

The

Begonian

May/June 2001



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: Behold the future of ABS in members like **Armando Nodal, Jr.** of the Miami Branch (FL)! This photo by **Doug Pridgen** was taken at their annual show at the Fairchild Tropical Garden. Armando won their new division for exhibitors under 18 years of age (and there were 3 exhibitors with 9 entries!) with his *B.* 'Paul's Pride' (Koehler FL 1994).

Back: *B.* 'Sisquoc' (*B. carrieae* x *bowerae* var. *nigramarga* Ziesenhenn CA 1973) won the Rizomatous Distinctive Division in the Miami 2001 Show for grower **Joyce Pridgen**. Photo by **Doug Pridgen**.

Let the Shows Begin!

We know that spring is on its way when we begin to get begonia show news from around the country. They begin in Florida in February and work their way north and west. This month we hear from the shows in Miami and Palm Beach. Soon we'll be hearing from April's shows of Oklahoma's Barkley Branch, the Houston (TX) Satellites Branch, and the Southwest Region's 'Jewels of the Rainforest.' The California Westchester Branch already has its show on the calendar for July and of course, the national show in Denver is in July as well. Check the Coming Events calendar each month for more to come. Shows are great places to meet new introductions and new species and to see old favorites. Not only do these shows let us see begonias grown at their most beautiful, but they also serve to introduce the general public to their diversity and potential. New members almost invariably result. And even when you cannot attend, our outstanding photographers make sure you meet the begonias in your *Begonian's* pages!

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Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads
200107 or 200108, your membership is about to expire. Please renew! We don't want to lose you.

President's Message

Spring is finally here. It's great to see plants reacting to the longer days and warmer weather. In my garden the *Amorphophallis* and *Caladium* bulbs have sprouted, the *Osmunda cinnamomea* fern is also sprouting. *Adiantum*, *Asplenium*, *Nephrolepis* and *Davallia* ferns are all sporting new fronds. Of course the begonias are taking off, canes that have been pruned and pinched are branching, rhizomatous and Rex begonias are all showing off their new foliage. It makes a President want to spend all his time out with his plants and not at his regular paying job. Work does tend to get in the way with one's hobby.

I want to introduce our new MAL Director, **Jerry Baird**. Jerry is an enthusiast member and he is looking forward to being editor of the MAL Newsletter. Jerry is looking for ideas, topics, and articles for the newsletter. MAL members let Jerry hear from you. His address is 5757 Cartier Road, West Palm Beach, 33417-4307, his E-mail is JBaird2497@aol.com. Branch Newsletter editors please add the MAL Director to your newsletter mailing list. Membership to MAL will run a calendar year, January to December. Remember to send MAL Newsletter subscriptions [\$5] to Arlene Ingles and make it a separate check from your regular ABS dues.

We also have a new Research Director, **Bruce Boardman**. Bruce volunteered for this post and ABS thanks him. If you have a nagging question about a particular begonia, let Bruce know [address and phone number on page 119].

An important message to ABS foreign Members, the United States Postal Service has advised the ABS that there is no longer foreign surface mail. All for-

eign mail is now overseas airmail and so all foreign memberships other than those of Mexico or Canada will be \$37.

I want to thank those ABS members who voted on the ABS Constitution and Bylaw Changes. Both changes passed. It was disappointing that only 79 ballots were returned. Let's try to have more ballots returned for the election of ABS Officers. Your ballot is included in this issue of the *Begonian*. New officers will now hold office for a two-year term.

The ABS Annual Convention and Show in Denver is right around the corner. If you haven't sent in your registration, don't delay.

Also make plans to attend the ABS Annual Meeting September 7, 8 & 9, 2001. This will also be the installation of ABS Officers. The Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Orange County Branches Annual Fiesta at the home of **Mary Sakamoto**. A trip to Huntington Gardens is also planned.

See you in Denver and Good Begonia Growing.

*Charles Jaros,
President*

Letters to the Editor

Another Begonia in Question

I'm wondering if anyone dropped you a note and let you know Iris Bird and Bob Golden have the wrong name on the begonia they call *B. barkeri* on the front cover of the November/December 2000 *Begonian*. I have a plant of *B. barkeri* that I got from Rudy Ziesenhenne years ago. Right next to it I have *B. 'Freddy'*, Rudy's cross of *B. manicata* 'Aureomaculata' x *B. barkeri*. *B. barkeri* has huge entire leaves and white flowers. *B. 'Freddy'* also has round leaves, but pink

flowers. I wouldn't attempt to name Iris and Bob's begonia. Patrick Worley confirmed that my plant was *B. barkeri*. He has tried setting seed on it, but they turned out not viable and also starting a plant from a leaf start as has Mimi Schramm and others in our branch, but no luck. This spring I will try it from a rhizome start again. My plant of *B. barkeri* never did much out in my tuberous begonia area so I dug it up and brought it into my atrium and it has done very well. Some leaves are nearly 1 yard across. It was just too cold in the shelter. Monterey area is quite a bit cooler than the Santa Barbara area. I checked both Thompson's *Begonias: The Complete Reference Guide* and Graf's *Exotica 3* Vol. 2, 1970. Millie has it listed (*B. barkeri*) with pink flowers while Graf has this listing: "*B. barkeri* Vera Cruz, Mexico, Rhizomatous, largest leaf 18-36:, glossy green, bristly-hairy beneath, white flowers."

Maybe one of our experts can straighten it out. I'm also writing to let you know that the Monterey Bay Area Branch has a new meeting address. After all these years at the Neighborhood Center (new Monterey Senior Center) we are moving to Carmel. The new address is:

The Community Room
The Cross Roads Shopping Village
Hwy. 2 and Rio Road
Carmel, CA 93923
7:30 to 10 P.M.
4th Wednesday of the month.

Leslie Hatfield
National Director
Monterey Bay Area Branch

*Anyone out there who knows the answer?
Could this be B. cardiocarpa ?*

And a Correction

I am writing to ask you to make a correction to the article written under

"The Seminars" (p. 176) in the issue of September/October 2000 related to the ABS Convention in Florida, May 2000. It was a very complimentary article, but the error was in the last sentence, "we saw a slide of the beautiful new introduction of Hugh's, a delicate pink tuberous with a slight picottee named *B. "Ms. Elizabeth McLauchlan"*". I wish to correct the assumption that this begonia was bred by me when actually it was bred by George McCormick, about whom an article was written by the late Mose Fadeem on a visit to Scotland a good number of years ago [see the January/February 1992 *Begonian*, back cover and page 4-6]. George was one of our very best hybridizers in Scotland and he has produced a number of top grade begonias including *B. "Allyson Jayne"* which went into the Guinness Book of Records as the biggest begonia bloom in the world at a staggering size of 13 1/2".

I was one of the judges who judged the Seedling Class at the Ayr Flower Show in 1988 and placed a beautiful pink bicolor first and awarded it a certificate of merit, and after the judging, I was approached by George. After discussing his new seedling, he told me to take it home with me at the end of the show and name it *B. "Mrs. Elizabeth McLauchlan."*

George would have been very proud of his begonia were he alive today and I am very pleased to say that it is now one of the most successful begonias on the show bench and I am happy to say that practically every grower now grows and shows it here in the U.K., Australia and New Zealand.

I will be very grateful if you will publish this corrections. Hope to see you in Denver.

Hugh D. McLauchlan,
29 Tofthille., Bishop Briggs,
Glasgow Q643PB, Scotland

And Some Answers

On February 19 I received the January/February issue and two days later there was another *Begonian* in the box. I thought I must be getting the same number twice, but it was already the March/April issue. Quick work, congratulations!

You ask for identifications. I'll try to oblige:

January/February, cover: this cannot possibly be *B. heydei*; I suggest *B. carpinifolia* although this has stems with longer internodes. Page 8: I am sorry to have bewildered Mrs. Joyce Pridgen, but yes, the correct name for the *Begonia* pictured is *B. dipetala*. Page 10: probably, *B. sericoneura*. Page 12, top: no idea! Dr. Burt-Utley will know. Page 12, bottom: looks like *B. frigida* to me. Page 27: without flowers there is little to be said; probably belongs to section *Parvibegonia*, but so do several Malaya species. Is it known where exactly it was collected.?

