

*The*  
**Begonian**

January/February 2004

# *The* **Begonian**

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Publication of the American Begonia Society

## **American Begonia Society**

**Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman**

### Aims and Purposes

To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.

To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

To gather and publish information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.

To issue a bulletin that will be mailed to all members of the society.

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

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## Cover

**Front:** Charles Jaros sends us this photo of his *B. platanifolia*. Look at that lush Florida growth!

**Back:** Janice Keck sends us this lovely photo of *B. 'Crestabruchii'* (*B. manicata* 'Crispa' x 'Sunderbruchii') growing in the National Botanic Gardens in Washington, D.C. See her letter on page 5.

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*Come to Tampa where begonias grow  
big. See below and page 5!*



## Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads  
**200303 or 200304**, your membership is about to expire. Please renew!  
We don't want to lose you.

# President's Message

**Charles Jaros**, when he was president of ABS mentioned in a director's meeting that there had not been a book on growing begonias since *Begonias for Beginners* by **Elda Haring** that was published in 1976. He also suggested that we try to secure the rights to the book to reprint it. I agree with Charles in that we need a book on growing begonias, but I believe we can create a new book, *The American Begonia Society Guide to Growing Begonias*.

Over the years, the *Begonian* has printed numerous articles on how to grow begonias, including articles on propagation, growing from seed, pruning and pinching, potting, soils, hybridizing and a myriad of other articles. I also understand that the *Begonian* or the ABS has the reprint rights to most of these articles. In other words, we can put the book together by using chapter contributions from members either ones that have been published in the *Begonian* or new ones that are written for the book.

Publishing a book was a fairly expensive proposition a few years ago when a press run of about 3,000 to 5,000 copies had to be printed and stored until they were sold. Now computer technology has provided us with "print-on-demand" publishing. A book is created along with pictures that are stored in digital format, and printed and bound when an order is received by Barnes and Noble, Amazon or other book sellers. Many of the books available today are print-on-demand. The initial investment on the part the publisher can be as little as \$500. The book can be either hard or soft cover.

I am going to propose at the winter board meeting in Tampa that we take a look at publishing *The American Begonia Society Guide to Growing Begonias* as an ABS project. Think about it. Could you

contribute a chapter? Are there articles in the *Begonian* that you have particularly enjoyed that you would like to see included? Most of Elda's chapters were printed in the *Begonian* prior to being included in her book. The ABS contains the bulk of useful begonia knowledge in the country; we might as well share it.

Let me know if you think this is a good idea, a dumb idea, or something we should consider or if you are interested in contributing. I hope to see you at the winter board meeting. [See the next page for full information] Plan to attend. My e-mail address for begonia matters is [howber@optonline.net](mailto:howber@optonline.net)

**Howard Berg**

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## Letters to the Editor

### Tip on Labeling

My labeling idea that seems to work is - use the plastic knives from silverware left over from picnics. Drill a hole and wire it on the plant. Also, our garden clubs in Long Beach, CA and Lakewood, CA use old plastic window blinds - cut off the size you want and write on with permanent ink pen.

Love your booklet. My friend shares hers with me - I'm too poor to subscribe right now.

Thank you,  
**Connie Van Velson**  
Long Beach, CA 90815-2401

*Good ideas, Connie. And if you have someone like Connie who lives near your Branch, perhaps your Branch might have a project to sponsor a subscription for that person..*



## Help for New Members

I am a relatively new member of the ABS and thoroughly enjoy the *Begonian*. From a new members perspective I have a suggestion for something you could include in this publication. I am often overwhelmed by the number of begonias offered for sale on various web sites. Could some of your experienced members submit lists of the begonias they think are the easiest to grow. Then this would give us a starting point as we start to acquire new plants. I know the book by the Thompsons provides such lists for some of the older begonias but I don't know if any such lists are available for the newer hybrids.

Thanks,

**Lynda Stevens**

B.C., Canada

*That's a great idea, Lynda. . Now all you readers submit your lists; I'll reprint them*

*by area of the country.*

## National Botanic Gardens

Here are some pictures I took while in the National Botanical Gardens in Washington, D.C. this past July. We were there shortly before they closed so I couldn't get as many photos as I wanted, but it was beautiful. They had some truly enormous specimens that made my eyes pop out. The one begonia that was unlabeled was so lush that even the stems were sprouting roots... I had to restrain myself from taking a clipping! You can keep the pictures.

**Janice Keck**

41 Stoney Beach R.

Oshkosh, WI 54907

*Janice, I didn't have space for all the lovely photos, but one appears on the back cover with a description on page 3. Maybe more can be run in the future.*

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## Winter Board Meeting by Dale Sena

The winter board meeting of the ABS will be held in Tampa, FL in conjunction with the University of South Florida Botanical Garden's annual Begonia Bash. The dates of the Bash are Friday and Saturday, February 27 and 28. There will be several begonia related lectures scheduled, as well as a great variety of begonias and other tropicals for sale in the plant shop.

On Saturday, February 27, there will be a special ABS tour of the Garden, followed by (weather permitting) lunch and our meeting. If the weather is not co-operative, we will go back to our hotel for the meeting. For those staying over, a visit to the Sunken Gardens in St. Petersburg on Sunday morning is planned.

The hotel is the Westshore Hotel, a Best Western. It's the same hotel the ABS stayed in when they were here before, very close the airport, and it has been newly renovated. Our room rate is \$85 per night which includes the hot breakfast buffet. Reservations must be made before Feb. 12 to get this rate. The hotel has an airport shuttle and has a courtesy van that will take guests to nearby places; go to Bayside Shuttle counter in the baggage claim area. Ph: 813-282-3636

I will host a welcome cocktail party Friday night like last time, but we won't have an organized dinner out -- just lots at my place.

# CONTINUING TO SEARCH FOR SPECIES BEGONIAS IN VERACRUZ AND ADJACENT OAXACA STATES

by Rekha Morris

On the afternoon of April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003 we began our drive out of Mexico City, taking over two hours to reach its outskirts to the toll road linking Mexico City with Pachuca where we would take highway 85 north to Tamazunchale. Although we had intended to spend the night in Pachuca, approximately 100 km from Mexico City, we arrived there a little before dusk, and decided to keep going as long as there was daylight. By the time we reached Actopan [Hidalgo state] some 35 km north on hwy. 85, night had fallen. Uncertain of finding a hotel anywhere between Actopan and Tamazunchale, a distance of over 200 km on a road which winds its way up and down mountains all the way from just north of Actopan, we decided to spend the night in Actopan. Early next morning we set off for Tamazunchale [San Luis Potosi state].

