A moisture meter is a good tool to

have if you're growing thick-stems.

For a begonia known to cultivation for over a hundred years, *B. johnstonii* is surprisingly uncommon. Despite its distinctive leaf margin, there don't seem to be any hybrid offspring. This may be because it isn't an enthusiastic bloomer - which may be related to difficulties in providing sufficient light. Or perhaps the reluctance to bloom is because of too much light, at the wrong time? The Thompsons give March as the time of bloom. This may be an indication that *B. johnstonii*, like rhizomatous begonias, needs long nights, short days to put forth flowers.

B. johnstonii is one of the more unusual and interesting begonia species. It isn't grown much, and there are gaps in our knowledge of how best to keep it in cultivation. Successful growers take note: let the rest of us know what you're doing right in your climate.

*It also means you won't have tip cuttings; but many thick stems will grow from a leaf, like rhizomatous begonias.



B. johnstonii. Photo by Edward and Mildred Thompson.

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We know you call it LaLa Land and a thousand suburbs in search of a city, but if you have ever flown into our home on a sparkling night and descended from the mountains to the Pacific you have some idea of the size and diversity of Los Angeles. West Los Angeles and the South Bay, including Santa Monica, Westwood, Beverly Hills, Culver City, El Segundo, Manhattan/Hermosa/Redondo Beach, Palos Verdes, Playa del Rey and, of course, Westchester diminish the vastness and make life most livable and comfortable. Each section has its own charm and delights. Why do people love L.A. and stay in L.A.? The weather--the world's greatest. The closer you get to the Pacific the better it gets--rarely unbearably hot and usually 20^o cooler than downtown or the Valley. And the climate is ideal for growing begonias and do we grow them! So please join us in September (arrive on August 31 for the September 1 pre-convention tour to Lotusland)

and see why we love L.A. The tours and seminars are almost settled. The menus have been chosen, and we're working on a perfect weekend for you. The program for the Saturday night banquet is worth the trip alone. More details later on all these subjects. We're hoping to get the packets to you early Spring, but you don't have to wait till then to book your flights and rooms (See page 78 for hotel phone number). We will be ready.

*~ABS Convention '99
Committee*

*Come see Rudy
Ziesenhenné's B.
'Lotusland' growing at its
best in Lotusland!
Photo by Janet Brown.*



In Memory

FAREWELL DEAR FRIEND.

With great sadness and a sense of terrible loss I must report the passing of one of our oldest and dearest members. Mickey Meyer passed away at the venerable age of 86 during the evening of Saturday 12th December 1998. Mickey devoted a great part of her life to the pursuit of her hobby, growing and hybridising begonias. Her hybridising work gained her international recognition and many of her cultivars are registered with the American Begonia Society. I remember her telling me that when she started growing begonias there was nobody in Australia to whom she could turn for advice and she eventually discovered the American Society as a source of inspiration. I have traced their records back to the early 1960s when she was involved with the Mae Blanton Begonia Branch. Alas, records before this time have been lost. She was a foundation member of the Australian Begonia Society (now replaced by the South Australian Begonia Society) and of our own New South Wales Society. We honoured her at our 1998 Convention with the award of Life Membership and the Queensland Society, at their 1995 Convention, presented her with a Certificate of Appreciation for the many years of work she had devoted to the development of so many beautiful begonia cultivars. Never was she too busy to offer a helping hand to fellow begonia enthusiasts and her contributions to our Newsletter were always welcome and of great interest. We were honoured to have her as our Guest of Honour at Convention '98, a function which she opened with great aplomb, much to the delight of all who attended. Mickey had a very numerous family who were devoted to her and who in her later

years took great care of their Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother. We offer our sincerest sympathy to them all. Fare thee well, Mickey. We have lost a friend and a source of inspiration.

Peter Sharp (From the January/
February NSW Begonia News,
Australia

Mickey will be missed by all her friends in the USA so many of whom even now are growing plants from the seed which she so unstintingly supplied to individuals and to the C.M. Kelly Seed Fund. Ed.

“Our Loss is Heaven’s Gain”

It saddens me to announce the death of our friend and fellow Begonia grower. Tim Gaffney passed away January 7, 1999, after a lengthy illness. He grew many beautiful Begonias and ferns which he displayed in his yard.

