

*The*

# **Begonian**

**November/December 2004**

# *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:** Read about **Ruby Lenert's** holiday tree photographed by **Tom Keepin** on Page 206.

**Back:** **Paul Carlisle** brought tuberous begonias we could not believe to the Show. See this lovely and read more on page 227.

# In This Issue

ABS's 2004 Convention hosted by San Diego has come and gone. Memories we will long hold can only be sketched in this issue. This is also the annual Holiday Greeting edition which is brought to our members largely through the contributions of those shown on page 205. This issue therefore serves as a double tribute to our wonderful members - first, to those who go all out to bring us outstanding annual events in which we can all take pride and second, to those who dig deep to contribute funds to make it possible to continue bringing bimonthly issues of the *Begonian*.

## Articles

2004 Holiday Greetings	205
Begonia Christmas Tree	206
ABS Convention 2004	207
2004 Show Winners	210
Little Orphan Atlanta	211
Natural Hybrids and Other Oddities	212
Master of Ceremonies	227
In Memory: <b>Helene Jaros</b>	228
Winter Board Meeting	229
New Cultivars	232
2004 ABS Awards	237

## Regular Features

President's Message	204
ABS Board Meeting Minutes	219
Conservation	222

Hybridizing Tuberous	223
Seed Fund	230
ABS News	234
Coming Events	238
Officers' Page	239

## Quick

Check your mailing label. If  
it reads

**200501 or 200502**, your  
membership is about to  
expire. Please renew! We  
don't want to lose you.

# President's Message

What a convention! San Diego had its usual wonderful weather, the setting at the Town and Country Hotel was spectacular and the convention events were well planned and enthusiastically received. The plant sale room was a begonia grower's paradise. Our thanks go to the Southern California branches and the ABS officers who worked so hard to produce such a memorable show and meeting.

I was pleased to see so many members-at-large attending the convention. About half our members do not belong to a branch, but the annual convention and show as well as regional meetings offer an opportunity to see begonias that aren't available to most of us and to acquire new plants at the sales held at these meetings. Additionally, there are seminars with experienced hybridizers and growers and talks by academics about species of begonias. Join us at one of the upcoming meetings either in Tampa, the Southwest Region or our annual meeting and show next year.

An interesting idea was advanced at the convention by **Johanna Kitson**. She would like a picture of each person associated with ABS who has a begonia named after them taken with the plant for display at the next convention. Contact Johanna at oetkbyto@aol.com. If you know a person who has a begonia named after them, tell them that Johanna would like a picture of them with their begonia. It sounds as if it will make a fascinating exhibit.

We talked about making some changes in how we do things in ABS. First and possibly most exciting is a proposal to use our website as a place where members can join or renew their memberships. We are exploring the use of Paypal on our web site to pay dues and for purchase of seed

and publication. Next year, possibly the convention registration can be done and paid for the same way. Our international members are excited about our possible use of Paypal because it will make currency conversions very easy for them.

Additionally, we are going to start communicating more directly with branch presidents rather than the branch's National Director because we find that information sent to the National Directors is not finding its way to branch members.

The Winter Board Meeting is going to be held in Tampa again next year in February. Plan to attend and take advantage of a great plant sale table, a chance to see the University of South Florida Begonia species collection and some interesting seminars. Make your flight reservations early to get some real bargain fares.

If you have any suggestions as to things ABS can do better or, in your opinion should be doing, send me an e-mail. My address is in the listing of officers in the back of this issue. One of the benefits of members letting us know what is going on is our recent problems with the seed fund that were caused by a couple of technical difficulties. When I and others received complaints, we were able to get to the bottom of the problem. Members responsible for the seed fund were able to correct the problem and send the seeds to those whose orders were lost.

**Howard Berg**

*This issue is brought to you in large part by the contributions of **Branches and Individuals** shown on the opposite page. ABS members and officers thank them one and all as well as **Wanda Macnair** who served as Holiday Greetings coordinator!*



**ABS HOLIDAY  
GREETINGS 2004**

**Bronze**

Alfred D. Robinson Branch  
Delaware Valley Branch  
Greater Atlanta Branch  
John & Eva Wendel  
Donna Zody

**Silver**

Iris Bird  
Tamsin & Bruce Boardman  
Michael Helsel  
Knickerbocker Branch  
Mae Blanton Branch  
Nikki Taussig  
San Gabriel Branch

**Gold**

Astro Branch (in memory of  
Helene Jaros)  
Janet Brown  
Dallas Area Branch  
Cheryl Lenert  
Freda & R.L. Holley

Mabel Corwin Branch  
Marge Lee Branch  
Palos Verdes Branch  
Sacramento Branch  
Gene & Ann Salisbury  
San Francisco Branch  
Westchester Branch

**Platinum**

Alamo Begonia Club  
Astro Branch  
Astro Branch (in memory of  
David Dey Jackquith)  
Begonia Society of the Palm  
Beaches  
Buxton Branch  
Doug Frost Branch  
Michael Flaherty  
Fred A. Barkley Branch  
Houston Satellites Branch  
Lulu Leonard  
Richard & Wanda Macnair  
Carol & Peter Notaras  
Orange County Branch  
Potomac Branch  
San Jacinto Branch  
Whittier Branch.

# **BEGONIA CHRISTMAS TREE**

*by Tom Keepin*

It is customary for the Astro Branch members in Houston, Texas to gather the first Sunday of December at a members home to celebrate the Holidays. This year **Ruby and K. O. Lenert** offered their home for our Annual Christmas Party. Ruby and K. O. have a lovely spacious home that comfortably accommodated our growing membership. **Cheryl Lenert** and Tom Keepin volunteered to help Ruby with the decorating the day before the party. Ruby had a very unusual idea for a Christmas Tree.

It is at this point I need to give you some background information. **Richard Evans** is a member of our branch and grows lovely begonias along with many other types of plants. Earlier in 2003 Richard suffered a stroke. This stroke left Richard unable to care for his plants properly or move them into the greenhouse for winter protection. Richard decided to give all his very large plants away to any member who could go to his residence and carry them away. Ruby Lenert was one of those members that went to Richard's home to give a plant or two of his collection a good home. Ruby came away with a *B. coccinea hort.* (pink). This in itself is not unusual, until you learn that the plant is 35 years old and stands 8 feet tall in the pot. Richard tells that his Uncle gave him *B. coccinea hort.* (pink) in 1968. The plant was a very tiny rooted cutting. Richard accepted the plant gratefully and kept it growing until he had to let it go to Ruby's care.

With that said it was Ruby's idea to decorate this begonia as if it were a traditional Christmas Tree so the members could enjoy it at the Christmas Party.