In the March/April issue, page 46: I think it is possibly *B. hirtella*; if so the flowers are small, whitish and uncharacteristic for *Begonia*; self-pollinating; a male flower bends over a female one and sheds its pollen on the stigmas.

Looking forward to the next issue.

Jan Doorenbos

Lijsterbeslaan 6
1621 CW Bennekom
0318-416844
(Netherlands)

Afraid the Post Office receives credit for the concurrent arrivals; and blame too - see notice to the right. Perhaps John Howell could give us a description of the flowers on U358 (January/February page 27) which did have bloom buds at the show and Don Miller might give us more information on where it was collected. I do not believe the photo of Peter Szilagyi's begonia (March/April, p. 46)

is B. hirtella. In translation to print, the leaves appear much more glossy than in the photo and even photos can be so deceiving! It seems to be a fairly large plant too.

U.S. Post Office's New Policy Forces Change in Overseas Membership Rates

The U. S. Post Office has discontinued surface mail to overseas; now all mail will go and be charged at airmail rates. The last issue had to be mailed this way. This forces ABS to discontinue the surface rate subscriptions; in the future all overseas memberships must be renewed at the \$37. rate. The one benefit is that at this new rate, many overseas members will receive their copies of the *Begonian* as quickly as some U.S. members. The ABS Board regrets this change very much.

Continued from page 87.

of five liters of water and one tablespoon of fungicide.

I shall share my experience of after plant care in due course of time. Till then happy begonia growing.

We saw in the photos on page 6 of the January/February Begonian that Harish grows truly gorgeous begonias. He believes that the soil he uses is a part of why they grow so beautifully. He has also promised us some photos of a native species come spring. You may write to Harish Sharma at: Aabshaar, Pushp Vatika Estate, Camel's Back Road, Mussoorie 248179, Uttranchal, India. Or phone to: 0091135632628 or E-mail: kritinf@nde.vsnl.net.in

Soil Preparation for Begonias:

Our Way of Preparing it in Mussoorie (India)

by Harish Sharma

I think it is very disappointing to have mediocre results in spite of one's best efforts to grow better begonias. Sometimes, the plants are leggy, many times there are plenty of offshoots emerging from tubers. The worst of all is the absence of perfect blooms at desirable times. In the majority of cases, the root cause of all these symptoms is the poor quality of soil.

Here, we are in the middle of January. This is the time when I start preparing the soil (weather permitting). We have extremely frosty nights at this time of the year. The temperature at night these days is around minus four degrees Celsius. We expect snowfall anytime from December to the first week of March. The first snowfall of this season was on January 21, 2001. So soil preparation can be done only when we have sunny bright days.

I took out the tubers from the pots and baskets during the beginning of December last. They were washed in Bavistin (the better fungicide) and kept in hanging plastic containers with enough air to pass through.

Every year there does occur a negligible percentage of rot in my tubers. Nowadays I prepare the soil for the tubers to be planted in the pots at the end of March. I collect all the leaves under my trees during their leaf shedding time. The leaves are dumped into big pits for nearly eight to nine months. This is the time when I get them dug out. It is very good compost now. I am getting them thrashed and then they shall be sieved. On the other hand, I get rotten old cow dung manure and get it sieved too. I mix the leaf mould and cow dung manure, in the ratio of two

parts of leaf mould and one part of cow dung manure, added with one part of light loam from my garden. This mixture is kept in the sun for a fortnight and raked everyday. In this mixture I add some Gemacxin (BHC) as an insecticide, which is one tablespoon per pot. In the mixture I also add two tablespoons of de-oiled powdered neem cake, which is beneficial for the growth of the plants. The de-oiled neem cake also keeps away the grubs. Talking about the neem oil cake I want to mention that I also spray neem oil as an insecticide on my begonia plants to keep away the deadly borer, which indeed is a menace. Neem oil and de-oiled neem cake are biodegradable insecticides, not harmful to human beings.

Another insecticide is my brother Mr. Bimoi Sharma, who manually checks all the plants for borers and wine weevil. Without him, I can't take care of these thousand odd begonias which are being multiplied every year. His is a new-found love for begonias for the past two years. Hope he won't mind being mentioned as an insecticide!

Keeping the soil in sun and adding the insecticide, fungicide and de-oiled neem cake is my way of sterilizing the soil. In the middle of March, I again get the soil spread in the sun for another week before filling it in the pots. In the pots I add a little crushed charcoal and one teaspoon of micronutrients, i.e. soil agromin. I water the pots thoroughly for a couple of times. After a week's time, the pots are ready to receive the tubers. As the pots are ready, the first watering is a mix

Continued on page 86.

ABS' Miami Branch 2001 Show

by Doug Pridgen

The Miami Branch of ABS held its annual show at Fairchild Tropical Garden on February 17 and 18. The show was the largest and best in recent history with 206 entries from 18 participants.

This included a new division for exhibitors under 18 years of age with 9 entries from 3 exhibitors which was won by Armando Nodal, Jr. [see cover photo] with B. 'Paul's Pride'.

The Novice Division was won by Mike Twyford with B. 'Cowardly Lion'. A beautiful drawing by Debbie Lamb won the Arts & Crafts Division, and Lee Sinoff won the Photography Division. Novel Grown was won by Dale Sena for U043 grown in a clear globe container. Tim Anderson's B. 'Deja Thorus' won the Commercial Division and his landscaped rock presentation won the Dish Garden Division. Best of Show was a *B. luxurians* grown by Joyce Pridgen.

To the right we see the winner of the New Introduction Division 2001, B. 'Mini-perba' entered by Doug Pridgen. All photos are by Doug.

Doug and his wife Joyce have the magic touch for winning begonias. You may write to him at 701 Brickell Ave., Suite 1400, Miami, FL 33131-2822





In the photo above we see B. 'Eldorado' (by Dorsey, FL, no date) entered in the Cane-like Division by Charles Sibley. Below is B. 'Cowardly Lion' (B. carrae X 'Bokit', Mounger, 1989) winner of the Novice Division at the Miami 2001 Show for Mike Twyford.



Begonias Triumph at Palm Beach Tropical Flower Show

by Nancy Cohen, Vice president, The Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches

The Tropical Flower and Garden Show, held February 23-25 and sponsored by the Horticulture Society of south Florida, is a "breathtaking exhibition of tropical flowers and gardens displayed in an 8 1/2 acre outdoor setting along the waterfront in downtown West Palm Beach." This year's theme was "A Symphony in Flowers." Members won many firsts and Polly Reed won the Paul P. Lowe "Best Begonia" award in the competitive plant show. But it was the Swamp Board Serenade in B. 'Begonia' that sailed to new heights for the Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches.

This year, at the instigation of BSPB Charter Member Frances Hunter (who is also Vice President of the Horticulture Society), the Horticulture Society agreed to judge plant society exhibits. Our display was spearheaded by Joseph Staresinic, who was ably assisted by Donna Bailey, Nancy Cohen, Lee Stakewicz and other members. The Swamp Boat filled with begonias and conducted happily by a gorgeous mannequin complete with music stand, baton, and violin won 3 prizes: A blue ribbon as best plant society display, a crystal vase as most educational display (note the Swamp Boat's sail), and the prestigious show-wide Jean Flagler Matthews Award for the garden that best interpreted the theme of the show. Each begonia had an identification tag with a treble clef to the left side and the begonia name to the right.

Society Members staffed the display for 3 days, answered many questions, distributed many brochures and *Begonians*, and sold many begonias. The show was a

lot of work but a terrific success: artistic, financial (we made \$346 on plant sales), and public relations (we added more than 30 people to our roster of begonia-lovers and would be begonia-lovers).

Thanks to all those who helped.

You read about their begonia garden in the last issue and now see how they take the show prizes; those Palm Beach begoniacs are imaginative and real workers! Johanna Kitson took the photo below of the sail's lesson in their display. You may write them at 14206 Greentree Drive, Wellington, Florida 33414.





Above we see, left to right, Joseph Staresinic and Nancy Cohen showing off the awards and below is the display. Photos by Warren Resen.



ABS Board Meeting Minutes, 2/24/2001, Atlanta, GA.