Our drive north took us first through dry and arid, rock strewn hilly areas of Hidalgo state where all that I saw growing were cacti but cacti such as I have never seen before or since. These were not mere balls or a series of upright forms but had unusual branching forms some like little upright candelabras while others had pendulous branches like miniature weeping willows. Those that were spherical in shape were either enormous in size or proliferated into dozens of smaller spheres mounded together like so many upturned terra cotta pots seen along roadside stalls. It was only later that I was to read that Mexico has one of the largest and most diverse species of cacti in the world.

Quite abruptly cacti gave way to what looked like a temperate region forest

comprised of junipers and pines. Unlike rain forests where every inch of ground as well as all the tree trunks are swathed in green, this forested area had little undergrowth. However, the exposed rocks beneath the trees and along the roadside were encrusted with lichen, sedums and other succulents in shades of silver, gray, olive, tan and maroon. Here and there from between crevices small, pink zephyranthes bloomed although it had not rained that day or on previous days perhaps even weeks. This was not a habitat where one encounters begonias but nonetheless it was hauntingly captivating especially to a frustrated rock gardener such as myself.

Gradually the succulents on the rocks began to be accompanied by small ferns growing among patches of moss. And, where the slopes formed long, vertical clefts where moisture could be retained. Between the two protective sides there were larger ferns and an assortment of small trees and shrubs. Although my notes indicated that *B. nelumbiifolia* had been documented 12 miles south of Tamazunchale, long before this and about 43 km north of Jacala or approximately 50 km south of Tamazunchale, I saw my first *B. nelumbiifolia*, a small, red veined variety. From that point onwards there were isolated clumps of *B. nelumbiifolia*, and since my notes indicated that *B. karwinskyana* had been documented some 60 km north of Jacala, I began to search the hill sides carefully for begonias. Since I had never seen *B. karwinskyana* illustrated I had to rely on Prof. Burt-Utley's description of its light green leaf blades as being "asymmetri-





*Above is B. ludicra  
growing along waterfall,  
Hwy. 175, Oaxaca and  
below right is B. mariti  
also Hwy. 175, Oaxaca.*



cally obovate to broadly elliptic, basally deeply cordate with lobes usually overlapping." In addition I kept a strict watch on our odometer, and as we approached the 60 km point north of Jacala, I found myself sitting on the edge of the car seat, head craned out of the window, anxiously wondering if the odd looking *B. nelumbiifolia* I had just seen was not in fact *B. karwinskyana*.

Within a short distance of the indicated area I did find *B. karwinskyana* growing so far up a steep cliff that I could not reach it to take leaf samples. A little further along the road were a few others growing not in large clumps as I had grown accustomed to seeing begonias such as *B. nelumbiifolia* or *B. barkeri*, but isolated plants with their leaves pock marked with holes and burned at the edges. There had been a drought in the area so that not only were the few specimens of *B. karwinskyana* which had managed to retain their foliage not at their best, but *B. glandulosa*, which I had photographed 2 km south of Tamazunchale in the heart of this pocket of rain forest habitat in San Luis Potosi state the previous December, drooped sadly with most of their foliage half withered. Despite the sparse and despondent samples of *B. karwinskyana* I encountered, I was able to take a few leaf samples for the herbarium and a small rhizome within reach. The latter has taken root and begun to send up two leaves here in Pendleton, SC. By the time we reached Tamazunchale, mist and twilight enveloped the hills, and the dim lights of habitations sprinkled along distant slopes flickered like glow worms.

The following morning we headed out of Tamazunchale to reach the junction of 120 with hwy. 85 some 30 km north of the city. This road, referred to as the Xilitla road in the footnote which located *B. xilitlensis* some ten miles along it, winds

southwards from its junction with hwy. 85 through picturesque terrain. Although the plants along the cliffs above the road were covered by a fine film of dust, they grew with sufficient vigor to signal the presence of moisture although we could detect nothing but dry air. Five or six km from the junction of hwy 85 I saw an exposed hill side with patches of light green against the gray of the stone. We had almost driven past this section when I realized that these were patches of *B. wallichiana* clinging to the steep slope. A few at the edges of the road retained their seed capsules, which I collected. *B. wallichiana* [often mistaken for *B. hirtella*] grows in such profusion and often ubiquitously in both Veracruz and Oaxaca that it receives scant attention from begonia lovers. I have learned to respect its presence as invariably there are other begonias to be found near it. And sure enough as I peered upwards into the under brush some thirty feet down hill from where *B. wallichiana* clung precariously to the steep cliff side, I saw dark green mats which turned out to be the foliage of *B. glandulosa*. I had not expected to see this species here, and had hoped that these might be *B. xilitlensis* which according to Prof. Burt-Utley's article published in 1984 had last been collected over 35 years previously.

As indicated in her article, the cliffs around here were indeed steep, and *B. glandulosa* grew way beyond our reach. Michael, my husband, slowly pulled himself up a slightly more gradual incline by clinging to shrubs and small trees within his reach. Some fifteen feet up he managed to collect a couple of small clumps of *B. glandulosa*, and then spying one with a floral stalk he reached for it only to find the ledge on which he stood collapse under his feet. I heard him slipping and stopped photographing thinking that surely he would either grab hold of a branch or brace





*B. pustulata* on Hwy. 175, Oaxaca

his feet against some shrub, but he kept slipping silently. As I ran down hill towards him I saw him sliding down, his body absolutely rigid, one hand holding the small bag of begonias, and uttering neither verbal expletives nor flailing around to grab at whatever is within reach, which is my way of dealing with such situations. Astounded at what I saw I nevertheless thought that since he was heading down feet first he would land on them. Instead just as he reached the edge of the embankment he turned and landed on his lower right hip, and with a sound between a soft grown and a sigh lay still and silent.

I ran up and in my haste dropped one of my cameras so that the roll of film was exposed. As I knelt beside him calling out his name and seeing him continuing to lie inert and unresponsive, I was overcome with shock at having killed him to satisfy my injudicious desire to return with another sampling of *B. glandulosa*. There was no one within miles of this isolated spot, and all I could do was hysterically repeat his name interspersed with "oh my god, oh my god, oh my god." Before I could collect my wits to do more than this verbal equivalent of ineffectual wringing of hands, he opened his eyes but remained silent. I offered to run up hill to the car to get water, instead he began to sit up and told me that he would try to walk up with me. In obvious pain, he nevertheless managed to stagger up supporting himself against me, and slowly managed to limp his way to the car.