Cheryl Lenert and Tom Keepin thought this was a great idea. So on December 6, 2003 Tom and Cheryl went to Ruby's home to help decorate for the Christmas Party. *B. coccinea hort.* (pink) was decorated with small gold balls with pink ribbons attached to match the few lovely pink blooms on the plant. There was also a large gold bow placed on top and its trailers snaked through the plant to help disguise any gaping holes in the plant. Then iridescent tinsel was placed on the branches as a finishing touch.

Members started arriving at Ruby's home about 1 P. M. on Sunday, December 7, 2003. It is the Astro's custom to exchange plants or plant related gifts at the party but they must be wrapped and placed under the tree. When members placed their gifts under the tree they were overwhelmed by what they saw. No one could believe their eyes. The Begonia Christmas Tree was beautiful and a big hit. We are sure that in the future should our annual Christmas Party be held at Ruby and K. O. Lenert's home *B. coccinea hort.* (pink) will be there in all its glory with tiny gold balls with pink ribbons and all the trimmings.

In closing Ruby Lenert was presented with two 5 x 7 framed photographs (1 - Ruby and the begonia and 1- Just the begonia) at the January meeting as a remembrance and Thank-You.

Should you find yourself in Houston on the first Sunday in December you are always welcome to join us at our Annual Christmas Party. There are lots of delicious home cooked goodies, laughter, friendship and, of course, begonia chatter.

**ABS Convention 2004:  
Back to the Future  
Species, Seeds, & Beyond  
San Diego, CA**

What a week! Begoniacs from across the country gathered in a beautiful city for a week of celebration.. The hotel was both the largest and the best landscaped situation I have ever been in. Someone said, it is the only place where you can walk in a straight line on the grounds and get lost! It was true - there must have been 20 buildings and hundreds of the most beautiful rose bushes full of flowers. The climate was Mediterranean and all the landscaping plants reflected that.

The tours took people around the area, to see home gardens, nurseries, and public gardens. **Mary Sakamoto** has been in her new location only a short time, but already she has a great shade house and her begonias were flourishing. Most were amazed as might be expected to see the garden of that intrepid show winner **Arlene Hoskins**.

Another tour I'll use the internet words of **Paul Rothstein** of Arkansas to describe: "One of the tours was to the former Nixon home on 7 acres overlooking the ocean. The grounds were beautiful with lots of potted begonias."

Kartuz Greenhouses and the Ades & Gish Nursery sent people back to the hotel loaded down with begonias before the sale even opened. **Chuck Ades** and his son gave us a behind the scenes introduction to how they grow and ship wholesale plants. And what magnificent plants they were. A few years ago, I gave Chuck a couple of scroungy cuttings and that day I saw them transformed into flats of gorgeous plants. They shared with us the composition of their growing soil and how they stick those cuttings; many plants are

grown from liners, that is small plants from specialty growers. Even better, both growers provided plants for the ABS sale. We had lunch in Chuck and Joan Ades' garden which was a wonder in itself with many "rooms" and interesting plants. Chuck had been working on it for a number of years and I think all his favorite plants have won a home in that garden.

The visit to Quail Gardens was of great interest. On land donated by a couple who never had children, but loved all children, we had a garden with that same Mediterranean climate filled with tropical plants in an environment where children could learn about plants. Of course, adults would love the plants as well. They were particularly proud of their cork oaks and I could not resist bring one home.

Then there were the seminars arranged by **Thelma O'Reilly** and **Janet Brown**. Since I love seminars, I was in heaven - so many wonderful speakers and so much learning. I often hear at conventions that there just isn't time for seminars so I noted their careful scheduling - two on Wednesday evening, two on Thursday evening, and 4 on Saturday. All were well attended, but then, all were great.

First we heard **Julain Duval** of Quail Gardens who prepared us for our visit the next day; we loved his stories including the surprise visit one day of the President of Chile and another by **Martha Stewart**. Then **Hugh McLauchlan** told us about the great garden festival of Scotland held a few years ago in a former shipyard that had been their first bombing target of Germany in World War II; for six months the festival brought people there from all over the world to see flower dis-



*Best of Show Winner B. 'Midnight Sun', Best Artistic - Terrarium, Best Cane-Like B. 'Jeanne Jones'. The first two photos are by Johanna Zinn and the last by Janet Welsh.*



plays, including begonias, without parallel. Today, he says, as with much of our world it has become a large development.

**Charles Jaros** shared with us beautiful species slides of past wonders and of many new discoveries that may soon be available to us. The slides were a beautiful tribute to the variety our beloved begonias. Then **Rekha Morris** reimpressed how variable species are by showing us in her set of slides showing plants in their growing habitats. We also heard about the impassable roads, dead end roads, and the wonder of suddenly discovering a species long searched for or in an unexpected location. You will see that in her article in this issue on her March 2004 trip.

On Saturday morning I tried to explain the classification system for the thick stem begonias and my experiences with some of the more spectacular species. Then **Brad Thompson** brought out batches of his new hybrids. Many of these are unusual crosses. He is best known for his many cane crosses, but after these plants that will no longer be true. Some of the really spectacular new hybrids were "rhizomatous at or below the soil with erect stems." He also used *B. luxurians* and *B. gehrtii* to create the unusual. Since he gave the examples that he had brought along away in a raffle, you can imagine that this was a favorite seminar!

Next we had **Kathleen Burt-Utley** who did a wonderful service by explaining to us traits that count when doing species identification and traits that are pretty much irrelevant. Then, we saw those differences in trait exemplified in her photos of the plants in location. We again felt that we had shared in on a collecting trip in the Americas by the time her slides were completed.

After lunch, **Mary Fuqua** and **Scott Hoover** took us along on their collecting trip to Malaysia so we got to travel a lot at this convention! Mary and Scott also an-

nounced that the New England Tropical Conservatory has been donated acreage and will be building a conservatory building to house their collection, side by side with an outside tropical garden.

Then, of course, we all got to see the show which was soooo beautiful! The tuberous begonias and tuberous exhibit by **Paul Carlisle** and **Mike Flaherty** just absolutely knocked you eyes out. Who knew such tuberous begonias could be grown in the U.S.? Read the list of winners that follows. But photos and lists cannot do justice to such an outstanding show!

Then of course there was the plant sale: The favorite event at any convention. People were standing in line long, long before the doors opened. Inside were table after table of gorgeous plants. There were not a lot of species, my favorites, but I did find a couple. Many plant collections will now be graced with all those new hybrids of Brad Thompson now thanks to HiMark Nursery and Ades and Gish. There were also many classics for new comers. As though the tables full were not enough, many were "under the tables" where even more plants were stashed. The sale lasted into Sunday and last I looked, the tables had been thinned out. I spent far too much in the boutique where there was every thing from pottery to art for sale.