1. President Charles Jaros open the meeting and thanked Carolyn Hawkins and the Greater Atlanta Branch for hosting the meeting. 3. Carol Notaras presented the financial statement: Income from 8/1/2000 to 1/31/2001 was \$33,361.79 while disbursements were \$28,799 in the general fund. The fund balances were \$6909.81 beginning and \$11,472.61 ending. Savings account totals were \$70,866.58 beginning and \$68,089.80 ending...5. Membership Director Arlene Ingles gave the membership report. On February 17, 2001, there were 1385 members. In the past four months 94 new members joined and 32 former members rejoined. However, 286 past due members have not renewed and 6 have asked to be removed from membership. From August 2000 to February 2001, there were 204 new members obtained: from branches 71, unknown 34, gifts 1, former rejoined 37, from friends 1, from Internet 34, 7 Reasons 14, magazines 6, second family 2, and foreign 2. Branches are the best single source of new members. Palos Verdes signed up 17 new members...8. President Jaros reported 79 ballots returned on the recent election: 66 for and 13 against eliminating the 3rd Vice President position and 74 for and 5 against having elected officers serve two year terms. These changes will be made. ...11 Branch Relations director Mary Bucholtz reported the strong possibility of a new branch in suburban Philadelphia, PA. Branch formation instructions were also sent to Pontiac, Michigan...12. Carol Notaras has mailing labels for the Denver Convention and will mail packets as

soon as she gets them; late March is likely. 13. A volunteer is needed to hold a convention in 2002. 14. National Directors were urged to get branch information on the web and to keep it updated. 15. The MAL director has resigned and Jerry L. Baird was appointed to fill the position. Cost reduction of the MAL newsletter is a prime objective this year. There are now 94 subscriptions up from 65 a year ago. Membership director Arlene Ingles requested separate checks be used for subscription payments. National Directors should have branch newsletters sent to Jerry Baird (see address page 119)...17. The nominating committee (Ann Salisbury, Chair, Joan Coulat, and Johanna Zinn) submitted a slate of officers for 2001-2003 (see page 100)...18. Bruce Boardman will be the new Research Director and Research Librarian. . Contrary to rumor, Millie Thomson's files are still intact at the Ft. Worth Botanical Garden. 19. Charles Jaros reported two slide programs on Begonia species by Millie Thompson are available for showing, Species from A to D and D to G, respectively. 20. A Grant Review Committee and its procedures were established with the Conservation Chair and Research Director as permanent members, and two members with 3 year terms: Bob Golden (CA) and Dale Sena (FL) were appointed. This will become a standing committee of the Board. 21. A proposal regarding the distribution of seeds from Scott Hoover's collecting trip this year was presented. After discussion it was decided to add a statement indicating that seeds will be used solely for research, education, and exhibition. The proposal as modified was passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Macnair, Secretary

These minutes have been much excerpted and condensed for reasons of space by the Editor. Complete copies are available upon request from Richard Macnair at the address given on page 119.

Identify this Species...

The Last Mystery

Last issue's mystery species was *B. paleata*. **Bill Claybaugh** of Houston was the first to identify it.

You will remember I incorrectly identified the plant on the cover of the September/October 2000 issue as *B. paleata*; here you can, hopefully, see the real thing. I say hopefully because *B. acida* and *B. paleata* are very difficult to distinguish. Based on the petioles this should be *B. paleata*. Its petioles are distinctly red. This one was grown by Gene Salisbury who shared seed with me to produce really lovely seedlings; their green is as deep and clear as it comes, made doubly striking by the bright red petioles which are its main identifier.

I still find several seeming discrepancies with the Smithsonian key on identifying this one, i.e. the direction of the main veins are supposed to continue the line of the petiole in *B. acida* and be at right angles in *B. paleata*. However, it appears to me that in the plants I have the line of the petiole *is* continued. So perhaps once more I will be corrected on the identity! I guess I won't be confident until I find a real *B. acida* to compare.

B. paleata was collected in Brazil and described in 1859 by Schott. It belongs to the section *Pritzelia*.

The New Mystery

This begonia underwent a name change announced in the Begonian early last year (a reading memory test too!). It has pinnate leaves reminiscent of *B. carpinifolia*, but longer and thinner and this plant is much larger and hardier. It also hails from Brazil and was described by A. de Candolle. It is listed as shrub-like, bare-leaved, small-leaved. In my five years of growing it, mine has never bloomed, but its blooms should be white.



Notes from a New Begonia Enthusiast

Startin' Out

by Jim Hannah

Our home isn't exactly the greatest when it comes to good windows for growing plants. Years ago we set up a table and some fluorescent lights in the cellar in self defense. We've used this rig since then for growing a wide variety of plants and for starting seedlings for outdoor spring planting. Most recently, we've used it for begonias. Hopefully, our new greenhouse will take over most of the functions of the lights. But meanwhile, the ol' light table is still a great place for starting seeds and growing some of the low light plants; we may never do away with it entirely.

The basic table's nothing more than a framework of 2 by 4's with a half inch thick 4 by 8 foot plywood top. The top is 38 inches above the floor. It has proven to be a comfortable height. We added a low rim and covered the top with a couple of layers of thin plastic sheet to contain dirt and liquids. We use standard 11 by 22 inch no-hole black plastic trays to further confine any messes. Some random boards we had lying around were used to make a storage platform under the top.

Light is provided by standard two tube 'shop light' fixtures. They're set up in a row above the table. We spaced them a foot apart originally and haven't

changed anything since. Each fixture is 'responsible' for a 1 by 4 foot strip of growing area. The tubes are ordinary 40 watters. We haven't used the tubes developed specifically for light gardens. That doesn't say that they're not worth the money -- just that we don't use them ourselves. The lights are controlled by a timer. The normal cycle is 14 hours on and 10 hours off. The temperature range is from 55 degrees F in the winter (lights off) to about 90 in the summer. Under the lights it probably gets over 100 degrees in summer. Under the lights it probably gets over 100 degrees in summer.

One little trick we discovered has worked well. In any light garden, you have to adjust the height of the fixtures from time to time. Our table is set up with the long side against a wall. 'Nuff said. We solved the problem of getting to the wall ends of the lights by putting screw eyes to the ceiling and running cords through them to the lights. Little pulleys can be used, too. They're easier on the cords. We put cleats in convenient positions to make tying the cords off a cinch. We use the same system for the front ends of the lights, too. If putting screw eyes in the ceiling isn't your cup of tea, you can make a little framework for them above the table. Either way, just be sure that you can raise the lights to a sufficient height. The light adjustment system should permit the bottoms of the lights to be at least 24 inches above the table top.



**The Association for plant &
flower people who grow in
hobby greenhouses and windows!**

Quarterly Magazine Growing & Maintenance Help & Advice

Dues: USA \$19 (Canada and Mexico \$21 -- Overseas \$22, US. funds/MO)

Sample magazine \$3.50, Directory of Greenhouse Manufacturers \$2.50

**Hobby Greenhouse Association (non-profit)
8 Glen Terrace, Bedford, MA 01730-2048**

While you won't normally set them that high for growing, there'll be times when you'll want them up and out of the way.

Now let's get back to begonias. Our experience thus far has been that successfully growing begonias under fluorescent lights is simply a matter of the choice of plants. Some types are happy under fluorescent lights and will flourish. Others will not, either because they need more light or because they just grow too tall. For example, we've had little success with the *Semperflorens*. While many of the *Semp* varieties are listed in seed catalogs as partial shade plants, their light needs seem to be greater than our setup provides.

You can also pretty much rule out begonias which grow taller than about a foot or so. This eliminates most of the cane-like and shrub begonias. Even though many of them are reasonably happy with the light strength, they'll grow way too tall way too fast. The cultivar *B. 'Down Home'* grew beautifully for us and even flowered abundantly, but we had to keep chopping it off to control it. For us, there's something sad about a plant that's not allowed to grow to its normal size. (What? Huh? Yes, we do love Japanese bonsai. I guess we're just not very consistent.)

So what can you grow? Leading the list are the smaller rhizomatous and *Rex* begonias. There's a huge variety available in leaf size, shape, and coloration in these two groups alone. A great plant to start with is *B. masoniana*, the Iron Cross begonia. It fits its name and has an iron constitution as well. There are many others.