Having determined that he had no bruises or lumps on his skull and neck, I massaged the bruise on his lower right side with a gel containing tea tree oil [a powerful anti-bacterial and anti-fungal substance], arnica [to relieve pain] and aloe. Although Michael sat sipping juice it was clear that he was in shock as he did not seem to know where we were. As part of

my first aid kit I carried a homeopathic preparation designed to mitigate trauma, and 20 minutes after taking 4 drops of this, I was relieved to see that his awareness of what had transpired was returning to normal. I insisted that he rest in the car for a couple of hours before attempting to drive us back.

While he did this I walked up and down examining the cliffs and continuing to search for begonias between returning to the car check on him. All I found was one nearly withered *B. heracleifolia* some 100 feet down hill from where we had stopped to photograph *B. wallichiana* and *B. glandulosa*, and not far from the hugest hive of killer bees I have ever seen! Thanks to a long program on killer bees I had watched on TV a few months earlier, I registered with mounting horror the antics of a bee buzzing around at first and then deliberately colliding against my head as I walked slowly examining the cliffs. According to this documentary, killer bees have scouts a little distance from the hive, and these warn approaching humans by first buzzing around them and then colliding with their heads. It was at this juncture that I suddenly realized what this bee was trying to communicate. I hastily started to walk away and as I turned to do so my eyes fell on a section of hillside further up from where I was looking for begonias and saw a bee hive nearly 4-6 in length with hundreds of bees clustered around it. As I headed away from the hive, the bee which had been buzzing and bumping against my head disappeared, and with relief and gratitude to those who had documented the habits of killer bees I made my way back to the car.

Hours later as we drove further down hill searching for a place to turn around, I noticed a path winding up between large patches of corn. Except for the cliffs which were extremely steep all the slopes



close to the road had been slashed of their original growth and given over to growing corn. As Michael slowly inched the car up this dirt path to turn around, I got out and began walking up hill, all the while conscious of this inexorably irrational drive which impelled me to search for begonias despite the terrible accident and my frightening encounter with killer bees. To my relief I located a small patch of some six plants of *B. nelumbiifolia*. Prof. Burt-Utley's 1984 article on *B. xilitlensis* had stated that "recent attempts to recollect *B. xilitlensis* from this area have been unsuccessful, yielding from section *Gireoudia* only *B. heracleifolia*". I had also found *B. nelumbiifolia* from section *Gireoudia* not to mention *B. glandulosa* which had taken such a physical and psychological toll on both of us.

After resting for another day we abandoned the idea of driving southwards on route 105 to locate more *B. karwinskyana*, and headed back on highway 85 for Puebla and on to Tropical World for much needed rest. A day before we were to fly home Michael heroically drove me south to Oaxaca to look for *B. mariti* along highway 175. Between light showers and spells of heavy downpours, we slowly drove along this road which winds through mountainous landscapes of breathtaking beauty. Towering tree ferns, gigantic Elephant's Ears [*alocacia*] larger than those on any elephant extant on earth, numerous bromeliads, gesneriads, syngoniums, philodendrons, peperomias, passifloras, anthuriums and a host of other tropical plants vie for attention. Dripping with moisture the many shades of green glistened with luminous clarity especially when the showers abated temporarily, and sunlight reflected off their rain drenched surfaces. All the many familiar plants commonly encountered as house plants not only grew in great profusion but with an

opulence which beggars description. In this sumptuous landscape it was difficult to concentrate only on begonias, yet it was these that I had come to document, so forcing my seeing mind to focus on begonias, I scoured the verdant cliffs as we slowly drove along ridges which seemed to be carved out of onyx, agate and jade with dazzling emerald highlights.

We made one detour off this main road so that I could check out a site where we had located *B. sericoneura* the previous December to see if they had flowered and set seed. To our delight there were over a dozen clusters of seed pods which I collected slipping and sliding on the wet and muddy hillside as the rain came down in torrents.

Not only did I succeed in locating several large colonies of *B. mariti* but I also found *B. heracleifolia*, *B. nelumbifolia*, *B. glabra*, *B. pustulata* and *B. ludicra*. Although the large colony of *B. ludicra* growing around a small waterfall had foliage which was green on both sides, one short strand at the lower edge of the same waterfall had foliage which was a rich maroon-purple on the reverse. I collected samples of this foliage for the herbarium, and a 10" length of stem which had rooted at several nodes. This to my surprise has survived, and, divided in two, now grows in a pot outdoors as well as in a terrarium. Among the several thick stands of *B. pustulata* I encountered along hwy. 175, there were two isolated small clumps of this species growing where a cliff side took a short right angled jog.

I had been photographing an unusual grouping of a dozen small plants of *B. heracleifolia* with dark chocolate markings which grew along a near vertical rock surface covered in moss as though they had been artificially anchored there by a zealous rock gardener. As I started uphill towards the car, I noticed a bright green

leaf against exposed soil where the rain had created a minor landslide. Looking closer I realized that this was *B. pustulata* growing quite a distance from the larger colonies I had so far documented. More significantly, the juvenile foliage as well as the reverse side of mature leaves of this *B. pustulata* were the color of cranberries. Nearby was yet another form with silvery white maculation, the only one of its kind I found there.

Grateful that I was not returning empty handed from this traumatic trip, we returned to Tropical World where I spent the night cleaning, drying and packing the herbarium samples, roots and rhizomes I had collected. Although all the rhizomes I collect are washed repeatedly during the course of each trip, I spend the night before our flight back to the States as I did this one in rechecking every specimen in preparation for their inspection by USDA officials at the Atlanta airport, notorious for confiscating plants at the merest hint of soil still adhering to any of them.

Rekha Morris

August 15<sup>th</sup> 2003.

#### LIST OF BEGONIA SPECIES DOCUMENTED & COLLECTED IN APRIL 2003

- [1] *B. glabra*: hwy. 175 [Oaxaca]
- [2] *B. glandulosa*: [a] hwy. 85, border of San Luis Potosi and Hidalgo. [b] hwy. 120 to Xilitla
- [3] *B. heracleifolia*: [a] hwy. 85, south of Tamazunchale [b] hwy. 120 to Xilitla [c] hwy. 175 [Oaxaca]
- [4] *B. karwinskyana*: hwy. 85, 35 miles or about 56 km N of Jacala.
- [5] *B. ludicra*: hwy. 175 [Oaxaca]. Several locations.
- [6] *B. mariti*: hwy. 175 [Oaxaca]. Several locations.
- [7] {A} *B. nelumbiifolia*: hwy. 85 [Hidalgo] and hwy 175 [Oaxaca] {B} *B. nelumbiifolia*, red veined form: hwy. 85 [Hidalgo]
- [8] *B. pustulata*: hwy. 175 [Oaxaca]. Several locations.