The banquet was chaired by the always entertaining Mike Flaherty and everyone went home from that with a mug having the Convention logo done by **Dean Turney**. **Elaine Burden** chaired the hospitality committee. We had a wonderful hospitality room available to us all through the convention where we could chat with old and new friends which is perhaps the greatest reward of any convention.

To the Southern California Branches and their members, plus all those from afar who helped them, we in ABS want to send our gratitude and thanks for a great event. ~FH

## 2004 ABS Convention:

Back to the Future: Species, Seeds & Beyond

San Diego, California August 24-29, 2004

### Show Winners

by Leora Fuentes

**Best of Show: B. 'Midnight Sun' exhibited by Bob Golden and Iris Bird**

**ABS Show is Sharing: Mike Flaherty**

**Sweepstakes: Mike Flaherty**

**Best Artistic: Mixed Planting, Decorative Container, Mike Flaherty &**

**Gary Hunt (Container)**

<u>Division</u>	<u>Entry</u>	<u>Exhibited by:</u>
Cane-like	B. 'Jeanne Jones'	Bob Golden & Iris Bird
Shrub-like	B. 'Midnight Sun'	Bob Golden & Iris Bird
Thick-stemmed	B. 'Star Frost'	Carol & Peter Notoras
Rhizomatous	B. 'Marmaduke'	Mike Flaherty
Rhizomatous - Unusual		
Foliage	<i>B. velloziana</i>	Ingeborg Foo
Rex Cultorum	B. 'Benitochiba'	Bob Golden/Iris Bird
Tuberous	B. 'Lancelot'	Paul C. Carlisle
Contained Atmosphere	<i>B. bogneri</i>	Dean Turney
Novice	B. 'Rudy'	Mike Flaherty
Novel Grown	B. 'O'Flaherty's Folly'	Mike Flaherty
Traveling Begonias	B. 'Cubinfo'	Joyce Pridgen
Photographs - Judged		
Artistically	<i>B. popenoei</i>	Mary Bucholtz
Photographs - Computer		
Enhanced	Rex Cultorum Begonia	Charles Henthorne
Arts	Picotee Begonia	Jeanne Kunze
Crafts	Semperflorens Begonia	Janet Welsh

### Cultural Awards

by Maxine Zinman

<u>Points</u>	<u>Begonia</u>	<u>Exhibitor</u>
99	B. 'Midnight Sun'	Bob Golden & Iris Bird
98.6	B. 'Ginny'	Ingeborg Foo
98	B. 'Emerald Maiden'	Mike Flaherty
98	Rex Cultorum (1)	Bob Golden & Iris Bird
98	Rex Cultorum (2)	Bob Golden & Iris Bird
97.6	B. 'Lancelot'	Paul C. Carlisle
97.5	B. 'Rudy'	Mike Flaherty
97	B. 'Bunchii'	Mike Flaherty
96.5	<i>B. velloziana</i>	Ingeborg Foo

96	B. 'Lotusland'	Mike Flaherty
96	B. 'Marmaduke'	Mike Flaherty
95	B. 'Bashful Bandit'	Carol and Peter Notaras
95	B. 'Kelton Parker'	Mary Sakamoto
95	B. 'Majesty'	Paul Carlisle
95	B. '#85'	Paul Carlisle
95	B. bogneri	Dean Turney
95	B. 'Medora'	Mike Flaerty
95	B. 'Cubinfo'	Joyce Pridgen

## ABS Thanks

All the members of ABS thanks Convention Co-Chairs **Mike Ludwig** and **Dean Turney** and the Southern California Branchs. The leader branch was the Margaret Lee Branch which has fewer than 10 members, yet at the same time they managed the ABS Seed Fund and this convention. It was a heroic example for all ABS branches and members; it also shows that they could draw on nearby branches and members across the country to assist. As well, hats off to those who brought plants from afar to make a great show. They not only gave a convention, they gave an OUTSTANDING convention with exemplary tours, exemplary seminars, and an exemplary show! Hats off to you, one and all!

## Little Orphan Atlanta

by Annette Boree

Every so often a letter or article appears in *The Begonian* with a poignant cry of "Can anyone tell me the name of my begonia?" including helpful descriptions of its beauties, "green leaves, spots, pink flowers" and so on. It breaks my heart.

I have a couple of begonias that, through my own negligence, no longer have names. But because our branch members share pieces of all our plants, I wait patiently and sooner or later I spot a familiar leaf — hopefully with the original label still firmly attached.

At the Atlanta Convention plant sale table I overheard a customer say: "It has no label so it's of no use to me." (I assume she must do a lot of hybridizing.) She set down a rhizomatous begonia with reddish-green, deeply-cleft leaves. Since I was buying plants to take back to all our members of the Brooklyn Queens Nassau

Branch, and this plant looked as if it would stay small, I bought it. (Having a label is a very secondary consideration after smallness in our group.) I took it home and repotted it, and it grew. Oh dear, did it grow! By the time our meeting date rolled around it had grown so huge that I knew exactly what would happen. It was rejected, and had to come back home with me.

It now fills my dining room bay window with glory from one side to the other. My cat has about 6 inches of space left at either end to sit and watch the birds outside. My cat was someone's reject, too. I got her at the animal shelter, and I'm very glad I did.

*Annette Boree writes from 8 Brown Road, Great Neck, NY 11024-1403, email awb4@hotmail.com.*

# NATURAL HYBRIDS AND OTHER ODDITIES FROM VERACRUZ

by **Rekha Morris**

Despite the many physical discomforts, each foray into the backwaters of Veracruz state, Mexico to document species begonias becomes a multi-layered adventure. Occasionally such forays culminate in discoveries, which continue to be exciting retrospectively long after the trip is over. Our most recent trip, March 5<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2004, is memorable both for the acute discomforts and the unusual finds in unexpected places.

My researches prior to taking this trip had indicated that there were three areas in Veracruz state which I had so far not been able to explore, and each of these was associated with begonias which thrived in distinct habitats. One of these in the northern section of Veracruz is so far removed from the other two that I would need to postpone exploring this mountainous region for another trip. Although the other two are not in close proximity, they are both in the southeastern sections of the state. I decided to concentrate on these two areas, one around the Los Tuxtlas region encompassing Lake Catemaco, and including the Istmus of Tehuantepec, which is considerably further south and east of Lake Catemaco, and the second area which encompasses a region north of Orizaba / Cordoba and south of Xalapa.