The “get together” he and his wife Marilyn held at their home in Whittier, California was delightful and relaxing for his many friends. He was especially proud of his B. ‘Page 13’ which stood over a foot and a half tall in an eight inch pot.

Tim was Co-Vice President of the Whittier Branch. He and his wife were active members of the Long Beach Parent Chapter. I am sure he will be growing Begonias and ferns along heaven’s pathways. Our sympathy goes out to his wife and family. Good. Bless. Farewell, Tim, we will miss you.

Vivian Hill

With Warm And Loving Thoughts

Of one inimitable and illustrious Begonia and fern personality, it grieves me to relate the passing of Leo Porter on the 5th of December 1998. Leo received the "Best New Introduction" award for B. 'Wanda' in 1968.

Leo and Dorothy Porter were the owners of Porter's Tropicals in Orange, California; many "old timers" will recollect the great experience a visit to this rare, unique and awesome nursery proved to be. God speed, my friend.

Ronnie Nevins,
Orange County Branch

Fantastic Fun...

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is what Southwest Region, ABS does best! This spring we'll be doing our thing - lots of fun, frolic, festivities, and food - among the fantastic begonias at the fabled Fort Worth Botanic Garden at our annual SWR Get-Together. Come speak begonia among friendly folk!

Our fabulous festival gets going on Thursday, May 6 and we'll fraternize through Sunday, May 9 with show, sale, seminars, workshops, tours, and feasts for the eyes as well as the tummy. Don't miss this fun fling:

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Round Robin Notes

Virginia Hamann
Round Robin Director

Here are some very interesting CHIRPS from the Robins which I find very egg-citing!

Robins #2 & 8 Tuberos Begonias, Howard Siebold (WA), Chairman: This Robin is now a very full flight with 10 members including Howard. The members were putting their tubers down for winter storage, some storing them in peat, others vermiculite. Howard cautions to watch tubers for rot and treat them by cutting away the bad spots then treating them with either sulphur or fungicides. **Campbell Watts (IA)** and I had a nice phone chat; he and his wife go to Hawaii to escape Iowa's wintery weather. He orders his tubers early so he will have blooming plants by May if not earlier.

#25 Midwest Growers II, Mary McClelland (NE), Chairman: Written in September, members were getting

greenhouses and plant growing windows ready for winter. A nice long fall gave everyone time to get the work done. Plants were inside before the cold arrived. **Lois Schneyer (MI)** summers in Alaska. It is fun to hear of 4 foot Rhubarb and wild flowers that must be breathtaking. **Matt Barlow (IL)** is growing seed from BU315, B. 'Joy Porter', B. 'Eldomo', and B. 'Snowfall'. Matt is pleased with the results as he was not sure if he could grow begonias from seed.

#20 Photography, Chairman Mary McClelland (NE): "What we see the camera sees and often clearer than we do. We see an overall picture and often miss items that show up in the print. How could I have not seen that? And there it is, we overlooked what was there...Often in a hurry we are not relaxed and try too hard" Advice from **Daniel Haseltine (IL)**. Kodak film 400 speed is used the most by members. **Mary Bucholtz (FL)** likes Fuji film. For slides she likes Kodak Kodachrome 64.

*Join a Robin and soar to new heights!
Write a note and tell your interests to:
Virginia Hamann, 1169 Lincoln Ave.,
Chester, Iowa 52134-8508.*

Membership Non-renewal

More members than we would like to see are not renewing each year as their membership expires. This means that somehow ABS is not meeting the needs of all our members. It would help ABS if you have a concern of any kind to communicate what that problem is to John Ingles, Membership Chair, to your *Begonian* Editor, or to the President; see page 79 for addresses.

We know that lives are more hectic, but we also know that begonias are of im-

portance to you. Only with a strong membership can we continue to offer current services and naturally what we want to do is expand services to members. Tell us what you are missing that you want or how you think we could make the Society better. If you are willing to serve the Society but are not being called upon, we would like to hear about that, too. Or tell us how you think we could increase membership and better hold on to those we have. Write.