I wish I could personally add tuberous begonias to the list of light garden plants, but to date we've only used our setup for starting the Nonstops from seed for outdoor use. They did quite well up to

the point where they were ready to ship outdoors, though. It might well be possible to grow the tuberous begonias through their full cycle under lights. We just haven't tried it yet. A well grown tuberous begonia in flower is an awesome sight.

There there's a whole group of small begonias of various types which either require or thrive in terrarium conditions -- very high humidity and warmth. These are made to order for fluorescent light gardens. You can easily construct some sort of clear-sided enclosure for them. We've even used clear plastic wrap and coat hanger wire in a pinch. *B. lyman-smithii* was grown from seed and chugged along very happily in an enclosure under the lights. There are many others you can try. The ABS Seed Fund can help you keep your costs to a minimum.

Got a nice seed starting tip from Mr. Collard in Canada. He uses soft margarine or other similar plastic containers. First, though, he cuts out most of the center of the lid. Then, when he's ready to cover the container, he stretches clear plastic wrap over the tube and uses the modified lid as a clamp. Simple and effective.

See you next time. Write if you get the chance.

Jim & Joan Hannah, growing this and that at 158 Fisher Avenue, Staten Island, NY.

Quick Tip

To get cuttings off to a good start, mist them daily with a mixture of one (1) drop of liquid fertilizer to one cup of water. Use a 10-10-10, 10-15-10, or 8-8-8 fertilizer (such as Schultz Plant Food Plus or Follett's Watch us Grow) and make sure it contains micronutrients such as iron, manganese, copper, boron, and zinc.

Diane Wilkerson

Begonia hydrocotylifolia Otto ex Hooker

by Normand Dufresne

B. hydrocotylifolia Otto ex Hooker was discovered in Mexico in 1841, but was not described until 1949.

B. hydrocotylifolia is a rhizomatous begonia with a short thick succulent and creeping rhizome. The leaves are small, 3 by 2 1/2 inches, orbicular (circular), cordate (heart shaped), entire, coriaceous (leathery), glabrous dark green in color, medium green in shading and when young covered with hairs. The underside of the leaf is light red and lightly napped. The brownish green petioles are 1 1/2 to 3 inches long and keep the plant compact.

Flowers are small rose pink with two rounded petals on both the male and female. The fruit has three nearly equal wings. Blooms are profuse mid winter to early spring.

B. hydrocotylifolia is sometimes called pennywort or pond lily begonia

because of its appearance. It is in fact one parent of *B. 'Erythrophylla'* which is also called pond lily.

Early morning or late afternoon sun is good for this plant. Temperatures between 58 and 72 degrees are fine, lower temperatures will make the plant go dormant. Humidity of 50 to 60 percent is ideal, but a lower rate is tolerated.

B. hydrocotylifolia is not a fussy begonia and will attain its full potential height of just under six inches in any good mix that drains well. A shallow container should be used.

This article appeared first in the January issue of The Buxtonian, newsletter of the Buxton Branch, where Normand writes an item on the plant of the month for each issue. You may write Normand at 4 Plantation Dr., Cumberland, RI 02864, phone: 401-658-2463.

B. dichroa Sprague 1906, Brazil

by Iris Bird

B. dichroa is a fairly easy plant to grow because it is not too demanding. It can be grown within a wide range of temperatures and humidity. However, it will grow best when the temperature range is between 60 to 70 degrees and when the humidity is between 40 and 60%. A lot of sunlight is required for this begonia to be vigorous and to bloom well. It can be grown outside in the summer in most areas, provided it is protected from the strong midday sun. In winter this begonia can be grown in the greenhouse or a similar humid spot in a lot of light. It needs protection from the rain and cold winds. If there is an overhanging roof with plastic overhead, it can be hung in a hanging basket up near the top to catch

the sunrays. It may be grown under fluorescent lighting and it will be perfectly happy there. There will be no difficulty with this cane-like begonia because it is low growing and slow growing.

If it is placed the usual distance from the tubes, it will thrive and bloom continuously. For anyone who enjoys windowsill plants, *B. dichroa* will be a colorful addition all year in the sunny window.

It should be fertilized regularly with a complete balanced fertilizer. It is a super begonia for those with limited growing space, as the stems naturally droop, so it can easily be grown in a hanging basket. It is very graceful and lovely with quite large leaves (4-5 inches long and 2 1/2 inches wide) on a mature plant.



B. hydrocotylifolia, above, grown by Gene Salisbury in his greenhouse in Tonkawa, OK. Below; *B. dichroa* as grown and photographed in California by Iris Bird.



The value of using *B. dichroa* in hybridizing was recognized very early because this species is not only a prolific seed-bearer, but it blooms profusely all year with large clusters of orange flowers. In 1938, the Robinsons's of Point Loma, CA developed the following hybrids: B. 'Di-erna', B. 'Di-Anna', and B. 'Di-Shasta'. In 1947, Leslie Woodriff introduced the very well known basket plant B. 'Orange Rubra'. Rudolf Ziesenhenné, the wonderful hybridizer of today who resides in Santa Barbara, introduced the following year, three hybrids which resulted from *B. dichroa*. They are as follows: B. 'Pink Supreme', B. 'Rose Supreme', and B. 'Scarlet Supreme'. B. 'Lenore Olivier' and B. 'Anna Christine' are also famous begonias introduced by Belva Kusler, a very well known hybridizer.

B. dichroa is an excellent begonia for growers who wish to try a little hy-

bridizing as the flowers are almost always there for the taking. It does not branch very well and this sometimes necessitates occasional pruning of the longer stems to force new shoots at the base of the plant. This will also insure you of a fuller plant.

Our is still very young and has not bloomed as yet. I am anxiously waiting. Bob Golden and I were given cuttings by Eric Seel. I have tried three times to grow from the seed fund offering and I have two plants very small at the moment. Hurry up *B. dichroa*, so we can get some seed and see what happens with that. If you get the chance to get cuttings, do so. It is beautiful.

The editor's attempts to grow B. dichroa have not been as successful as those of Iris so be sure to follow her growing directions! Iris Bird, whose beautiful photos and plants often appear in the Begonian can be reached at 5425 Edgemere Dr., Torrance, CA 90503.

Quick Tips

Do you have used fiberglass screening, from windows or sliding screen doors, lying around the garage? Use last years screening to line all the drain holes (bottom and sides) in your outdoor pots. The screen will keep little crawling creatures (ants, rolypolys, etc.) out of the pots and stop dirt from washing out of the drain holes.

Label all your spray bottles with a permanent marking pen (Sanford Sharpie works well) and then religiously adhere to the labels. This prevents your grandchild or husband from "helping" you by spraying Roundup on all your plants from a bottle marked "begonia fertilizer."

Safers Insecticidal Soap with pyrethrums is a great choice for insect control. Apply at the manufacturers suggested rate three times over a period of ten days. This program controls mealy bug, spider mites, whitefly, aphids and a host of other insect pests. It is also less toxic to other critters such as grandchildren, dogs, cats, and husbands when they nibble on your prize canes.

Dianna Wilkerson

Don't know how to set and save seed for the Seed Fund? Write them; they'll tell you how to do it!