Since both these are areas of seasonal dryness I was apprehensive about finding a substantial number of begonias. **Scott Hoover** had located only five species during his month long trip in February / March 1975 to Michoacan, Morelia and Chiapas [**The Begonian**, Dec. 1976], and since Chiapas not only has the largest number of begonias in Mexico but also has a generally moist climate, I was dubi-

ous I would be more successful in my attempts to locate begonias during this dry season. Contrary to my expectations, not only did I document 16 species and several natural hybrids in these two areas of exploration in Veracruz state, but have since realized that this was to be the best seed collecting trip I had taken to date.

According to plans I had formulated prior to this trip, the day after we arrived we headed for the Los Tuxtlas region, and were fortunate enough to find an exceptionally clean and well-appointed hacienda type hotel between Santiago Tuxtla and St. Andres Tuxtla which became our base for the next five days. My initial objective was to locate *B. sousae* and *B. thiemei*, however, all three areas, Vija de Santiago, Lago Encantada and the Biological Station north of St. Andres Tuxtla, where these begonias had been documented in the past, proved disappointing.

Vija de Santiago, a prominent hill in the area, has now been denuded of its natural flora and serves as a ranch and pasture land. The shores of Lago Encantada despite the magical name, were bone dry, and the only begonia which managed to survive in the prevailing dry heat was none other than the stalwart *B. heracleifolia*. I found it growing among cacti, covered in a film of fine dust, and epiphytically. The Biological Station, which preserves some 700 hectares of tropical rainforest, was humid enough for begonias to thrive, yet the only species I found along the road to it and scattered here and there within the preserve were *B. nelumbifolia* and *B. heracleifolia*. We explored along several paths winding around the preserve, but without ever encountering any begonias, and certainly there was no sign of either

*B. sousae* or *B. thiemei*. The courteous director of the Biological Station was not familiar with begonias other than the two species that abounded on the roadside, and the botanist who might have been more conversant with begonias was out of station.

Our drive east to Minatitlan from where we headed south towards Hidalgotitlan in the Istmus of Tehuantepec proved to be a nightmarish journey involving ferry crossing of Coatzacoalcos River, and endless vistas of dry and dusty landscape. In this area I was attempting to locate *B. lynceorum* and *B. imperialis*, and despite the inhospitable terrain now denuded of the forests which once covered the Istmus, well until dusk I kept hoping that we would arrive at an oasis which allowed these begonias to survive. In small pockets where a few trees survived we unexpectedly found colonies of *B. nelumbifolia* and *B. heracleifolia*, covered with dust, but nonetheless managing not only to survive but actually able to bloom and set seed.

After four disappointing days of scouring every green patch of ground for begonias, and in the process being attacked by chiggers, so that our legs, arms and back were sore and itchy as though we had deliberately subjected our bodies to some bizarre form of medieval self flagellation resulting in little round, red welts, I was ready to pack up and head for the more salubrious and temperate climate of Xalapa. However, since one of the maids at our hotel kept telling us that she had plants like those I had in my hotel room [*B. heracleifolia* and *B. nelumbifolia*] growing around her ranch, we decided to spend our last and fifth day there exploring in and around private property. This decision proved to be fruitful beyond my expectations.

Leaving our car on a rise overlooking a sinuous green belt denoting the pres-

ence of constant water, we headed downhill to explore. Down a rough path that led towards the shallow end of this stream I encountered for the first time *B. glabra* in bloom. Although I have documented and photographed this species at several spots in Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Hidalgo, I had never before seen it in bloom, and adding to this excitement was the discovery that there were several heads of near mature seed pods which I was able to bring back for the ABS. Across the stream which circled around to create a small circular peninsula I found not only *B. nelumbifolia*, and *B. heracleifolia*, but also *B. sousae*, and a species I had never before encountered in the five trips I have so far taken to Mexico.

*B. sousae* grew in scattered patches with a few plants sending up clusters of tiny deep pink floral heads. On close examination each creamy white bud was speckled with deep pinkish red dots, and as the flowers matured the entire surface turned a paler shade of pink. The unidentified species [*B. U461*] has orbicular foliage which terminates in two tail-like appendages at the lower extremity, and at this initial perplexing encounter I thought that it was a scendent begonia, perhaps an intriguing mutation of *B. ludicra* which also thrives around streams and waterfalls, and also has one, often two narrowly elongated points, protruding from the angular [rather than orbicular] upper section of its foliage. The exciting aspect of this discovery at that time was that perhaps I had finally found *B. ludicra* in bloom albeit a pretty bizarre form of it. **Patrick McMillan's** botanical analysis and comparative research which involved consulting specimens from the Herbaria of Harvard and Duke universities later revealed this species, *B. U461*, to be *B. involucrata*, a species recorded for Costa Rica and Panama but not for Mexico to date. Since I had never seen this species

in Mexico until this trip, it did not occur to me that I had found a “new” species for Veracruz. Not only was this an as yet undocumented species for this state [and it appears for Mexico as a whole] but its pristine white blooms held above the foliage in prominent floral clusters are so intensely fragrant as to permeate the area around with a scent which to me was a heady blend of osmanthus and jasmine. After days spent in dry, dusty, chigger infested terrain, the cool moist, fragrant air made this spot as seductive as any encountered by Odysseus during his countless adventures in the Aegean.

On the way to this private property and also along another road we had taken on our way to the Ismus of Tehuantepec, I had encountered another begonia I did not recognize and have yet to identify, *BU 462*. I first saw this species growing among 3' tall grass. From a distance its foliage reminded me of forms of *B. barkeri* with stellate, lobed foliage. Since *B. barkeri* has not to my knowledge been recorded in this area, I had jumped out of the car and raced across the grass beating it down with my walking stick, and in the process inviting all the chiggers within a radius of some 50 feet to feast on my limbs and torso already inflamed by their compatriots. In crisscrossing this area over the five days we were there I ended up by finding this same species at two other locations, and from these I was able to bring back both floral samples and seed pods for further study.

After a day spent at the herbarium in Xalapa I decided that since I had never photographed *B. multistaminea* in bloom or collected its seeds on previous trips, we might spend an afternoon once again exploring along the hills between Naolinco and Misantra. Our first attempt had to be aborted due to intense fog, so intense that it took us nearly six hours to cover the eight or so miles we had driven into the

hills. The following day we set out around noon and found the hills bathed in sunlight. This was not to last for long. By the time we had driven an hour into the hills, a light mist began to float upwards, occasionally enveloping the hills around us. Soon this grew heavier and heavier until we were so shrouded in fog that I could barely see for five or six feet around me. Luckily we had arrived in begonia habitat and I was able to photograph *B. incarnata*, *B. ludicra*, *B. galbra*, *B. nelumbifolia*, *B. manicata*, *B. multistaminea* [although without any flowers or seed pods], and to my surprise *B. barkeri* which has not been documented in this area to date.