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My Favorite Begonia: **B. 'Persian Brocade'**

by Janice Keck

Spurred on by Freda Holley's offer of a free start of Begonia 'Quinebaug' to the first person to submit a "my favorite begonia" article, I decided to set pen to paper. Being a new grower I don't have growing expertise to share, but I could easily pick a favorite. My criteria would be a plant that was not only pretty, but easily grown as well. No mildew prone, humidity sensitive, or weak plants would qualify! So I set off in our summer garden to select a favorite.

My first stop was at the terrariums. When I lifted the covers and peered inside I saw some very striking specimens:

ones with reds, pinks, or silver. A variety of textures ranging from puckers to pleats. But I quickly shut the lid, gorgeous though they might be, they are too fickle to rate as a favorite.

Next, I visited my canes. They were all in full heavy bloom. A first for me. Unfortunately as I drew closer, I saw beyond the blossoms and pretty foliage and detected the scars of mildew. We have such long cloudy winters that canes don't thrive for me. No favorite here either.

I headed under the apple tree and scanned the shrubs and rhizomes for a stand out. I immediately spotted B. 'Lady

B. 'Persian Brocade' (B. bowerae x B. 'Maphil' by Dillard, 1961). Photo by Janice Keck.



Vi', 'Tequesta', and 'Boomer'. Huge, healthy, lush and pretty. I was sure I'd narrowed the field until I recalled that these were newly acquired plants. Although they'd gone from small to giant in three months, they had yet to endure an Oshkosh winter indoors.

As I headed back to the house to start anew and revisit all my begonias, I passed by my "common" house plants. A hardy group; some I've had for 15 years. There in their midst I spotted what would be my hands down winner--B. 'Persian Brocade'. This plant is so hardy it gets grouped with my spider plants and philodendrons for ease of care and neglect.

I got my original plant in Seattle because it was pretty. Emerald green leaves, marked with black. This plant travelled across country in the back of a U-Haul van to Wisconsin. Then it found itself placed in a seldom used, unheated room with all the other house plants where

it sat for four months while I was overcome with morning sickness. When I regained myself, I went to check on the plants with certain foreboding. I opened the door and there sat B. 'Persian Brocade' atop the storage boxes in full bloom.

B. 'Persian Brocade' is a rhizomatous begonia with medium sized leaves. It roots so easily that I simply break pieces off and stick them directly into potting soil. It's great for filling in the odd gaps often found in my begonia planters. It does well in low (40%) humidity or the muggy humidity of summer. It has never had mildew or any of the multitude of other ailments my begonias contract. Finally it is easily as pretty as any of my other more fickle varieties. B. 'Persian Brocade' is, then, my favorite begonia.

Janice Keck tells me that B. 'Quinebaug' is happy and doing well also in its new home at 41 Stoney Beach Rd., Oshkosh, WI 54901. And, see page 73 for a new offer.

Nominating Committee Appointed

President Bruce Boardman has appointed the 1999 ABS Nominating Committee. Members are:

Johanna Zinn (Eastern)
4407 Jensen Place
Fairfax, VA 22032
PH: 703-323-7513

Mary Mclelland (Central), Chair
P.O. Box 928
Hastings, NE 68902
PH: 402-462-6944

Ingeborg Foo (Western)
1050 Melrose Way
Vista, CA 92083-6504
PH: 760-724-4871

Offices to be filled are: President, First, Second, and Third Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer. If anyone wishes to suggest candidates, they should contact one of the Committee members.

The Committee has been instructed that: "It is of utmost importance that a diligent attempt be made to obtain more than one nominee for each office."

The Committee must turn in its list of candidates no later than March 15 in order that their names may be printed in a ballot in the May/June *Begonian*. Ballots must be counted on July 22 and results will be published in the September/October *Begonian*.

B. 'Josephine'

by Ruth Pease

Have you ever noticed the first stems on some of your cane begonias growing downward, trailing, and the "new canes" growing upright!

During the Show and Tell part of our branch meeting, I pointed out the attributes of Brad Thompson's begonia B. 'Josephine'. There are many, including its stunning wavy foliage with large white spots on top and pink rosy-colored backs, as well as unforgettable large clusters of blush pink to cerise blooms.