**Pronunciation of Begoniaceae
Names for the Begonian, 68,
March/April & May/June 2001
by Jack Golding**

acida	ASS-i-duh
angulata	ang-yew-LAY-tuh
barkeri	BARK-er-eye
biserrata	beye-ser-RAY-tuh
boliviensis	boh-liv-i-EN-siz
bowerae	BOW-er-ee, <i>bow-er-eye</i>
var nigramarga	neye-gra-MAR-guh
cardiocarpa	kar-di-oh-KAHR-puh
carpinifolia	kar-pin-i-FOH-li-uh
carrierae	kar-REE-ee
castaneifolia	kas-tan-eye-FOH-li-uh
chlorosticta	klo-ro-STIK-tuh
conchifolia	kon-chi-FOH-li-uh
cucullata	kyew-kul-LAY-tuh
var arenosicola	uh-ren-oh-si-KOH-luh
deliciosa	de-lis-i-OH-suh
dichotoma	deye-KOHT-o-muh
dichroa	DEYE-kroh-uh
dipetala	deye-PET-a-luh
dregei	DREG-e-eye
echinosepala	ek-in-oh-SEP-a luh
var elongatifolia	e-long-gay-ti-FOH-li-uh
egregia	e-GREE-ji-uh
fischeri	FISH-er-eye
frigida hort	FRI-ji-duh
glabra	GLAYB-ruh
humilis	HYEW-mi-lis
mannii	MANN-i eye
grandis	GRAND-is
subsp evansiana	e-van-si-AY-nuh
hatacoa	ha-ta-KOH-uh
var meisneri	MEYES-ner-eye
syn <i>barbata</i>	bar-BAY-tuh
syn <i>rubrovenia</i>	ryew-broh-VEEN-i-uh
herbacea	her-BAY-se-uh
heydei	HEYE-de-eye
hirtella	hir-TEL-luh
humilis	HYEW-mi-lis

var. porteriana	por-ter-i-AY-nuh
hydrocotylifolia	heye-dro-koh-til-i-FOH-li-uh
imperialis	im-peer-i-AY-lis
incarnata	in-kar-NAY-tuh
johnstonii	john-STON-i-eye
kellermanii	kel-ler-MAN-i-eye
ludwigii	LEWD-vig-i-eye
luxurians	lux-YEWR-i-ans
lyman-smithii	lyman-SMITH-i-eye
malabarica	mal-i-BAR-i-kuh
manicata	man-i-KAY-tuh
mannii	MANN-i eye
masoniana	MAY-son-i-ay-nuh
var maculata	mak-yew-LAY-tuh
mazae	MAH-zee
metallica	met-TAL-li-kuh
micranthera	meye-kran-THER-uh
var. venturii	ven-TYEUR-i-eye
longimaculata	ling-i-mak-yew-LAY-tuh
octopetala	ok-to-pet-AY-luh
olsoniae	<i>ohl-SOHN-i-ee</i>
paleata	pa-le-AY-tuh
parilis	PAY-ri-lis
petasitifolia	pet-uh-si-ti-FOH-li-uh
plebeja	ple-BEE-juh
popenoei	poh-pen-OH-eye
prismatocarpa	pris-ma-TOH-car-puh
pustulata	pus-tyew-LAY-tuh
reniformis	ren-i-FORM-is
rex	REX
sarmentacea hort.	sar-men-TAY-se-uh
seemanniana	see-man-ni-AY-nuh
sericoneura	ser-i-kon-OO-ruh,
staudtii	STAWD-ti-eye
sudjanae	sud-JAYN-ee
tenuifolia	ten-yew-i-FOH-li-uh
veitchii	VEECH-i-eye

Editor's Notes

Begonia, Begonia, begonias?? What should it be? My head swims sometimes trying to figure out which is the right term and the right type face to use. The confusion arises because there is *Begonia* in the botanical sense which is Latin and applies to both singular and plural use and written, not as I once thought always in italics, in a *distinctive* type face. Notice that Jack Golding uses a different style for his lists. I try always to use italic since that has been tradition.

Now begonia is also an English word and when used in ordinary text it may be used in the plural with a final s and within text is not capitalized or emphasized. The trick is to be able to differentiate. For example, Scott Hoover's articles almost always use the term in a botanical sense and hence it is *Begonia*. It should always be *Begonia* when used as a specific name as *Begonia dichroa* or *Begonia 'Freddie'*. In a general care articles, the usage is usually begonia and begonias, however.

Add to this the fact that in the computer program I use, it is not easy to go from regular text to italic or bold so I usually wait until the end of the text and then go back and italicize or make bold whatever needs it; of course, I miss some and make errors, but I try to observe these protocols! Also, to add more confusion, in captions where italics are used, then the type face reverts to plain for emphasis!

I really need some general articles about specific begonias (see the *B. dichroa* and *B. hydrocotylifolia* articles). I stole these from Branch newsletters - and I think it is terrific that such articles appear in some newsletters. It would be nice to receive some from you readers, however, as I know you are growing some very special begonias out there that everyone would like to hear about.

Also note that you can send your Quick Tips by E-mail to our new **Quick Tips Editor Diane Wilkerson** or send them by regular mail. Her address is at the bottom of page 118.

See you in Denver!

~FH

American Begonia Society Election 2001

About the Candidates

For President:

Morris Mueller has completed two terms in the office of 1st Vice President. He serves as the President and National Director for the Sacramento Branch of ABS and is also an associate member of the San Francisco Branch and a member of the Southwest Region. He is on the ABS Audit Committee. Morris attends the national conventions and supports ABS and his branch in numerous ways. Many of us have been recipients of his favorite terrarium plants that he grows and propagates.

For 1st Vice President:

Howard Berg has just completed his second term as 2nd Vice President. He has been a member of ABS since 1966 and of the Knickerbocker Branch since 1968. He was one of the founding members of the Chicago Branch and served as its initial president. He has served the Knickerbocker Branch as president for four terms over the years and is currently its treasurer. He also served ABS as 3rd Vice President in the past. Howard collects sets of antiquarian botanical books, particularly those that have material on begonias including color prints.

For 2nd Vice President:

Janet Brown joined the Westchester Branch and ABS in 1991. She served as Westchester Branch Show Chairman for 9 years, President for 3 years and Newsletter Editor for 6 years. She was ABS Convention Chairman for 1999. She loves begonias, particularly the stems and the American Begonia Series. Janet is also a frequent contributor of articles and photographs for the *Begonian*.

For Secretary:

Richard Macnair is currently serving as ABS Secretary. When you read his notes, you feel that you have attended the Board Meeting he records so they are his notes. He is very active in the Buxton Branch of ABS, currently serving as President, and has been a dedicated behind-the-scenes worker for ABS. He never fails to support both the local conventions and the ABS Board in any way possible. He works with his wife Wanda to make many plant introductions successful.

For Treasurer:

Carol Notaras has been serving as treasurer for the past eight years. She also served two terms as President of the Westchester Branch. She is an active member of the Westchester, San Francisco and Sacramento Branches. She was ABS Convention Chair in 1989. She also grows award winning begonias and is a frequent contributor of photographs for the *Begonian*.

Now Available

The *John Ingles Memorial Buxton Checklist Supplement 2000* is now available through the ABS Bookstore. Cost is \$15. This is a 73 page publication covering over 4,500 new hybrids. It supplements the last edition of the *Revised Buxton Checklist* published in 1980. The supplement was compiled by John Ingles, Jr. and ABS Past President Bruce Wagner and is a must have for Begonia enthusiasts. Make checks payable to the American Begonia Society and to ABS Bookstore Manager Cheryl Ingles, 13014 Chaville, Cypress, TX 77433.

Continued from page 111.

each day. One could also request photos from plants seen on the web site as well as electronic copies of library materials by e-mail from this web-page. The sixth enhancement is to begin a digital photographic record of the live collection which could be distributed on CD-R.

References:

Begoniaceae, Part I: Illustrated Key,
by L.B. Wasshausen, D.C.,
and J. Karegeannes, C.E.
Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986

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'Best of Show' Should be her Middle Name: An Interview with Joyce Pridgen

On the next page you see Joyce Pridgen with her *B. luxurians*, winner of Best of Show at the Miami 2001 Show. You may remember that she won Best of Show at the ABS 2000 National in Florida with her *B. 'Boomer'*. Even when she travels across the continent she still takes home winning ribbons. Join the editor here as she tries to learn some of Joyce's secrets for winners.

Ed: Joyce, tell us your secrets for producing show winners.

JP: I have no secrets. I just begin the day after one show to get plants ready for the next one. I use Fafard 2-S potting mix, but any very light, well-drained mix will do. And I fertilize with Nutricote. I move my plants up as they grow, but never to more than 1 or 2 pot sizes larger. I turn my plants twice a week to keep them symmetrical; this is important I think.

Ed: Do you grow your plants outside all year?