Due to the heavy, obscuring fog which reduced visibility to such an extent that I had to keep my door open so that I could look down at the edge of the road in order to direct Michael so that he would not drive off the road and into the ditches or off the cliff side, we decided to keep going north and take a long detour back to Xalapa rather than risk the extremely steep and winding road we had taken between Naolinco and Misantra.

The following day we headed south towards Cordoba via Puente Nacional where *B. plebja* had been documented. The cliffs above the river at Puente Nacional were as dry and scruffy as the hills above Xalapa had been wet and foggy the previous day. There was no sign of anything green and certainly no sign of *B. plebja*. Disappointed we decide to look for a site referred to as Remudadero which we had not found on any map but where *B. peltata* and *B. polygonata* had been documented. On a previous trip the curator of the herbarium in Xalapa had pointed out that Remudadero was the site of only two or three houses, and we needed to get off the main roads to find it. After inquiring at a couple of larger settlements, we arrived at one which should have been



*Clockwise from the top is Begonia sousae, Begonia involucrata, a natural hybrid of B. pinetorum and B. carolineifolia [B. U463], and finally Rekha with B. heracleifolia's white flowers towering above her head in the ruins of Techuantepec. Photos by Rekha Morris.*



Remudadero except that I noticed that there were some dozen houses, several with gardens neatly defined by stones painted white. Puzzled, I suggested that Michael find someone to see where we were. As he disappeared in search of Remudadero's mysteriously invisible inhabitants, I got off to reconnoiter along a path leading slightly downhill. No sooner had I stepped out of the car than I noticed *B. peltata* in bloom at the edge of the path, and just beyond it *B. polygonata*, also in bloom. As we learned later, both had been collected from around the hills by a woman who had planted them at the edge of her property. We searched in vain for other specimens, but the hills were bone dry. These two plants had survived as they had been carefully nurtured while those in the wild, like *B. plebja*, had gone dormant until the advent of the rainy season.

Our explorations around the Orizaba/Cordoba area were momentous for several reasons. Deluged by dozens of samples of begonia foliage and flowers, **Patrick McMillan**, the curator of the herbarium at Clemson University, had finally succumbed to the charms of this genus, and had decided to join us for the final week of our two week long trip. Young and agile, he was not only able to explore quickly along cliffs which would have taken me far longer to do so but to also venture up steep slopes which daunted me. Together we found and photographed species which I had previously documented such as *B. manicata*, *B. carolineifolia*, *B. nelumbifolia*, *B. heracleifolia*, *B. barkeri*, *B. ludicra*, and in addition *B. oaxacana*, which I had not found until this trip. In addition, Patrick found a hybrid between *B. barkeri* & *B. carolineifolia* on a hill I had not ventured up. This form is similar to one I had found elsewhere in the area during my first trip to Veracruz in 2002. We also documented

both pink and white flowered forms of *B. pinetorum*, and a hybrid between *B. pinetorum* and *B. carolineifolia*. This was an exciting discovery as I had mentioned to Patrick that there was a rock outcrop where I had wanted to photograph *B. carolineifolia* & *B. pinetorum* growing amongst such a tangled & thick mass of vines and shrubs that neither Michael nor I could get a clear view of these species growing in close proximity. It appears that since our last visit there a large tree had fallen, and in crashing down had cleared much of the undergrowth. Patrick instantly clamored up the clearing and there in a cleft was this hybrid form of *B. pinetorum* in bloom. The several large plants of *B. carolineifolia* were now fully in view but interest in them was overshadowed by this unusual form of *B. pinetorum*. A few days later we were to encounter yet another unusual form of this species in the Los Tuxtlas region.

Since I continued to be enthralled by *B. U461* and its lovely habitat, and wanted Patrick to use his botanical skills to help me identify this begonia as well as *B. U462*, we decided to head back to the Los Tuxtlas region, and make another attempt to find the habitat of *B. imperialis* and *B. lynceorum* in the Ismus of Tehuantepec. Although *B. U461* is probably a form of *B. involucrata* native to Costa Rica and Panama but not recorded for Mexico to date, the identity of *B. U462* remains unresolved.

Experience in plant hunting in Mexico has taught me to never overlook or underestimate the efforts of local gardeners no matter how tiny their gardens may be. I had found *B. peltata* and *B. polygonata* in Remudadero thanks to the unknown gardener who had collected them in the hills around her home, and nurtured them in her postage stamp garden. So while in the Los Tuxtlas region I remained

alert and carefully observed all the little gardens we passed. In one such garden I saw a 20" woody stemmed plant whose foliage and flowers were much like those of *B. pinetorum*, however, among all the examples of this species I had encountered I had never before seen one with this tall, woody stem. I not only photographed this specimen but asked the owners of this garden where they had found the plant. The lady responsible for locating this plant was summoned out of the house by her daughters to talk to us. She smiled with pleasure at our interest and waved her hand towards the surrounding hills.

Since we had examined sections of these hills without encountering this form of *B. pinetorum*, I was once again chagrined at my failure. Unable to leave without finding this form, we began to drive slowly along the dirt road leading back to the main highway all the while examining every rock outcropping carefully. On one of these we saw our first tiny seedling of *B. pinetorum*, and as Michael brought the car to a standstill, both Patrick and I were out and racing for the rock. Tiny seedlings grew out of various crevices, but along one side of the rock were two long, woody stems about 1/2" in diameter which trailed downwards nearly 6'-8' feet. The foliage and flowers on these vine-like woody stems were those of *B. pinetorum*.

Satisfied at yet another extraordinary find, we drove out of these hills and back to our hotel beyond St. Andres Tuxtla.

Two more attempts to reach the habitat of *B. imperialis* and *B. lynceorum* ended in failure, however, we located *B. U462* at yet another site along one of the many dusty roads we traversed in search of *B. imperialis*. Most exciting was finding white flowered *B. heracleifolia* in the wild. We had seen this form of *B. heracleifolia* in a private garden around the

Orizaba / Cordoba area, and since I had never encountered this form anywhere else, I was both intrigued and disappointed at my failure. As we gloomily made our third attempt to reach the habitat of *B. imperialis*, we suddenly encountered this sumptuous *B. heracleifolia* some five feet high and as wide, with dozens of stalks of white blooms, many of which had begun to set seed. I have never seen a *B. heracleifolia* of such dimensions, nor was there a second one as large along the 15' or 20' stretch of embankment where there were only white flowered *B. heracleifolia*.