As I was showing our plant, I recalled something I had heard about 30 years ago when a guest speaker told us that the first canes on some begonias have the tendency to hang down or trail while the newer ones grow upright! She went

on to say that judges should be aware of this habit of growth and should not deduct points from such plants entered in shows. I believe the speaker was Dorothy Behrends.

I have had several cane begonias do this--not all. In one case I transplanted the begonia into a basket believing it would be spectacular trailing over a hanging basket only to find the stems from there on grew straight up 1 1/2 to 2 feet.

The first trailing stems on my plant have become woody. These will be pruned back next Spring. Will the new growth trail or grow upright? Would pinching out the tips of the trailing stems as they were growing have helped to keep fullness around the base of my plant? The challenge becomes another learning ex-

This B. 'Josephine' below was grown by George Macias and appeared in the 1997 Houston ABS Show. Photo is by Midori Nobussawa. Inset is of the female flowers on Ruth Pease's plant grown in CA; we see what she means about light as we note the deeper color. Inset photo by Ruth Pease.



perience for begonia growers.

Incidentally, the light in our meeting hall didn't do justice to the color and overall appearance of *B. 'Josephine'*. This begonia grows about 1 1/2 feet high with leaves that are 3 to 4 inches wide and 7 inches long to a point and gives you a full-looking plant in a short time.

Having said this about Begonia 'Josephine', I must tell you my curiosity was aroused. I decided to look into its heritage. Try this sometime. It is fascinating!

Researching several references, I found the following:

B. 'Josephine' (*B. 'Jumbo Jet'* x *B. 'Amelia'*)

B. 'Jumbo Jet' (*B. 'Kentwood'* x *B. 'Orange Supreme'*)

B. 'Kentwood' (*B. 'Elizabeth Lockhart'* x *B. aconitifolia* {syn. *sceptrum*})

B. 'Elizabeth Lockhart' is a Superba seedling.

B. 'Orange Supreme' (*B. 'Shasta'* x *B. dichroa*)

B. 'Shasta' is a *B. coccinea* seedling

B. 'Amelia' (*B. 'Tom Ment'* x *B. maculata* v. *wightii*)

B. 'Tom Ment' (*B. 'Di-Erna'* x

B. 'Orange Rubra')

B. 'Di-Erna' (*B. dichroa* x *B. coccinea* {*B. rubra* hort})

B. 'Orange Rubra' (*B. dichroa* x *B. 'Coral Rubra'*)

As a common denominator, *B. dichroa* may have been a strong influence on these hybrids.

I found the following on page 147 of 'Die Begonian' by Karl Albert Fotsch (1933): "...we want to mention Beg. Dichroa, Sprague which was introduced by Haage and Schmidt in 1907. It

seems to be suitable for room culture, and might become important for hybridizing."

B. dichroa is a species and should have been shown as *Beg. dichroa* (small *d*) in the quoted text, possibly a typo). *Die Begonian* was translated from the German by Hans Schломk and copies were typed by Daisy I. Walker in 1960.

The results of researching the colors of the blossoms of the aforementioned hybrids and species and how different lighting conditions would affect them would be another story!

Ruth Pease's article on *B. 'Josephine'* appeared first in the December issue of the *Westchester Newsletter of the Westchester Branch*. You may write her at 8406 Croydon Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90045-3039.

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Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund Listing

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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 described, 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 the seeds. The descriptions published are from the literature and apply to the name used for the seed offer-

ings.

The Seed Fund needs donations of the following seeds requested by members:

B. decora, *brevirimsa* (Cultivar: 'Exotica'), *rex* Putzeys, *olsoniae*, *pustulata*, *serratipetala*, *solimutata*, U261, *listada*, *hispida* var. *cucullifera*, *cathayana*, *goegoensis*, *paulenis*, *xanthina*, U059, U093, U192, U225, U336, U346.

Most packets of species seeds are \$1.50 each and all packets of hybrid seeds are 50 cents each. Very rare seeds and newly collected seeds will be \$2.00 or more per

B. peltata is a beautiful and unusual, but easy to grow species seen here at the Ft. Worth Botanic Garden. Photo by Mary Bucholtz.