- [9] *B. sericoneura*: Off hwy. 175 [Oaxaca].
- [10] *B. wallichiana*: [a] several sections of hwy. 85 [b] hwy. 120 to Xilitla.

#### SEEDS COLLECTED FOR THE ABS:

- [1] *B. carolineifolia*: Cordoba area [Veracruz]
- [2] *B. heracleifolia*: Variant forms from several sites in Veracruz and Oaxaca.
- [3] *B. manicata*: Cordoba area.
- [3] *B. mariti* Oaxaca
- [5] *B. sericoneura* Oaxaca
- [6] *B. wallichiana* San Luis Potosi

All these were personally handed to **Ann Salisbury** at the Oklahoma City convention at the end of April 2003 with the request that these be distributed in appreciation to all the chapters and individuals who supported my trip to Mexico to document and collect begonia species in Dec. 2002 – Jan. 2003.

#### SPECIMENS FOR THE CLEMSON UNIVERSITY HERBARIUM

- [1] *B. glandulosa*
- [2] *B. glabra*
- [3] *B. heracleifolia*: several variant forms.
- [4] *B. karwinskyana*
- [5] *B. ludicra* 2 forms, an all green form and one with purple/maroon reverse foliage.
- [6] *B. mariti*
- [7] *B. manicata*
- [8] *B. nelumbiifolia*: 2 forms: [a] one small leaved, red veined form referred to as *B. nelumbiifolia* 'Red Vein', [b] and the other with huge, thick, dark green foliage referred to as *B. nelumbiifolia*, 'Gigantea'.
- [9] *B. pustulata*: 3 forms: [a] with white maculation on foliage [b] cranberry reverse foliage [c] an all green form
- [10] *B. wallichiana*

For the herbarium I collect flowers, foliage, petioles, and seed pods. When there is variation between juvenile and mature foliage in color [as in *B. pustulata*] or in form [as in *B. heracleifolia*] I collect both.

**Acknowledgement:** Once again I would like to acknowledge the invaluable help I received from **Senor Abel Rodriguez**,



manager of Tropical World. Without his invariable kindness to us during our all too brief stay in Tropical World, and assistance in procuring the essential Phytosanitary Certificate without which no plants are allowed into the USA, our Mexican experiences would be greatly impoverished. With ever increasing admiration I also wish to thank **Michael Marino** and **Bruce Pearson** for setting up Tropical World to accommodate plant lovers such as myself, and their acumen in find-

ing Sr. Rodriguez to manage this picturesque facility within view of the snow covered peak of Mt. Orizaba.

**Rekha Morris**

### Note:

Rekha has asked us to observe that the begonia on page 89 of the May/June 2003 issue with *B. heracleifolia* is *B. sericoneura*. This is important because of the location in which it is found.

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## Unique Propagating Tips

Do you have any really unique propagating tricks? Share them with readers. Your editor is not great at propagating, but thanks to the ease with which begonias do propagate the truth is that even with my poor methods I get far more new plants than I can provide a home for.

One thing that works amazingly well for me is simply to stick a whole rhizome leaf or a cutting into a pot with a plant that is large but still has room at the pot edges. We've all noted that begonias seem to like company and grow very well when mixed in pots or bowls. I am amazed at how many of those random stickings actually do live and put up new plants in rather short order.

Of course rooting in water is reported often and I try it all the time, mostly because I'm too busy when I get unexpected cuttings. For example, this summer my dog Pal, an English Mastiff, decided to go after an armadillo one night against the back fence and in the process took out several of my large plants (and I mean large) leaving me with enough cuttings to open a nursery!

But back to the main thought -- I have had surprising luck with taking very

large - no - huge leaves of *B. popenoei*, *B. nelumbiifolia* (my giant form), and *B. sericoneura* (syn. *hypolipara*) and placing them in a big tall, clear glass vase. These take a long time to root, but in the meanwhile they make a striking display! The water needs to be changed often at first, but once they root this seems to keep the water clear. Then when they are well rooted, I plant the stem and after some time get many, many plantlets as a result. Of course, small leaves can work the same way, but make will make an elegant small display.

Here's something that **Lois Rowland** in Redfield, Arkansas tried this past summer:

"I've had many problems this year from plants being too hot, etc. I love the cane begonias and have better luck with them. I started a bunch of stems in water and when they had good roots I took them around to the front porch. The sand bag is in the backyard and Bryan, my son, has a red Lab that can knock me down. He just wants to love! So...I mixed my dirt and spotted big wide ant families in the grass. [The soil there] looks just like sand, but it is much finer. I put my finger in the dirt for the hole; put the cutting in and covered it with the ant sand. Not one died; they seemed to love it! Just don't get any ants. Has anyone else tried this?"

Let us know if you've tried these or have other unique ideas. ~ FH



Above is the editor's *B. chitoensis* grown outside in Arkansas with an inset of its flower magnified. Below is *B. chitoensis* grown by **Gene Salisbury** in his greenhouse in a photo taken by **Midori Nobusawa** in 2000.





# *Begonia chitoensis*

by *Normand Dufresne*

*Begonia chitoensis* was published in 1977 by **Tang-Shui Liu** and **Ming-Jou Lai**. The original citation appeared in *Flora of Taiwan*, Volume 3, page 793. It was collected in Chitou, Nantou on the island of Taiwan. Ming-Jou Lai also collected this species in Pahsien-Shan, in Taichung, also on Taiwan. Liu and Lai named it *B. chitoensis* for Chitou.

*B. chitoensis* first came to America in January 1984 by way of seeds, which were sent to **Millie Thompson** by **Yi-Shan Shui**, a horticulturist who lived on Taiwan. She sent seeds of several species that grow on that island.