JP: Yes, I have two growing areas. One is by a pool and the other is a shade house. These provide a number of different degrees of shade and I place plants where they seem to get the amount they need. I place most of the canes where they get more sun and the rhizomatous where they get more shade. Sometimes in the heat, the rhizomatous may even go under the benches. I prefer clay pots for the rhizomatous and semi-tuberous, but use plastic for the others. I put material in the bottom of my pots too, even rocks for the big, top-heavy ones. We get some very strong winds and this helps to keep the plants upright. Of course, even with this,

sometimes one will topple over.

Ed: Joyce, I know you love all kinds of begonias, but do you have a favorite type?

JP: Yes, I think I like the semi-tuberous best because I can grow them and they do well. Also, they are interesting plants. They do get mildew at times, but I manage to control that.

Ed: I love them too, but I lose mine in the heat.

JP: Yes, I lost my *B. partita* [Synonym for *B. dregei*] last summer. We do okay if the nights cool off enough. Right now we are suffering from drought and we can water only twice a week. It may soon go to once if we don't get some rain.

Ed: After last summer, I know what that is like, but right now we're getting rain. Joyce, on another subject, do you enjoy reading about begonias and if so what is your favorite resource?

JP: Indeed I do. The Thompson book *Begonias The Complete Reference Guide* is my favorite reading. There just isn't anything better.

Ed: Do you grow from seed?

JP: No, but my husband Doug grows from seed and enjoys propagating in general. I start stem cuttings, but I leave them to him. He sometimes says there really should be an award for pot scrubbing and leaf trimming so he could win a ribbon for his specialty!

Ed: Yes, but I see that he won best new introduction in the Miami show this year.



Here she is, Joyce Pridgen with her 2001 Miami ranch Show 'Best of Show' winner B. luxurians! Photo is by Doug Pridgen.

and he would always win this editor's awards for his photographs. The Pridgen photographs often save my day! I notice that you have won several awards for "Traveling Begonias". Can you give us any tips on getting our plants to Denver in good shape?

P: Doug helps there too. He chooses the right size box first of all. It has to go through the machine at the airport so it can't be too tall. Once we had a tall one and it tipped over and our plants got a little damage. So now we make sure it is the right height. Then, he cuts a sheet of cardboard to fit inside the box and makes holes to fit the pots through so they can't move about. Then, we place some foam peanuts around the plants for protection. We take just one box with three plants and carry it with us rather than checking it. Another thing, you have to be sure you have plants growing in the 4"

pots to just the right stage to take to the show also, that takes some advance planning.

Ed: How did you get started with begonias?

JP: I had grown a few when we lived in the Tampa area - you know, the ones you pick up at the garden center. Then we moved from the Tampa area to the Miami area and I saw the ABS Convention up in Miami Lakes advertised in 1993. We went just to see what it was all about and wound up joining ABS and the local branch. Now, I have at least 250 plants!

Ed: And what do you enjoy most about growing begonias?

JP: Oh, I guess, just the feeling of accomplishment I get when I see how beautiful they become.

Ed: Thank you, Joyce, for sharing with us. See you in Denver!

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The Margaret Lee Branch, San Diego County, CA
Eleanor L. Calkins, Seed Fund Administrator

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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 is identified by a code to 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 offerings.

The Seed Fund needs donations of seeds. Seeds may be traded for seeds offered in the Seed Fund Listings. Unlisted seeds from earlier offerings may be available in small quantities. If you have a special need ask the Seed Fund Administrator.

The need for new seeds to distribute is acute. Please pollinate your species begonias with pollen from other plants of the same species and contribute (or exchange) to the seed fund. The Seed Fund needs enough seeds for 25 packets.

Most packets of species seeds are \$1.50 all packets of hybrid (including open pollinated) seeds are 50¢ per packet. Very rare seeds and newly collected seeds will be \$2.00 or more per packet. California residents please add 7% sales tax. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, **payable in US funds ONLY**, to The

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The CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND is a project of the Margaret Lee Branch of the ABS. in San Diego County, California.

Contributors this month are: **Evelyn Bouquet.**

Seed List

March-April 2001

MJ01-01: *B. humilis* var. *porteriana*
(\$2.00)

MJ01-02: *B. hydrocotylifolia*

MJ01-03: *B. egregia* (\$2.00)

MJ01-04: *B. johnstonii*,

MJ01-05: *B. cucullata* var. *arenosicola*

MJ01-06: *B. herbacea*

Hybrids

MJ01-07: *B.* 'Palomar Fanfare'

MJ01-08: *B.* 'Leslie Lynn'

DESCRIPTIONS

NOTE: The names reported here are correct and are based on the latest information from **BEGONIACEAE** from the Smithsonian by Smith, Wasshausen, Golding, and Karegeannes

MJ01-01: *B. humilis* Dryander var. *porteriana* A. de Candolle [Brazil] (Sect. *Doratometra*) Annual; green stems 2'-3', branching at base, sparsely hairy above, triangular leaves 2"-4" long, obliquely ovate, acuminate, basely cordate, shallowly lobed, serrate, ciliate, pilose above, short petioled; white flowers in few-flowered cymes in winter.

MJ01-02: *B. hydrocotylifolia* Otto ex W. J. Hooker [Mexico] (Sect. *Gireouda*) Hairy, small rhizome; leaves 1"-2" long, orbicular to cordate, glossy green above, red underneath; short petioled; pink flowers on rosy-red peduncles to 1" long in late winter to summer

MJ01-03: *B. egregia* N. E. Brown [Brazil] (Sect. *Tetrachia*) Stem 2'-4'; leaves peltate, 6"-11" long 2"-3" wide, lanceolate, somewhat cupped, brittle, pebbled, grey-green; many white flowers in winter; ovary 4-celled, 4-winged.

MJ01-04: *B. johnstonii* Oliver ex J. D. Hooker [Kenya] (Sect. *Rostrobegonia*) Thick-stemmed; fleshy leaves red streaked with scalloped margin, soft hairs along veins; profuse, large pink flowers in late winter

MJ01-05: *B. cucullata* Willdenow var. *arenosicola* Smith & Schubert [Brazil] (Sect. *Begonia*). Succulent stems to 3', green, little branched; green leaves to 4";

white flowers much of the year. Variety *arenosicola* is distinguished by the narrowly elliptic leaves, rounded at the tip, narrow unequally cuneate at the base; and large subtentire roundly obtuse stipules.

MJ01-06: *B. herbacea* Vellozo [Brazil] (Sect. *Trachelocarpus*) Shaggy rhizome; leaves 4"-6" long, symmetrically lanceolate, attenuate, serrate, light green, sometimes with cystoliths; short petioles; flowers white to pink, male flowers in clusters on peduncles shorter than the foliage, female flowers solitary, sessile at base of leaves.

Hybrids

The descriptions are of the female parent. The plants grown from these seeds may not resemble the descriptions given. Plants grown from these seed should be marked as hybrids and not given the name of the parent.

MJ01-07: *B.* 'Palomar Fanfare' X. A Kartuz hybrid. *B.* 'Palomar Fanfare' is a hybrid between *B. sarmentacea* hort. and *B. olsoniae*. Seeds are from *B.* 'Palomar Fanfare' selfed. There is some variation in leaf pattern, mostly in the veining which is a lighter color than the rest of the leaf. Resembles *B. olsoniae* with larger leaves, white flowers that are fragrant. The grower of these seed fears that *B. sarmentacea* hort. is probably now extinct in cultivation.

MJ01-08: *B.* 'Leslie Lynn' X. *B.* "Leslie Lynn was hybridized by Doris Motschman in the 1950s. It is *B.* 'Kensington' X *B. glandulosa* (dayi). *B.* 'Kensington' is a seedling of *B. heracleifolia* var. *sunderbruckii*. 'Leslie Lynn' is a large, rhizomatous plant with scaly red petioles, dark, satiny reddish black, star shaped leaves. Flowers pink in spring and summer on tall (2'-3') peduncles. Quite striking. These seeds are probably self-pollinated.



Here they are together to clear up any confusion created by the error in labeling in the September/October issue of the Begonian, page 194. Above we see U400 as entered in the Commercial Division of the 2001 Miami Branch Show by Tim Anderson. And below is U388 as grown and photographed by Don Miller. Both are beauties!