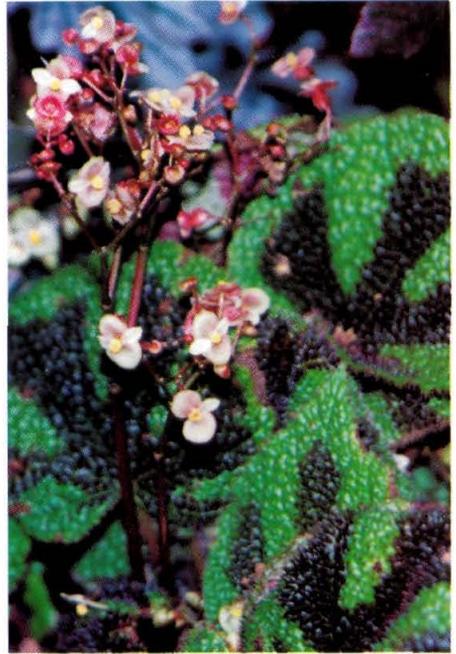
packet. California residents please add 7.75% sales tax.

All orders must be accompanied by check or money order payable in **US funds ONLY to the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund.**

Costs of mailing:

US only: 1-12 packets \$1; 13-24, \$1.35; 25-36, \$1.71; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.30; 49-60, \$2.66. **Canada only:** 1-12 packets, \$1.10; 13-24, \$1.46; 25-36, \$1.82; 37-48 (2 cans) \$2.35; 49-60, \$2.71. **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. **All other international mail:** 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68

B. venosa in Atlanta. Photo by Midori Nobussawa.



B. masoniana in bloom. Photo by Midori Nobusawa.

Please send your order with payment to:

**AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND**
Eleanor L. Calkins, Coordinator
910 Fern Street
Escondido, CA 92027

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: **L.L. Hunt, Masako Yamaguchi, Dean Turney, Doug Hahn, James Cody, Cynthia Bishop, Louise Muzyk, Jackie Davis, Michael Kartuz, and Thelma O'Reilly.**

Species Seeds

- MA99-1: *B. foliosa*
- MA99-2: *B. gracilis* var.
martiana (bulbils)

- MA99-3:** *B. grandis* ssp.
evansiana
- MA99-4:** *B. masoniana* (\$2.00)
- MA99-5:** *B. peltata* (\$2.00)
- MA99-6:** *B. sunorchis* (\$2.00)
- MA99-7:** *B. venosa*
- MA99-8:** *B. U221*
- MA99-9:** *B. U331*
- MA99-10:** *B. U363* (\$2.00)
- MA99-11:** *B. U382* (\$2.00)

Cultivar Seeds

- MA99-12:** *B. grandis* ssp.
evansiana 'Alba'
- MA99-13:** *B.* 'Lou's Marbled'
- MA99-14:** Mixed Rex varieties
- MA99-15:** Mixed rhizomatous
- MA99-16:** Mixed canes

DESCRIPTIONS

MA99-1: *B. foliosa* (HBK) Columbia, Ecuador, Venezuela. A shrub having many-branched floppy stems, small medium green bare leaves, red stems and petioles and small pinkish-white flowers from spring to autumn.

MA99-2 *B. gracilis* (HBK) var. *martiana* Mexico, "Hollyhock"; tuberous, erect unbranched glabrous stem, orbicular to lanceolate, crenately toothed fleshy pale green leaves, large pink flowers on short axial peduncles, summer; axial bulblets.

MA99-3: *B. grandis* (Dryander) ssp. *evansiana* (China) known as the "hardy begonia"; will withstand quite low temperatures 2-3 ft., green to bronze leaves, pink blooms. See article *Begonian* July/Aug 1998 pg. 131.

MA99-4: *B. masoniana* (Irmscher) China. Rhizomatous; green, pustulate leaves with chocolate colored iron cross pattern.

MA99-5: *B. peltata* (Otto & Dietrich) Mexico. Shrub with green felted peltate leaves. White flowers winter through spring.

MA99-6: *B. sunorchis* (Chevalier) Tropical American. Erect woody stems branching on upper parts. Green peltate leaves, whiteish hair, blooms late winter, light pink.

MA99-7: *B. venosa* (Skan) Brazil. white-scurfy, erect, thick stems hidden by large, thin, papery stipules, reniform fleshy leaves depressed at center, appearing frosted, white, hairy, fragrant flowers in late summer to spring.