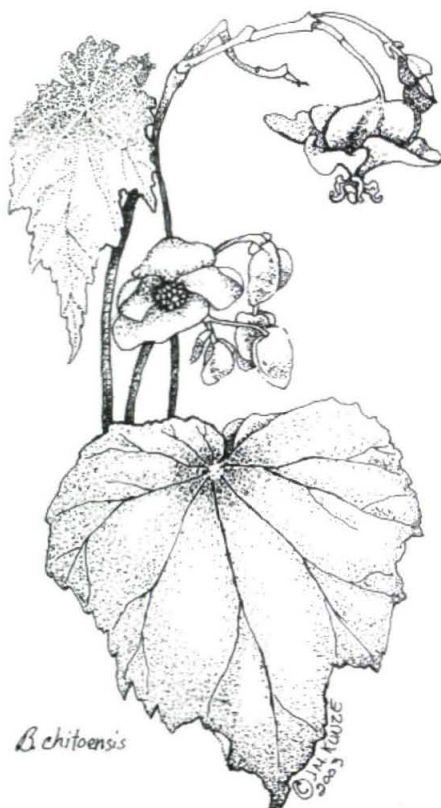
Taiwan is off the Southeast coast of China. Nantou and Taichung are near the middle part of the island. Summers are hot and humid and winters are warm to hot. Rainfall is 40 or more inches annually with much more rainfall and lower temperatures in the mountainous areas.

*B. chitoensis* is a rhizomatous begonia with erect stems. In the early stages there is a creeping rhizome and as the plant matures the erect branching stems appear. It is said that these stems can grow to two feet in the wild.

The ovate medium green leaves are on a long petiole and measure 8 by 5 inches; the base is cordate - heart shape with a small overlap. The leaf margin is denticulate - finely toothed. There are eight to ten main veins.

The flowers are brilliant pink. The male flower has four tepals; the outer tepals are larger than the inner tepals. The female flower has five tepals. The ovary is three-winged and the back wing is much wider. Bloom time starts in June and ends in October.

Filtered sunlight is preferred in the summer; in winter the amount of light should be increased. Millie Thompson says that the ideal temperature for this plant is between 58 and 62 degrees with humidity at 55%.



*This article first appeared in The Buxtonian, newsletter of the Buxton Branch edited by Jane Snellman. The lovely drawing is by Buxton member Jeanne Marie Kunze.*

# New Begonias

**Rekha Morris** has alerted us to two new begonia announcements.

The first was posted in a copy of *The Garden* in September 2003 which is quoted below:

"Newly described *Begonia silletensis* subsp. *mengyangensis* from China was first exhibited at this year's Hampton Court Palace Flower show. It has large, glossy green leaves, fleshy stems, highly fragrant flowers, and needs cool conditions, especially at night. It can be seen in the NCCPG National Plant Collection of Begonia at Glasgow Botanic Garden; (tel: 0141 334 2422).

"The begonia was found in Yunnan Province in 1977 by a part from the Kunming Institute of Botany, China. Compared with the typical species (found in India), Chinese plants have larger leaves and unequally ridged fruit. It was first described in *Novon* 12, pp. 133-6 (2002)."

The next two were described in the article "Two New Species of Begonia (Begoniaceae) from the Atlantic Coastal Forest in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil" by **Sandra Jules Gomes da Silva** and **Maria Candida Henrique Mamede**, Instituto de Botanica, Caixa Postal 4003, CEP 01061-970, Sao Paulo, SP, Brazil. This appeared in *Novon* 10: 222-25. 2000.

The abstract is quoted below:

"A B S T R A C T. *Begonia salesopolensis* and *B. jureiensis* known only from a montane forest in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil, are described and illustrated. The former belongs to section *Ewaldia*, but it is distinguished from the other taxa of this section by its fleshy capsules and rudimentary or absent wings. The flattened style branches, obconical anthers, and the bilamellate placentae,

ovuliferous throughout place *B. jureiensis* in section *Pereira*, and the peltate, glabrous leaf blades distinguish it from the other species of this section. *B. edmundoi* Brade.

...

"The genus *Begonia* is well represented in Brazil, especially in the Atlantic coastal forest. Smith et al. (1986) published two recent treatments of the genus, which attributed 240 taxa to Brazil, and included synonyms and a key for species of *Begonia*. The floristic study of the genus in Atlantic forest in the state of Sao Paulo consisted of 40 taxa, 15 of which are endemic to Sao Paulo and 14 shared with Rio de Janeiro State (Gomes da Silva, 1998). During the preparation of this survey, we discovered two new species of *Begonia* which are described below."

Naturally, these begonias have already been noted by **Jack Golding** and **Dieter Wasshausen** in *Begoniaceae, Edition 2*. However, I thought readers might enjoy reading these abstracts to increase awareness of these new plants. To my knowledge, they are not being grown in the U.S.

However, this also gives me occasion to remind readers of how very lucky we have been to have **Jack Golding** keeping up with the international literature and the publication and revision of *Begonia* species. This has been an invaluable service not only to ABS but the world.

It also gives me a chance to remind readers that they may purchase copies of his new edition noted above by sending a check for \$50 plus \$5 postage (\$55.) to **Ann Salisbury** at P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, OK 74653. Proceeds go into the Millie Thompson Fund which once again is somewhat over \$4000. and stands ready to assist in the publication of new materials on begonias. Send proposals to the editor.



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## Conservation Comments

Bill Claybaugh,  
Conservation Chairman, ABS

### More on species identification — — *B. thiemei* versus *B. carolineifolia*

My recent work with the Begoniaceae Keys has again demonstrated the confusion that exists when trying to differentiate between certain species. Too many times, we receive plants as gifts or from sales that are misidentified and it is very difficult to determine the correct name. This is not a new problem, but rather one that we live with constantly. Fortunately, by a careful examination of the plants, and especially their flowers, we can clarify many of these identities. The following is an example.

Today, there is almost a universal confusion between *B. thiemei* and *B. carolineifolia*. To the casual observer, these two plants are identical in appearance. To differentiate between these species, I have found three literature references that give several fairly simple and practical methods when used individually, or better yet, when used collectively.

#### 1. *Begoniaceae Edition 1*, L. B. Smith et. al., page 17, 1986.

**Leaflet shape:** For *B. thiemei* and its synonym *B. macdougallii* the individual leaflets are (a) subentire, or (b) distinctly cut, laxly undulate-dentate, some or all with a single large lateral lobe. The *B. carolineifolia* leaflets are distinctly cut, coarsely and densely dentate, and unlobed.

#### 2. *Tulane studies in Zoology and*

*Botany*, Volume 25, Number 1,  
page 81, 1985, K. Burt-Utley.

**Rhizome growth habit:** “*B. thiemei* has a repent rhizome (it lies close to the earth surface), while *B. carolineifolia* has a fleshy erect or ascending rhizome similar to the rhizomes characteristic of *B. sericoneura*, *B. crassicaulis* and *B. cardiocarpa*.”