U388 and U 400

by Don Miller

My U388 is growing again and I did get a picture of it although some leaves are still pale. It was collected in Vietnam by Mary Sizemore who is from Florida. I got a cutting from Betsy Feuerstein of Memphis, Tennessee. Thelma O'Reily assigned the U number of 388 to it.

I grow it in a terrarium. The leaves get huge, 8 to 10" across. It has very long white hairs on it.

The plant pictured in the September/October 2000 Begonian is U400. Tim Anderson said he got it from the Singapore Botanical Gardens. I brought it back from the Penang Botanical Garden in 1990, but lost it. Thelma assigned the U number U400 to it when she was in Florida in 2000.

Snail Jail

Recycle 2 liter plastic beverage bottles by making throwaway snail traps. Cut the top third off the empty bottle, drop a spoonful of slug bait into the bottom of the bottle (the editor of the *Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch* newsletter uses *Deadline*), invert the top third of the bottle and staple the cut edge rims together in about 3 places. This design keeps the slug bait away from kids, birds, and pets and keeps the bait dry in rainy weather. The editor has killed many slugs and snails using this method.

This came to us from Helmut Brodka of Renton, Washington by way of the Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch newsletter.

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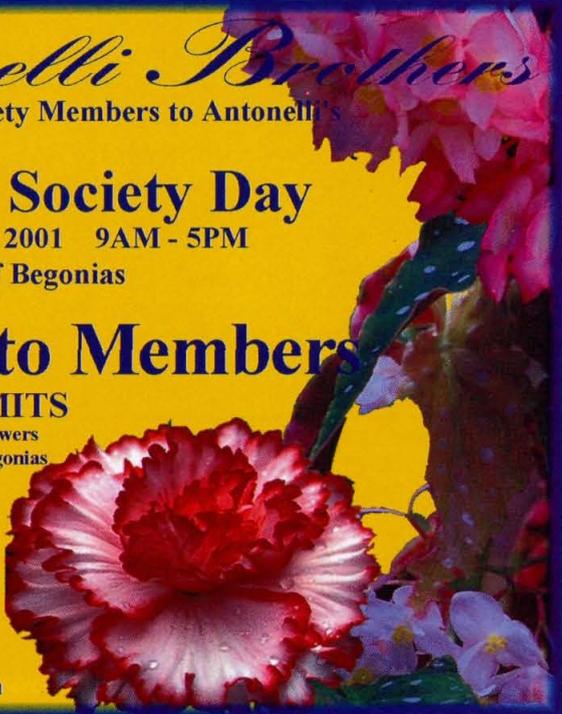
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Future Direction of the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens Begonia Collection and Library

by Linda Shires and Lawrenc X. Oakford

The primary goals of this collection of living specimens and library materials can be enhanced by the incorporation of several technological advances. The first goal is the maintenance and expansion of the living collection. The second goal is the taxonomic authentication of the specimens in the living collection. The third goal is the maintenance, expansion and long-term security of the library materials for research. The curator of this collection has developed a plan to enhance the achievement of these goals.

The first enhancement is the use of bar code labels to facilitate easy and accurate collection inventories. Hand inventories now consume two and a half days or more. By placing bar codes tied to the accession numbers in the Fort Worth Botanic Garden's electronic database on each pot a complete and accurate inventory could be completed in as little as half a day allowing more time for other curatorial activities. A hand-held bar code scanner would be used to save the bar code information for each plant scanned which can then be downloaded into a desktop computer for quick updating of collection listings. As a safeguard for the species collection a second barcode on a small bracelet will be attached above the first petiole on the plant's stem to ensure future accuracy when repotting is done in case the pot's label is lost or mislabeled.

The second enhancement is not technological but will have an important impact on the living collection. A collection-wide assessment of the taxonomic accuracy of each specimen will be initiated. The species collection will be keyed out from taxonomic descriptions in the library and from outside sources. Hybrid

experts will be consulted to verify the authenticity of the hybrid collection. It is felt that this will strengthen the living collection's future usefulness.

The third enhancement is the digitization of all library holdings. Items will be scanned into a computer with a flat-bed scanner as image files first then these files saved onto CD-R disks. These files will then be converted to text files using an optical character recognition (OCR) software program. These files will also be saved to CD-R disks. The text files will then be converted to Adobe portable document files (PDF's) for distribution. The power of this file format for distribution is that any computer (Windows, Apple, UNIX or LINUS) can read the files with the free reader distributed by Adobe.

The fourth enhancement is to index the text files generated above and develop a database engine that could dynamically perform searches of the text files. Queries would be able to be performed on titles, authors, keywords and/or the full text of the items. This would then be a searchable electronic library which could be distributed partially or fully on CD-R disks.

The fifth enhancement would be to develop a web-page for the collection and library. This page would include descriptions of the collection and library holdings, methods of contacting the curators, current news, and a link to search the electronic library with possibly the ability to download pdf's of the materials found. This would allow researchers and those interested in begonias access to the collection and its holdings over the Internet, a practice that is becoming more common

Continued on page 102.

Rudy's 90th Birthday

by Janet Brown

What a night! What a turnout! What a party! We came from all over Southern California to celebrate Mr. Begonia's 90th birthday, to honor him, and show him how much he is loved. Publicity Chairman Ramona Parker enticed the *Los Angeles Times*' *Westside Weekly* to cover the event. Reporters Ted Shaffrey and photographer Carl Hidalgo spent the evening with us and their article with photos of Rudolf Ziesenhenne, Irene Nuss and President Patricia McElderry was excellent. They printed the ABS website address and did a great job of describing the evening and Rudy's words.

Rudy spoke about the early days and hybridizing B. 'Freddie'. One of his gifts was a beautiful plate done by Marian Lindgren many years ago of B. 'Freddie'. And sons Freddie and Skee were in the audience as well. Rudy received a pair of fishing fly suspenders from old friend Joan Coulat, a crystal hurricane lamp decorated with begonia leaves and flowers by Patricia McElderry, and a kiss and a hug from old friend and colleague Thelma O'Reilly who couldn't be with us. It was a pleasure to deliver that present! And all the members present signed a big red heart for Rudy's birthday.

Walter Pease and Irene Nuss gave moving tributes to Rudy that left us with tears in our eyes. Sadly, Ruth Pease could not be with us as she is recovering from major heart surgery. Ruth had done all the work before the party sending announcements to all the local California branches and to many dear friends of Rudy. The Hantgins drove down from Ventura to help us celebrate.

Irene Nuss gave a program on pruning and it was wonderful to have these two greats of the begonia world trading reminiscences and pruning tips with each other and the audience. Rudy was present when Westchester Branch organized in 1959. He was the speaker for every September birthday meeting up until 1996 when it became difficult for him to get down to us. It was a delight to have him speak to us again on this occasion.

We wish him many more years of begonia work and we hope to celebrate with him next year and many years to come. Rudolf Ziesenhenne is a legend and a treasure to all of us in the American Begonia Society.





Left, Rudy and Pat McElderry, Westchester President, with his gift from Westchester Branch. Above, Irene Nuss and Rudy with his cake and inset, a close look at the cake. Below, Rudy celebrates with some who traveled to be with him: From left, Iris Bird, Palos Verdes Branch President; Mary Sakamoto; Pam Hantgin, Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch President; Margaret Fisher, Orange County Branch President; Joy Blair; and Joy Paris, Long Beach Parent Chapter President. Photos are by Jeanne Jones..



NEWS: ABS, Branch, International

The Rocky Mountain Begonia Society newsletter shares with us that **Gary Davis** of the Denver Botanic Gardens and **Tom Lemieux** of the Horticulture Department at the University of Colorado are working on forming a new plant society devoted to tropical plants.

The Houston folks have been reaching out! On February 23 **Tom Keepin** spoke to the Forest West Garden Club on "Landscaping with Begonias." On February 1, **Cheryl Lenert** spoke to the Lazy Dazy Garden Club in Sharpstown. On March 20th, Cheryl appeared on Channel 8's Lazy Gardener program and on April 23rd, Tom and Cheryl worked together to give a program at the Museum of Fine Arts to the judges of *Florescence* being held on April 24th and 25th. Tom used a slide show to introduce the various classifications and show them show quality plants. There were plants on hand for the judges to see and mock judge to give them practice.