MA99-8: *B. U221* Brazil. Erect stems, persistent stipules, medium, dark green puckered leaves, veins evident, no blooms reported. (See *Begonian* May/June 1994, p. 90.)

MA99-9: *B. U331*. No description provided.

MA99-10: *B. U363*. Java. Attractive upright rhizomatous species with green leaves and white flowers. Easy to grow.

MA99-11: *B. U382*. Sulawesi. Herbaceous shrub; collected along stream margin, flowers arising from leaf axils with wingless fruit.

MA99-12: *B. grandis* ssp. *evansiana* 'Alba', see desc. above, white flowers.

MA99-13: *B.* 'Lou's Marbled' rhizomatous.

M99-14: Mixed Rex varieties.

MA99-15: Mixed rhizomatous, all curly, crested varieties.

MA99-16: Mixed canes.

Editor's Notes...

As I've mentioned to you I've found codes that permit me to add such characters as the French Ç or the dash to text. These characters had translated well from the version I prepare on the PC to the printer's MAC for printing. Thus, I decided to use the codes for the single character versions of the fractions 1/2, 1/4, and 3/4 last issue. Unfortunately, these did not translate correctly. Hence the first correction that appears below. My regrets to everyone for this problem. Regarding, the second correction: No, August didn't lose a day as it approached the Millennium, the editor did! And her mouse must have slipped on *B. pearcei* too.

Sometimes I tell you about the editor's woes, but let me tell you about some special rewards. Each month, I get to go through every photo I have received to select the cover pictures and others inside to fit in each issue. What a special treat! I only wish I could share each and every picture I have received--so many are so gorgeous. When I can find just the right photo for the seed fund or to complement a feature, I truly feel blessed. And, please, keep sending them! The front cover photo this month had been with me so long that I'm sure Iris Bird had forgotten I have it, but isn't that glowing color just right for a cold winter day? Thank you, Iris, and all our other great photographers who share their skill and their plants with us.

The second reward is getting Branch newsletters. Not only is it great to know what's happening, but many feature gems such as that written by **Donna Zody** on Page 57. The feature item on *B. 'Josephine'* is another. When I run across one of these, I put it in my "Future File" which I also go through each month to see what I can find room for.

My last special offer to a reader who would share with us a feature item about their favorite begonia, brought the charming article by *Janice Keck*. Encouraged, I have a new offer to the first one to send me another such article. I will share with the writer a small plant of *B. chitoensis*. This plant is a "rhizomatous at or below the soil with erect stem" from Taiwan and is one of the easiest and best growing species I have. The mother plant now fills a 12" container and is pleading for more spreading room; it never gets bare and lived through a hail storm and last summer's drought with barely a protest. I promise you, *you want this one* so dash me off an article telling me about your favorite begonia. It's all right if it's just today that it's a favorite; mine changes by the minute. If you have a photo, fine, if not, maybe I can find one in the stash! And remember, don't hesitate just because you don't have a typewriter or computer. Some of the best articles I've ever had came in handwritten and that's never a problem for me.

Remember, good writing etiquette is to submit to only one editor at a time. If you do submit to more than one, be sure to inform the editors.

Corrections

1. In the January/February 1999 issue on pages 5, 6, 8, and 30, wherever an elevated degree sign appears, there should be a 1/2 and where an elevated half-moon like sign appears on page 6, there should be a 1/4.
2. On page 34, you should plan to arrive in LA on Tuesday, August 31.
3. On page 36, the pronunciation of *B. pearcei* should be PEARCE-eye.