Every cloud is said to have silver lining, and certainly our disappointment over our failure to even reach the vicinity of *B. imperialis* habitat despite several 14-18 hour long days of driving was much ameliorated by this chance encounter with a white flowered *B. heracleifolia* of such formidable and dazzling form and stature that both Patrick and I took turns being photographed beside it.

### Seeds Collected During the March 2004 trip

- [1] *B. barkeri*. Orizaba / Cordoba area. 3/15/2004
- [2] *B. carolineifolia*.
- [3] *B. glabra* Los Tuxtlas region3 /18/ 2004 *This is the first time I have seen this in bloom.*
- [4] *B. heracleifolia*. Orizaba / Cordoba area. 3/16/2004
- [5] *B. heracleifolia*. Dark reddish/pink flowers. Ismus of Tehuantepec. 3/17/ 2004
- [6] *B. heracleifolia*. *White flowers. Another first for me!*
- [7] *B. heracleifolia*. Garden in Fortin de Las Flores. 3/2004
- [8] *B. heracleifolia*. All brown foliage. Orizaba / Cordoba area 3/15/2004
- [9] *B. incarnata*. various sites in

Veracruz. 3/2004

- [10] *B. manicata* Orizaba / Cordoba area  
3/15/2004
- [11] *B. peltata*. Remudadero, Veracruz.  
3/13/2004
- [12] *B. polygonata*
- [13] *B. pinetorum*. Pink flowers. Orizaba  
/ Cordoba area 3/16/2004
- [14] *B. pinetorum*. White flowers. Had  
not seen this in bloom before.
- [15] *B. sericoneura* Lake Catemaco area.  
3/9/2004
- [16] *B. stigmosa*. Oaxaca, hwy. 175./  
19/2004
- [17] *B. wallichiana* Orizaba / Cordoba  
area 3/16/2004
- [18] Unidentified eyelash type garden in  
Remudadero 3/13/2004

I had not documented three of the  
above species until this trip: *B. peltata*, *B.*  
*polygonata*, & *B. stigmosa*.

Seeds of Two unidentified Species and  
three natural hybrids:

- [1] Seeds of *B. U461* from private  
property in the Los Tuxtlas region. 3/  
18/04
- [2] Seeds of *B. U462* from two sites:  
{a} Los Tuxtlas Region. 3/9/04 {b}  
Ismus of Tehuantepec. 3/17/2004
- [3] *B. Pinetorum* x *B. carolineifolia*.  
Orizaba / Cordoba area
- [4] *B. barkeri* x *B. carolineifolia*.
- [5] *B. nelumbifolia* x *B. heracleifolia*.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Once again I would like to extend  
my gratitude to **Bruce Pearson, Michael  
Marino** and **Abel Rodriguez** of Tropical  
World de las Flores near Fortin for pro-  
viding us with the ideal base and safe ha-  
ven for our explorations in Veracruz and

adjacent Oaxaca.

I would also like to thank **Dr. Sosa**,  
Director of the Instituto de Ecologia in  
Xalapa, and **Dr. Lorea**, Head Curator of  
their herbarium, for facilitating my re-  
search on the begonias of Veracruz state.  
I also extend my gratitude to those who  
enabled me to take this trip by their gener-  
ous donations: the ABS Grants Commit-  
tee, the Astro Branch, the Sacramento  
Branch, **Carol Notaras, Thelma O'Reilly**  
and **Tom Keepin**. Finally I would like to  
take this opportunity to acknowledge that  
without my husband's skills in Spanish,  
and endless patience in negotiation of the  
roads of Mexico [this time with a right leg  
swollen to his knees from a spider bite],  
this and all the other trips to Mexico would  
not have taken place.

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Continued from page 231.

After *B. gracilis* change to tuberous  
Correct the following to:  
*B. kenworthyae*  
*B. nelumbifolia* var. *rubra*  
*B. popenoei*  
*B. reneformis*

After *B. dregei* types change to mixed.

Add a space after *B.* 'Skagum'

Editor's Note: Remember that hybrid seed do  
not produce the same plant as that they were  
taken from and should not bear that plant's  
name when grown out. For example, *B.*  
'Holley Moon' is an F<sup>1</sup> or primary hybrid and  
the seedling produced from the original cross  
were very uniform. The hybrid named was se-  
lected as the best seedling. A cross with it,  
even if selfed, should be far more variable as  
the genes of the original parents *B. carrieae*  
and *B. nelumbifolia* sort them selves out; that  
is the nature of F<sup>2</sup> hybrids. Of course, a cross  
with another species or hybrid will be increas-  
ingly different.

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL  
BUSINESS MEETING  
AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY  
San Diego, CA, August 28, 2004**

President **Howard Berg** opened the meeting and asked **Cheryl Lenert** to read the Aims and Purposes of the Society. He also welcomed long time member **Rudy Ziesenhenn**e to the meeting and convention. There were 42 board member votes present.

The minutes of the Board Meeting in San Antonio, May 29, 2004, were accepted as sent to the board members.

Treasurer **Carol Notaras** presented the financial reports for the last trimester and the fiscal year. For the period May 1 to July 31, 2004, the general fund beginning balance was \$5372.76 and the ending balance was \$9726.49. The combined checking accounts (Begonian mailing, seed fund and general fund) beginning balance was \$7018.55 and the ending balance was \$9979.58. Combined checking and savings accounts began with \$66,712.16 and ended with \$64,751.92. For the fiscal year August 1, 2003 to July 31, 2004, the general fund beginning balance was \$16,618.84, income was \$43,594.67, disbursement was \$50,487.02, and ending balance was \$9726.49. The combined checking accounts balance began at \$18,008.62 and ended at \$9979.58. The combined checking and savings totals were \$82,446.66 beginning and \$64,751.92 ending. The large deficit is due to the lack of income from a convention during the fiscal year since there were two conventions the previous year. The report was accepted.

Past President **Morris Mueller** presented the Audit Committee report in the absence of Committee Chair **Paul Tsamtsis**. The financial record books of the ABS appeared to be in order as of the audit date of July 10, 2004.