**Petiolar indument:** “*B. thiemei* also differs from *B. carolineifolia* in its sparse petiolar indument of villi (sparse hairs on petiolules).”

**Staminate tepals size:** Both have only 2 staminate sepals (outer tepals) and no petals. *B. thiemei* has staminate tepals nominally 7-9 mm. long and 8-11 mm. wide. *B. carolineifolia* has staminate tepals nominally 4-6 mm. long and 6.5-8 mm. wide.

**Number of stamens:** *B. thiemei* has more stamens, nominally 21 to 27, whereas *B. carolineifolia* tends to have 13 to 19.

**Size of anthers:** *B. thiemei* has anthers 2 – 3.1 mm. in length whereas *B. carolineifolia* has anthers of 1 – 1.7 mm in length.

#### 3. *The Begonian*, November 1947, page 220, R. Ziesenhenné (writing on *B. macdougallii*, a synonym of *B. thiemei*.)

**Capsule wing size:** (*B. thiemei*) “... has the largest wing of the capsule very broad and is 8 mm. long, and is quite triangular with a blunt tip. ... In *B. carolineifolia* the largest wing is very low, 4 mm. and rounded and not much larger than the smaller two wings.”

**Stigmas:** “(*B. thiemei*) ... stigma is only slightly grown out of the base and has two lobes, each of which make a full twist. ... (*B. carolineifolia*) The lower half of the stigmas are united and the branches are only twisted half a turn.”

**Anthers and filaments:** “(For *B. thiemei*) ... The connective in the anther is pointed.

The filaments are about one-fourth the length of the anthers. ... (For *B. carolineifolia*) The connective in the anthers is blunt. The filaments are about as long as the anthers.”

Based on the above analysis by three separate authors, we now have several valid means of differentiating between these two similar species. The first two criteria, leaflet shape and rhizome orientation, are absolute in nature, i.e. they are, or they are not, and they can be observed on any adult plant at any time of the year. An easy differentiation is when the leaflets have a single large lateral lobe characteristic of *B. thiemei*. If the lobe is not present, then *B. thiemei* will be subentire while *B. carolineifolia* will be distinctly cut, coarsely and densely dentate, and unlobed. Equally easy is observing the rhizome where the *B. thiemei* rhizome lies at the soil surface but the *B. carolineifolia* rhizome rises dramatically above the soil line.

The other criteria for differentiating between the species are relative in nature, i.e., we should compare one against others, and all but one requires the use of flowers. These criteria are best used when both

type plants are present so a relative comparison can be made. Also, a good magnifying glass may be required.

This example of differentiating between two species demonstrates the power of a simple literature search. I recommend the starting point for any such literature search be the **Begoniaceae Edition 2**, which should be in every ABS Branch library. Looking in the “Annotated Species List” under *B. thiemei* and *B. carolineifolia* gives Subkey numbers that lead to the Begoniaceae Key location for information on leaves, as summarized above. Also, in this same location, one finds listed the K. Burt-Utley article quoted above. I purchased this article from Tulane University for a nominal sum. The **R. Ziesenhenné** article was obtained from **Jack Golding** who keeps an extensive library of references for all species, including the original citations that established the species name.

I currently have plants of *B. thiemei* and/or *B. carolineifolia* from six different sources. When they bloom this winter, I will carefully examine each one and make my determinations. You might try the same with those in your greenhouse, then e-mail me ([absastro@hotmail.com](mailto:absastro@hotmail.com)) your results. I would very much like to know.

---

## Begonia Doll

*Many of you will remember the lovely doll meant for Muriel Ash at the 2001 Denver Convention. that never made it to her. Here we have an update.*

[Here is] the replacement porcelain doll...It has taken awhile to obtain the material, doll and design the dress; it will now be sent to **Muriel Ash**.

The dress is made from a silk scarf generously donated by Singapore ABS member **Tan Jiew Hoe**. The dress was created by dress designer **Marva Newberry** and the doll made by **Helene Jaros**. It

turned out quite beautifully, but is different than “Suzanne” the doll made for the Denver Convention. Mom has retired from dollmaking (no place to put them) so hope nothing happens to this one.

**Charles Jaros**

2000 Maureen Drive  
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*Charles, I am sure any number of ABS members would volunteer to store them (permanently of course) for Helene! See the new doll to the right top.*





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These highlighted seeds were collected by **Rehka Morris** during a trip to Mexico.

*B. barkeri* Knowles & Westcott  
*B. carolineifolia* Regel  
*B. heracleifolia* Schlechtendal & Chamisso collection 1  
*B. heracleifolia* Schlechtendal & Chamisso collection 2  
*B. manicata* Brongniart  
*B. sericoneura* Liebmman  
*B. wallichiana* Liebmman  
Mexico mixed seeds

#### **Descriptions**

*B. carolineifolia* Regel (Sect. *Gireoudia*) [Mexico, Guatemala] Large erect rhizome;

large palmately parted leaves on long petioles; flowers large, pink, with dark pink spots; late winter to early spring.

*B. manicata* Brongniart [Mexico] (Sect. *Gireoudia*); succulent rhizomes sometimes erect; distinctive collar of coarse red hairs at top of petiole; ovate green leaves with toothed ciliate margins; pink flowers on long stems.

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*B. acetosa* Vellozo  
*B. albo-picta* W. Bull  
*B. boliviensis* A. de Candolle  
*B. cinnabarina* W. J. Hooker  
*B. coccinea* W. J. Hooker  
*B. crassicaulis* Lindley  
*B. cubensis* Hasskarl  
*B. cucullata* Willdenow  
    var. *arenosicola* C. de Candolle  
    var. *cucullata*  
*B. dichroa* T. A. Sprague  
*B. dipetala* Graham  
*B. dregei* Otto & Dietrich  
*B. dregei* syn *partita* Irmscher  
*B. dregei* syn *suffruticosa* Meisner  
*B. dregei*-Glasgow  
*B. echinosepala* Regel  
*B. echinosepala* var. *elongatifolia* Irmscher  
*B. edmundoi* Brade  
*B. egregia* N. E. Brown