Pronunciation of Begonia Epithets for the Begonian, 66: March/April, 1999

by Jack Golding

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| aconitifolia | uh-kon-i-ti-FOH-li-uh syn. <i>sceptrum</i> SKEP-trum |
| bowerae | BOW-er-ee, <i>bow-er-eye</i> |
| brevirimsa | brev-i-ri-MOH-suh (cultivar: 'Exotica', hort.) ex-OT-ti-kuh |
| cathayana | kath-ay-AY-nuh |
| chitoensis | chi-TOH-en-sis |
| coccinea | kok-SIN-e-uh |
| dichroa | DEYE-kroh-uh |
| foliosa | foh-li-OH-suh |
| goegoensis | goh-goh-EN-sis |
| gracilis | GRAY-sil-is var. martiana mart-i-AY-nuh |
| grandis | GRAND-is ssp. evansiana e-van-si-AY-nuh |
| hispida | HISS-pi-duh var. cucullifera kew-kul-LIF-er-uh |
| johnstonii | john-STON-i-eye |
| listada | lis-TAH-duh |
| ludwigii | LEWD-vig-i-eye (comemorative name for Ludwig Diels) |
| maculata | mak-yew-LAY-tuh var. wightii WHITE-i-eye |
| masoniana | MAY-son-i-ay-nuh |
| olsoniae | ohl-SOHN-i-ee |
| paulensis | paul-EN-sis |
| peltata | pel-TAY-tuh |
| pustulata | pus-tyew-LAY-tuh |
| serratipetala | ser-ra-ti-PET-a-luh |
| solimutata | sol-i-myew-TAY-tuh |
| sunorchis | sun-OHR-chis |
| thelmae | THELMA-ee (named for Thelma O'Reilly) |
| versicolor | ver-si-KOH-lor |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| wollnyi | WOHLL-ni-eye syn. <i>acrensis</i> uh-KREN-sis syn. <i>williamsii</i> will-JAM-si-eye |
| xanthina | zan-THEYE-nuh |

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 the latest available to the editor.

- B. 'Josephine' 3
 - B. 'Persian Brocade' 1
 - B. *versicolor* 2, 3, 4
1. B & K Tropicals, 5300 48th Terrace North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709, PH: 727-522-8691, E-mail: BKtrop@aol.com
 2. Cloudy Valley Nursery, 935 W. Isabella Street, Lebanon, Oregon 97355, PH: 541-258-7517, E-mail: goetzk@dnc.net
 3. Kartuz Greenhouses, 1408 Sunset Dr., P.O. Box 790, Vista, CA 92085-0790, PH: 760-941-3613
 4. Logee's Greenhouses, Dept. B., 141 North Street, Danielson, CT 06239, PH: 888-330-8038

Some readers have also inquired about a source for the potting mix by Fafard that is popular in Florida. Fafard Soil Mixes are available from Progress Growers Supply, Inc., 159 Railroad St., P.O. Box 866, Canton, GA 30114, 1-800-666-4178

The Fort Worth Botanic Garden Begonia Research Library

We have had several inquiries recently on the status of our Begonia Research Library here in Fort Worth. This is just to let everyone know that we are still in operation although reduced to two days a week - one of which is spent in the greenhouse. In fact, our library is growing and we have had an offer to publish our research findings sometime in the future on the internet by one of the large botanical libraries in Europe. I hope the following information will be of interest to those who have asked.

Currently we have 19,994 references in our index with 15, 043 here in our library journal. Journal references are 3,245 -- with 1,438 copies of these journals in our library. Our bibliography has grown to 3,309 entries with 2,333 in the library.

We also have 3,648 herbarium descriptions and 3,606 ecology listings including the country where the particular species is found. Among the index descriptions we have 2,137 sp. nov. citations with 1,790 here in our library; 241 var. nova descriptions with 221 of those also in our library. We have 763 illustrations; many are copies of the original drawings.

We have over 4,000 pages of research material including many articles written by some of the important botanists and begonia specialists of today and of years past.

We are always happy to help anyone or send material to anyone who is interested in having all information available on any species they are growing or just want to learn about. You can write us here at the Gardens: 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd., Ft. Worth, TX 76107 or E-mail us at: begspbkl@airmail.net. We can also be reached by phone at 817-871-8744 or Fax at 817-871-7638.

Kelton Parker, ABS Research Director
Eve Fox, Begonia Species Bank

Quick Tips

Shrub begonias need extra humidity to propagate well. Give them this by putting 1" of perlite in the bottom of the tall utility-type box, insert the cuttings, and cover tightly with plastic wrap.

Michael Kartuz
Vista, CA

Cut up old bleach bottles to form a scoop with a built-in handle. Cut off the bottom of a bleach or water bottle to make a handy tray.