Membership Secretary **Arlene Ingles** reported that the current total membership was 1204 including foreign, life and free memberships. She submitted a written report for February

through August, 2004, that indicated the current total paying membership was 1031. After correction of some apparent errors in addition, the report showed the total membership ranged from 1204 to 1329 during this period. President Berg asked how many new members joined this year. There was no data on new members for the full fiscal year but Arlene later informed President Berg that there were 123 new members thus far for the calendar year. The February through August report showed new members each month that added up to 118. A separate New Member Report for May through August 19 showed 72 new members. The majority of these were brought in by branches and the internet website. Palm Beaches Branch signed up the most new members (8) while Astro Branch was runner-up with 4 new members. An inconsistency was noted for the number of new members in the two reports. Of the 118 total for February through August only 44 were shown for May through August compared to the 72 in the New Member report. The cause of the inconsistency is unknown at this time.

Member at Large Chair **Sandy Boyd** reported that she is planning to mail out another newsletter soon.

Save Our Species Newsletter Editor **Rekha Morris** reported that 46 species have been adopted and urged more members to sign up. Applications were circulated. Three copies of the SOS Newsletter were sent to all branches.

Branch Relations Director **Mary Bucholtz** reported that the Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau Branch dissolved this year and the Cascade Branch will be doing likewise. The Austin, Texas, group has not yet requested Branch status. No status is available on the group in Knoxville, TN.. We were reminded that the Tampa Branch was issued a charter at the February board meeting.

Nomenclature Chair **Gene Salisbury** reported 5 new Begonia registrations. They were *B.* 'Machiko', *B.* 'Shaun Henthorne', *B.* 'Agnes Brin', *B.* 'Maria Alexandra Brin', and *B.* 'Kimjongilhwa'. Details on origin and type are

available from Gene.

Conservation Chair **Bill Claybaugh** sent a written report on several items. Twenty new species have been grown from seed to good size and will be transported to the Fort Worth Botanical Garden in September, 2004. Twelve new species have been sent to Ohio State University for their Ornamental Plant Germplasm Preservation Studies bringing the total we have sent thus far to fifty. Sixty-five ABS members have attended one or both of the workshops on Begonia Description and how to use the Begoniaceae Keys. A new Pictorial Begonia Key is being developed for the Astro website to aid in identification of selected species Begonias. The Astro website has over 50 photographs of Begonia from **Scott Hoover's** 1990 trip to Thailand and Western Malasia.

Seed Fund Chair **Mike Ludwig** reported that all outstanding orders have been filled. There have been some problems on some orders so if there is a problem with your order please contact Mike. There was also a problem with his telephone number having a wrong area code but that has been corrected. The correct area code is 619. You can also use the email address in the Begonian. Mike will answer from a different address and you should reply to that address. Seed orders are down this year. New species seed is needed to generate more orders. Also, new donors are needed to replace those who have retired from growing seed and more seed is needed as well. Orders can still be placed from the seed listing in the January-February Begonian. All seed has been tested for germination.

Entries and Classification Chair **Leora Henthorne** relayed statistics on the show. There were 24 exhibitors and 124 entries.

**Mary Sakamoto** gave a convention report indicating 174 registrants and all operations working well. Convention Co-Chair **Mike Ludwig** thanked all the other branches for their help and support in putting on the convention. Without their help the convention could not have been held. The site of the 2005 convention has not been determined. Proposals are

requested. **Ann Salisbury** reported that the Southwest Region Gettogether in San Antonio cleared about \$5000.

President Berg announced that he is searching for someone to fill the position of Internet Website Editor since **Kathy Goetz** has indicated a desire to resign.

Business Manager **Gene Salisbury** announced that he has not received any orders for ABS stationery recently. Branches are reminded that they can order it from him.

Display Ad Chair **Ann Salisbury** reported that total income from ads this year was \$1485.

Holiday Ad Chair **Wanda Macnair** reported having a total of \$2249 donated before the meeting started. Later donations brought the total to \$2634.

Judging Chair **Maxine Zinman** reported sending cultural certificates to two branches.

Public Relations Chair **Virginia Jens** reported that a public relations brochure for branches has been prepared. She hopes to have it published before the next meeting.

Research Director **Bruce Boardman** had no research to report but said he was collecting data on the history of the ABS.

Bookstore Chair **Cheryl Lenert** reported that she has located a source of binders for Begonians but has not stocked any. She suggests that it might be better for branches or individuals to order them directly.

**Freda Holley** reported that the Millie Thompson Publications Fund has \$4000 available to help publish new material. Also, the Thelma O'Reilly Reprint Fund has money for reprinting items no longer available. Both would have to be reimbursed as reprints are sold.

**Shirley Brown**, President of the Tampa Branch, invited everyone to the Winter Board Meeting next February and pointed out the University of South Florida Botanical Garden's

planned fund raising trip to ENGLAND in July, 2005. The brochure in the convention registration bag shows prices that will be going up after September 15, 2004.

Grant Review Committee Chair **Mary Sakamoto** reported one grant request was received from **Rekha Morris**. It has not yet been reviewed or evaluated.

Awards Chair **Ann Salisbury** reminded all members that there are three new awards and urged everyone to consider submitting nominations for both the new and old awards.

Branches were reminded to send all officer changes to Membership Secretary **Arlene Ingles** so she can change them on the internet website and make accurate mailing labels.

Branch reports were presented by representatives of numerous branches including Sacramento, Palm Beaches, Palos Verdes, Buxton, Atlanta, Westchester, Margaret Lee, San Francisco, Dorothy Caviness, Tampa, Orange County, San Jacinto, Barkley, A. D. Robinson, Doug Frost, Potomac, Astro, Whittier, Alamo, and Southwest Region.

**Bruce Boardman** announced that the Australian Begonia Society would be holding its convention in mid March next year. Please contact Bruce for registration and other details if you are interested in going.

**Mary Fuqua** reported that the New England Tropical Conservatory has recently acquired land in Bennington, VT, and is proceeding with plans to build trails and construct education, research and display facilities on the property. Construction will be accomplished over the next several years.

The Working Committee appointed by President Berg at the Tampa Board Meeting met on August 27, 2004, to identify items needing action. The following is a summary of those items. Other items will be addressed at a later date.

The Committee will examine the duties of the

National Director position for the purpose of either changing the current job description to include specific duties, such as informing the Membership Secretary when a member passes, or abolishing the position and transferring the duties to the Branch President. The reason is an apparent lack of communication between National Directors and ABS.

The Committee will consider a new position of Assistant Membership Secretary to handle recruitment and to act as secretary in case the Secretary is unable to continue.

The Membership Secretary should send information on member renewals to all branches so each branch membership chair can follow up on non-renewals.

Appointments of assistants or trainees should be made for Begonian Editor, Entries and Classification, U-Numbers, Nomenclature, Grant Committee Chair and Awards Committee Chair.

The Finance Committee should become more active in developing annual budgets and the Executive Board should be more active in making decisions and/or recommendations for action by the board or membership.