Daniel Haseltine of the Chicago Branch (IL) has prepared some beautiful certificates for the Seed Fund. These should really help to provide incentive for Seed Fund contributions. And Branches don't forget to get your seed contributions into the seed fund before the convention to be eligible for the \$50 reward.

The American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society will be celebrating their 50th anniversary at their convention in Kansas City, MO on July 3rd to 8th. **Elvin McDonald** who was a member of ABS when he helped form the AGGS society will be their banquet speaker.

Akira Tanaka of the Japanese Begonia Society announces that there is in preparation a "Revised Checklist of Begonia Species and Hybrids Introduced in Japan." The list will be in English and Japanese.

In conjunction with the Monterey Area Branch Show and Sale in 2000, **Bill** and **Mimi Schramm** got a wonderful writeup in the Monterey County Home Garden Section. It was in full color. Entitled "A Lush Hobby" the photos of the begonias they grew were enough to make anyone want to grow begonias. There was even a full coverage of the different classifications of begonias.

The Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch will celebrate its 64th birthday with a potluck on Saturday, May 12th at 11:30 at **Pam** and **Steve Hantgin's** Home. They will also have a garden tour on Saturday, June 16th from noon to 4 p.m.

And the Buxtonians are reaching out too. **Wanda Macnair** spoke to the Billerica Garden Club on January 2, 2001. From this the Buxton Branch may get several new members.

Everyone! Help out the folks in Denver by sending in your registrations just as soon as you possibly can! This helps them to be sure they have enough buses, room in the seminars for everyone, and generally to plan properly.

Write to Ross...

"Write to Ross" is a regular feature of the NSW Begonia News, newsletter of the Australian New South Wales Begonia Society. And do they ever have good questions and Ross even better answers! A sample is quoted below. Ross is Ross Bolwell, well known to US Begoniacs. He is President of the NSW society.

Q: What light levels are the best for bringing out the colours in begonias?

A: This question was posed at the February meeting. It is always difficult to convey the meaning of low light or high light in terms that make sense because our vision adjusts by our pupils dilating to compensate.

The unit of measurement for light is called lux. If you stand outside in mid-summer at midday on a clear day in the Southern Hemisphere the light from the sun would measure about 180,000 lux; this would be considered extremely high light. At the other extreme, the light given off by a 40 watt fluorescent tube measured about 300 mm away would be approximately 1,000 lux and would be considered very low light.

Adequate levels of light for begonias vary between species and hybrids and are also dependent on the length of time exposed. As a guide, between 10,000 and 20,000 lux for about ten to twelve hours is suitable for most rhizomatous types whereas higher levels would suit the canes and shrubs.

Flower colour is richer and more intense at higher light levels than at lower levels; hence flowers that have been shaded beneath the foliage are paler than those standing out from the foliage. If the light levels are very high along with high temperatures then the flower colours can beach out. Lower light levels seem to

bring out the rich colours in the leaves of *B. rex* varieties and this is also associated with the cooler temperatures of spring and autumn.

Rhizomatous begonias produce good leaf colour at slightly higher light levels than for the Rexes with many rhizome types showing their best colour in winter. So as a general rule foliage colour is best at lower light levels and cooler temperatures whereas flower color is best at high light levels and warmer temperatures.

As a guide, heavy shade cloth (80% shade) gives about a 40,000 lux reading in summer.

Q: Are there any rhizomes suitable for a position which gets little morning sun, but does receive afternoon sun? I have some canes planted in this position.

A: Many begonias can take a lot more sun than is generally accepted. I have observed a number of rhizomatous begonias in sunny spots. *B. 'Virbob'* is one hybrid that surprised me by its tolerance to sunlight, growing beneath a palm tree where it received both morning and afternoon sun. This was in a suburban garden in North Parramatta. Tough species such as *B. manicata*, *heracleifolia*, *conchifolia*, *mazae*, and *bowerae* and their hybrid offspring can be successful for up to half a day of sun, either morning or afternoon. Typically *B. 'Cleopatra'* types perform well in sunny positions as does *B. 'Erythrophylla'*.

Now it is important to remember that a begonia requires acclimatising into a sunny spot (high light), particularly one brought from the indoor section (low light) of a plant nursery. Once this is achieved (it takes about six weeks) the plant should perform very well. You will see much better flowering and the leaves will take

on a different look being thicker but smaller. Some leaves may curl up to try to reduce the amount of light they receive and this indicates that the position is not right for that variety. On the one or two extremely hot days in summer you may find that the leaves burn. This happens to lots of full sun plant also and the begonias will recover without any long term damage. Plant them in amongst your cane varieties and watch them grow!

If you have a burning question, you can also send your question to Ross at rholwell@attglobal.net and I'll bet he will try to answer them for you.

Register Your Hybrids

If you hybridize, you should be registering those beauties you develop. Gene Salisbury has the forms. They are very clear and simple to complete.

To register, you do need to trial your hybrids and let a couple of other ABS members (or more) try them as well. It is better if these members live in another area than you do so that the hybrid gets a good tryout under several different types of growing conditions. Two of these trial members should like your hybrid and be willing to recommend it for registration.

Your hybrid should be distinguishable from other known hybrids, distinctive in some trait that makes it worthwhile.

If you can interest a commercial grower in having some available at the time registration is announced, that would be great although it is not a requirement.

For registration forms, write to: Gene Salisbury, Nomenclature Director, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653 or call him at 580-628-5230.

In Memory

Paul Riviere

Paul Riviere passed away in December 2000. Paul was a member of the A.B.S. since 1963. He was Past President of the San Francisco Branch and National Representative for the San Francisco Branch to ABS. He was also President of the Flower show Incorporated for the City of San Francisco for many years. He single handedly kept the San Francisco Flower Show going for many years. He was also President of several Fuchsia Branches in the San Francisco area.

Kay Bradley

Kay Bradley passed away on January 29, 2001. Kay was born in Cushing, Oklahoma, but lived most of her life on the west coast. She and her husband Lorne have been members of the San Francisco Branch and East Bay Branches of the ABS for many years. She served as Vice President of the San Francisco Branch and together they attended as many conventions and Get Togethers as possible. She was also very active with the Bay Area Organ Club and was a volunteer in the Oakland Discover Shops which are upscale resale shops for the American Cancer Society.

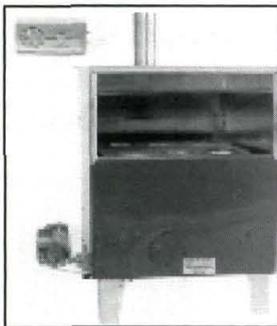
Paul Riviere and Kay Bradley will be greatly missed.

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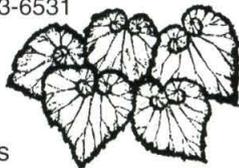
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COMING EVENTS

May 4-6, 2001: The Nature Discovery Volunteers and the Northcoast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will host the 18th annual "Spring Wildflower Show at the Humboldt County Office of Education, 901 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, CA. For information call 707-445-5883 or 707-442-8743 or e-mail: yoshells@humboldt1.com or visit northcoast.com/~cnps/wfs.htm.

July 4-8, 2001: ABS Convention 2001 in Denver, CO. There will be a preconvention tour on the day before the convention starts and a postconvention tour following the last day of the convention. Hotel will be the downtown Embassy Suites. For more information call Andy Conely at 303-916-5676.

July 21, 2001 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and July 22, 2001 (12 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.): Westchester Branch Show and Sale with a California theme featuring Rudy Ziesenhenne's California Indian series (i.e. B. 'Sisquoc', B. 'Yonanli', and others). For information, contact Janet Brown at 310-670-4471 or E-mail at JBBrown@aol.com.

August 24-26, 2001: San Francisco Branch Show and Sale. Call Carol Notaras at 415-931-4912 or E-mail cnotaras@juno.com for more info.

September 7-9, 2001: ABS Board Meeting in Orange County, CA. More information to come.

September 15, 2001: 12-3:30 p.m. Buxton Branch (MA) Annual Show and Sale, combined with the NE/AGGS. For more information call Wanda Macnair at 617-876-1356.

September 26-28, 2002: AABS Convention, Perth Australia. You're invited!

The Begonian

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