Irene Nuss
Los Angeles, CA

News: ABS, Branch, and International

The Westchester Branch kicked off their new year with a most beautiful January slide show on Schlumbergera by **Jeanne Jones**.

The Knickerbocker Branch held its Annual Seed Meeting on January 12 at the Horticultural Center in NYC. Their newsletter carried an article titled "Sowing Seeds" by **Lavi Berland** as homework for the meeting. At the meeting members received instruction on how to plant and grow. And there were soil mix for seeds and labels for sale on the plant sale table. Members brought seed to donate backed up with seed from the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund. The Branch was also making plans to participate in a plant show sponsored by the Indoor Gardening Society on April 6-8.

"Hope for the future is at the heart of all gardening," was the saying with which the Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch Newsletter introduced the new year. The Branch program was "Frost Damage: How to Help Your Plants Recover." This was a timely program as cold gripped even California this year.

The Alamo Begonia Club began its year with a slide show on begonias and with guests from the private sector invited. Their February session was planned as a potting session for begonia cuttings to be grown for the Branch's June 6th plant sale and for the Southwest Region Get-Together in May.

The Long Beach parent chapter celebrated its 67th Birthday on January 16 with a

party complete with a birthday cake! Guest speaker for the occasion was **Brad Thompson**. This chapter will be presenting the Boutique for the 1999 Convention and was busy making plans for it.

In December the Houston Astro Branch members each took home a rooted named Rex Cultorum begonia from a tray of these provided by **Tom Keepin**. Tom also provided a program on how to grow them and control their pests. Now, each member will return their plant, dead or alive, to the March meeting when first, second, and third prizes will be awarded to the best looking plants. Members were asked to take photos of their plants and bring them for the February meeting program which was to be on photography.

The Greater Chicago Branch January meeting was on "Recycling and Crocking." Members brought samples of everyday, recycled items used in potting and growing.

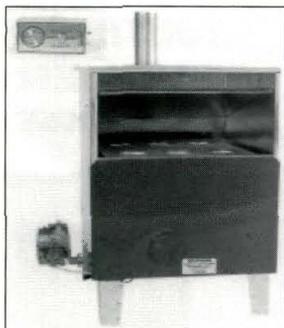
The Cascade Branch has a new newsletter editor, **Cynthia Bishop**. Among the programs being planned by this branch for the year are those on Caring for Begonia Seedlings/Starting Tubers, Growing Supplies and Where to find Them, Thick Stemmed Begonias, Semperfloren Begonias as well as field trips and slide programs. The newsletter also has articles about individual members and a long article each month on a begonia species. There have also been two recent articles by **Patrick Worley** on hybridizing. Good reading!

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COMING EVENTS

March 6-7, 1999: New South Wales Begonia Exhibition and Sale of Plants at Bloomin' Greenery Nursery, 226 Annangrove Road, Annangrove, Australia. Write to that address for information or E-mail Peter Sharp at: PeterSharp@bigpond.com.

May 6-9, 1999: Southwest Region/ABS Get-Together at Fort Worth (TX) Botanic Gardens. Hotel will be the Ramada Inn Midtown, 1401 S. University Drive, Ft. Worth, Texas., PH: 1-800-336-3000. See page 63 for more information.

September 1-5 1999: Begonia Kaleidoscopes, ABS Convention, hosted by Westchester Branch, Los Angeles, CA. Come on August 31 to be there for the first tour on Wednesday morning, September 1. The show will close at 4 PM on September 5. Hotel is the Embassy Suites, Los Angeles Airport - South, 1440 East Imperial Avenue, El Segundo, CA 90145, Ph: 310-640-3600. Free shuttle. See Page 61 for more information.

March 25-26, 2000: Begonia Convention 2000 will be held at the Haven Motel, Glenelg, Adelaide, Australia. The South Australian Begonia society invites all to attend. For information write to the Convention Secretary, 4 Kinnaird Crescent, Highbury, SA 5089, Australia.

Closing date for May/June issue is March 20, 1999!

The Begonian

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171, Cleburne, TX 76031

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319-565-4208

Seed Fund.....Eleanor Calkins, 910 Fern
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4743

Slide Library.....Charles Jaros
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Ph: 407-328-0618.

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