*B. glabra* Aublet  
*B. gracilis* Humboldt, Bonpland, & Kunth  
     var. *martiana* A. de Candolle  
*B. grandis* Dryander  
     subs. *evansiana* (Andrews) Irmscher  
*B. heracleifolia* Schlechtendal & Chamisso  
     var. *paramadilio* hort  
     var. *sunderbruckii* hort.  
*B. hirtella* Link  
*B. humilis* Dryander  
*B. hydrocotylifolia* Otto ex W. J. Hooker  
*B. imperialis* Lemaire  
     var. *smaragdina* Lemaire  
*B. johnstonii* Oliver ex J. D. Hooker f.  
*B. kellermanii* C. de Candolle  
*B. kenworthyae* Ziesenhenn  
*B. leathermaniae* O'Reilly & Karegeannes  
*B. lindleyana* Walpers  
*B. ludwigii* Irmscher  
*B. malabarica* Lamarck  
*B. metallica* W. G. Smith  
*B. mollicaulis* Irmscher  
*B. nelumbiifolia* Schlecht. & Cham.  
*B. nelumbiifolia* var. *rubra*  
*B. odorata* alba  
*B. paleata* Schott ex A. de Candolle  
*B. pearcei* J. D. Hooker  
*B. peltata* Otto & Dietrich  
*B. popenoei* Standley  
*B. reniformis* Dryander syn *vitifolia* Schott  
*B. sanguinea* Raddi  
*B. schmidtiana* Regel  
*B. sericoneura* Liebmman  
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*B. solananthera* A. de Candolle  
*B. subvillosa* Klotzsch  
*B. sutherlandii* J. D. Hooker  
*B. thiemei* C. de Candolle (U#103)  
     syn *macdougallii* Ziesenhenn  
*B. U#315*  
*B. U#412*  
*B. U#414*  
*B. U#444*  
*B. ulmifolia* Willdenow  
*B. valida* Goebel  
*B. venosa* Skan ex J. D. Hooker  
     cane hybrids, mixed  
     cane hybrids, tall  
*B. 'Costello'*

*B. cucullata* var. *arenosicola* hybrid  
*B. dregei* types mix  
*B. dregei* x *B. dregei* (partita)  
*B. egregia* op  
     FL mixed seed  
*B. hirtella* op  
*B. 'Kentwood'*  
*B. 'Orange Rubra'*  
*B. 'Rory'*  
     semp- Pink  
     semp- 'Glamour Rose Picottee'  
*B. sericoneura* op  
*B. 'Skagum'*—tuberous- non-stop mixed

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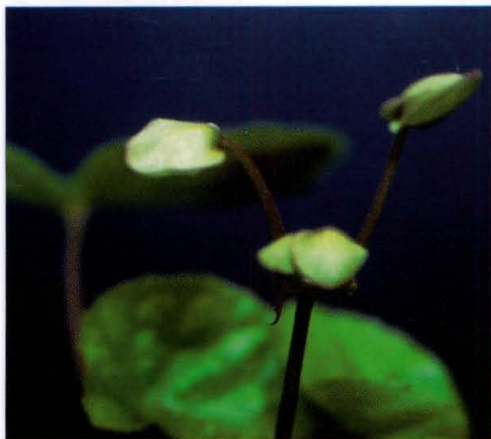
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Above left is *B. U276*, plant featuring foliage and flowers. To the right is a close view of inflorescences on *B. U292*. Below left is a view of the rhizome and flower buds on *B. U292*. Below right is a close view of the maturing seed pod (5 months) on *B. U292*. Both *B. U276* and *B. U292* were grown by **Mabel Corwin**. All photos are by **Thelma O'Reilly**.





# Unidentified Species Listing

Thelma O'Reilly, Project Director

## **B. U276**

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** on Road to Ringlet, Cameroun Highlands, February, 1990. Habitat: Embankment of stream along road. Several individuals, tallest to 3.25 m with leaves to nearly 18 cm (10"). Elevation 4200 ft. Collector noted that this species has an affinity to *Begonia tricornis*.

## **B. U277**

Western Malaysia. Seed and cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** along Hwy. 59 along road to Ringlet, Cameroun Highlands, February, 1990. Habitat: A dry waterfall cliff face. Elevation 3600 ft. Rhizomatous. Vine-like, showing characteristics of two species. One possibly *Begonia decora*. Leaves have slight bumps where trichomes appear and veins are raised on upper surface. Great variation on certain individuals.

## **B. U278**

Western Malaysia. Seed and cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** on trail above stream along Hwy. 59 past Ringlet, Cameroun Highlands, February, 1990. Habitat: Modest population with strongly iridescent, blue colored leaves scattered along ridge of trail. Elevation 3500 ft. Collector noted that this species could be same as *B. U274* or possibly *Begonia pavonina*.

## **B. U279**

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** 1.8 km from Hwy. 59 along road to bottom of Robinson Falls, February, 1990. Habitat: Embankment above river, just below dam. Large population distributed along both sides of river. Elevation: 3700 ft. Rhizomatous. Leaves variable in

color, some bronze, some iridescent blue. Collector noted this collection could be same as *B. U278*.

## **B. U280**

Western Malaysia. Seed and cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** on road to Banong Brindhang, February, 1990. Habitat: Along embankment above dry stream bed with moss covered boulders in stream. Also observed growing on forest floor and epiphytically. Elevation: 5700 ft. Rhizomatous: Species with secondary branching. Flowers white flushed pink, 2" across.

## **B. U281**

Western Malaysia. Seed and cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** at same location, elevation and date as *B. U280*. Collector noted that seed of this collection possibly is a hybrid between this collection and *Begonia decora*.

## **B. U282**

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** along Rt. 4 to Kota Bahfru, Perak Province. Habitat: Along stream embankment above and past waterfall. Two individuals observed and collected, one in soil above stream, one on mossy rock. Elevation 2500 ft. Collector noted affinity to *Begonia pseudisoptera*.

## **B. U283**

Western Malaysia. Seed and cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** off logging road 25.0 km from Temeggor Reservoir, Perak Province about 5 km along logging road, February, 1990. Elevation 3000 ft. Collector has identified this collection as *Begonia pseudisoptera*.



Above left is a front view of foliage on *B. U292* and right is a back view. Plant grown by **Mabel Corwin**; photo by **Thelma O'Reilly**. Below left is a drawing of *B. 'Tim O'Reilly'* by **Pat Maley**. To the right is a photo of **Tim O'Reilly** for whom it is a namesake. Photo by **Joyce Hesse**. Tim, our ever popular convention master of ceremonies received an ABS special award of recognition at our 2003 Convention in Oklahoma City.





**B. U284**

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** 29.8 km past Temeggor Reservoir, February, 1990. Habitat: Modest population growing at base of small trees down steep embankment off logging road. Elevation 3400 ft. Rhizomatous: Secondary branching, large leaves up to 10-12 cm. Collector noted affinity to *Begonia maxwelliana*.

**B. U285**

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** at Huai Sai Lieng waterfall, January 1990. Habitat: Plants mixed in grass along upper slope of S.W. side of waterfall, abundant population growing with salaginella. No flowers. Elevation 3900 ft.

**B. U286**

Panama, El Valle. Seed collected by **Roberto Brin**, 1990. Rhizomatous: Leaves pale green, flowers white, winter flowering.

**B. U287**

Panama, El Valle. Seed collected by **Roberto Brin**, 1990. Rhizomatous. Leaves pale green, flowers white, winter flowering. Collector reported plant is different from *B. U286*.

**B. U288**

Western Malaysia. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** 21.5 km. from Rt. 2 on road through Genting Highlands, February 1990. Habitat: Plants growing along rocks and rotted logs in shade of banana and fern trees. Elevation: 4400 ft. Rhizomatous: Vine-like, similar to *B. U270*, but habit is different and leaves larger. Flowers pink.

**B. U289**

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** below Hwy. at KM past 14,

Doi Pui National Park, January, 1990. Habitat: Very small population of several individuals growing on wet, heavily shaded cliff face with little soil. Elevation: 3300 ft. Rhizomatous: Shows secondary branching. Collector questions affinity to *Begonia inflata*.

**B. U290**

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** through Doi Chiang Doa Wildlife Sanctuary, January, 1990. Habitat: Stream margin 2 km from main office within 15 m of gate. Elevation 2000 ft. Rhizomatous: Secondary branching, leaves narrow with serrated margins. One individual observed nearly a meter tall, no fruit or seed.

**B. U291**

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** below Hwy. at KM post 14, Doi Suthep/Doi Pui National Park, January, 1990. Habitat: Very small population composed of several individuals growing on wet, heavily shaded cliff face. Elevation 3300 ft. Rhizomatous: Species with secondary branching. Sympatric with *B. U289*.

**B. U292<sup>1</sup>**

Northern Thailand. Cuttings collected by **Scott Hoover** about 20 m along trail to Krung Ching waterfall within 300 m of original office headquarters for Khoa Luang National Park, February, 1990. Habitat: Isolated individuals, no colonies. Elevation: 350 ft. Herb: One individual observed in fruit that was wingless. The fruit of this species is characteristic of fruit on a single specimen of *Begonia garrettii* Craib found in the herbarium.

**Note:**

<sup>1</sup>B. U292 is the most distinct and captivating begonia species I have studied. To

date I have been unable to make an identification due to the unusual inflorescence and fruit. After several trials and errors, **Mabel Corwin** succeeded in producing viable seed by removing the fruit before it dried completely (a few months), and allowed it to dry separated from inflorescence. In cultivation this species appears to have a medium-sized rhizome. See pho-

tos on pages 32 and 34. If anyone has identified this beautiful species please contact **Thelma O'Reilly** at 10942 Sunray Pl., La Mesa, CA 91941 or by phone at 1-619-670-0830.

*Thelma O'Reilly is a member of the Nomenclature Committee and chair of the Unidentified Species Project of the ABS.*

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## Convention 2004

by Michael Ludwig

I hope you've all had a chance to visit the web site for the hotel and saw that it is going to be a truly beautiful backdrop to our convention. We have all weather the fires well and have plenty to show you beginning on Tuesday August 24 with a tour to Orange County and growers **Mary Sakamoto** and **Arlene Hoskins**. Tours on Wednesday and Thursday will include Mike Kartuz's Greenhouses, Aides and Gish's growing grounds with a seminar by **Chuck Aides**, and tour of Quail Botanical Gardens. There are other surprises that we are working on for the tours.

---

*From the internet:*

### A tip on Botrytis from Keith Rogers, Mannum, South Australia

It gets cold down here too. Some of my plants suffer from Botrytis in the autumn and winter. I tried fungicides at gold plated container prices which fail dismally.

In the end I settled for simple 10% full cream milk (power is better) and 90% water. It works safely on my Begonia, Sinningia (all gesneriads, etc.) and even some, although not 100% sure yet, very delicate maidenhair ferns.

This works differently than normal

Our seminar speakers include **Hugh McLauchlan**, **Rekha Morris** and **Freda Holley**.

We will save plenty of time to explore and see San Diego and we are working on sheets with suggestions.

This is a convention very much 'in the works' so keep your eyes open to future articles here. We plan to get registrations packets to the membership in April so save August 24 - 29, 2004 for a great time with other Begonia lovers in beautiful San Diego.

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fungicide which coats the non-affected plant and stops the spore from growing where it lands. This stuff kills the fungal spore in its tracks too.

But beware if the plant is Mycorrhizal reliant. It may kill the fungi in the soil or pot as well if it is spread too far around.

This is now widely used in the grape industry.

*You may visit Keith's Fern Page on the internet at [www.lm.net.au/~kerogers/](http://www.lm.net.au/~kerogers/) and he says you will find the Fern Society of South Australia on [www.chariot.net.au/~saufern/](http://www.chariot.net.au/~saufern/). The editor has not checked these addresses out so let us know if they work.*



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## COMING EVENTS

**Winter Board Meeting, Tampa Florida, February 27-28, 2004:** See page 5 this issue for details. Contact is Dale Sena by email at [dalesena@cs.com](mailto:dalesena@cs.com). Hotel number is 813--282-3636

**Southwest Region Get-Together, San Antonio, Texas, May 27-30, 2004.** This time at a great hotel the Hilton San Antonio Airport, 611 Northwest Look 410, San Antonio, Texas 78126, Phone: Toll Free 1-877-377-7227, Reservations [www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com) Rooms will be \$89 for single, double, triple or quadruple occupancy with upgrade to the executive level for additional \$25 per night.

**August 24-19, 2004 ABS Convention, San Diego, CA.** See page 225 of the November/December 2003 *Begonian* and page 36 of this issue.

**2005 Association of Australia Begonia Societies National Conference in Beautiful Ballarat.** Final details soon.

*If you wish your event on this calendar for next issue, please send the editor an announcement by mail or email by **January 1, 2004**. Be sure to give a phone and if possible email contact for the event. As soon as the current issue is complete, the editor is changing computer systems; hopefully it will go smoothly, but you can help by being sure to get any feature articles in by January 1 as well. (**I need articles!**) And keep good wishes for her in mind! Change is traumatic! FH*

---

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