A promoter should be appointed to assemble a cadre of "buddies" and assign them to look after new members as we find them.

Credit card acceptance through Paypal was discussed and an application obtained. It appears that it could be set up to meet all the ABS needs including domestic and foreign membership, convention registration, plant sales, etc. at a nominal cost. The committee recommended we give it a try.

Respectfully Submitted,  
**Richard Macnair,**  
*Secretary*

## Conservation Comments

by Bill Claybaugh

Conservation Chairman, ABS

### Pictorial Begonia Key

The principal tool for identifying species begonias is the Begoniaceae Key published by the Smithsonian Institute, Editions 1 and 2. This key was developed by Drs. L. B. Smith and D. C. Wasshausen in 1986, and then modified by J. Golding and D. C. Wasshausen in 2002. This "illustrated key" includes approximately 1400 photographs, one for each of the holotype or type specimen for almost all of the species described. These photos are very useful for species identification, but do lack details such as leaf and flower color and often overall plant growth habit. Further, the key was developed by very experienced botanist and the descriptive nomenclature is sometime difficult for our ABS members to understand, without considerable effort.

As a partial solution to these problems, a "Pictorial Begonia Key" has been developed and is now published on the Internet as part of the Astro Web Site. This new key uses many aspects of the original Begoniaceae Key including subkey numbering and some of the couplets from the "Main Key". Where it differs significantly can be described as follows:

1. Wording has been simplified in some cases.
2. Nomenclature has been standardized, saying one thing in only one way.
3. Several subkeys have been combined to remove some confusing couplets. Two subkeys have been omitted.
4. For simpler reference the listings of the species have been separated by continent of origin (African, American or Asian) and alphabetically.

5. Each species is finally described by one or several 4 x 6 inch color pictures.
  - a. Each large photo is previewed by a small "thumbnail" photo.
  - b. Photos include some or all of the following: total plant, leaves, male flowers, female flowers.
  - c. In some cases, very similar-appearing plants are shown simultaneously so that differences can be noted.

This "Pictorial Begonia Key" is an ongoing project and will grow with time. Most of the pictures are of plants in my personal collection, approximately 150 species, but also includes photos of plants from recent conventions and shows. Further, the intent is to ultimately include pictures of all species currently located at the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens. This should approximately double the number of species involved and should include most plants that we commonly encounter. Throughout this key development, we will have **Jack Golding** reviewing the web pages and pictures. He is presently suggesting improvements and corrections that should make this pictorial key a valuable complement to the Begoniaceae Key for species identification.

To access this key, go to the Astro Web Site at <http://absastro.tripod.com>

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### Editor's Notes

I would like to **thank** all those who rushed convention photos and photo disks to me in time for this edition. I had real trouble making choices; there were so many great ones and my color space was so limited. I only wish I could share them all! I have favored the hard copy photos over the digital photos because the printer prefers these.

## Hybridising Tuberous Begonias by Dennis Need, England

*With the tuberous begonias highlighted in the 2004 ABS Show, it seems appropriate to bring you the article here taken from the Summer Bulletin of The National Begonia Society of the U.K. edited by Derek L. Telford [derek.telford2@ntlworld.com]. Our thanks to them for its use.*

Male and female meet, get together, result could be babies. Well not quite, but creating new begonias, requires the pollination of the female flower with pollen from the male flower of another variety. Unlike other genera, we have distinct male and female flowers, which make it easier to hybridise begonias. There is no mistaking the female bloom as the embryo seedpod is at the back of the flower; female flowers are usually on either side of the central male flower. With single flowers producing lots of anthers there is no problem in finding pollen, in fact having single flowered varieties in your greenhouse could so easily fertilize every close female flower. Finding pollen with large flowered doubles is another matter, and with many varieties this can be quite difficult.

There are many ways to try and force varieties to produce pollen that is used with a degree of success, is to take some cuttings of selected varieties in late May/June. These are rooted, and grown on in compost containing very little nutrient, the plants are allowed to from late August on. In many cases the resulting male flowers will be weak things, with fewer petals than usual, and will frequently result in the production of anthers and pollen. By tapping the male flower when the anthers split the released pollen will fall onto the lower petals. This can then be collected with a small soft brush and deposited on the female flower of your choice. Make a small

label with the date and details of the cross, and fasten it to the stem of the female flower. If enough pollen is available, it is wise to repeat this over the next couple of days. One important point is to make sure that there are plenty of female blooms ready for the pollen when it is available. A method I have used is to take off all the male flowers on the chosen seed parents, so you have plenty of female flowers always ready.

A simple system of labelling is to cut adhesive address labels into strips, write the cross and date, (seed parent first) and attach to the stem of the seedpod by folding over to stick to itself. This way even if the pod accidentally gets knocked off, the label is still attached to the seedpod. If the pod has been on the plant for 4 to 5 weeks and is knocked off, the ripening process can continue by placing the stem in a glass of water, until the ripening is complete. I have managed to obtain viable seed by doing this when the pod has only been on the plant for 3 weeks.

Should the cross be successful, the petals will usually fall from the pollinated flower in 5 to 6 days. With some varieties, the pollinated flower will partly close its petals when fertilisation has been successful. The seedpod will enlarge as the seed develops, but compared to the seedpod of other plant species, only slightly.

Time for the ripening of the seedpod varies from 5 to 7 weeks, occasionally some will take longer, but the average is 6 weeks. Signs to look for so you know when to take the pod from the plant are the pod showing signs of drying; the pod can then be left on a saucer on a windowsill to complete the ripening process. The top of the pod near the stalk will after a few days show signs of splitting, but it is

usually a little longer before you can extract the seed. If the pod is nice and dry, all the seed will probably fall from the pod, but should there be some moisture it will require leaving a little longer to complete the drying process.

The final job before storing the seed is to separate the ripe seed from the chaff and dust. This is easily done, by placing the seed and rubbish on a clean piece of white paper, by tilting the paper and tapping it the viable seed will roll down onto another piece of paper, leaving the debris behind. By doing this is a couple of time, you will end up with nice clean seed free of any dust and dead seed husk.

Once the seed is dry and cleaned it can be stored and will remain viable for a number of years if it is kept dry and cold. The refrigerator is a good place to keep any seed by storing it in a sealed container in which a small packet of silica gel is included; this will absorb any excess moisture.

If you become serious about hybridising begonias, you would be well

advised to read up something about genetics, as a haphazard cross is a slow way to achieve any improvement from your efforts.

With the complicated mix of the original species, and the efforts of many hybridists over the years, the genetic make up of begonia varieties does not always show in the flowers and foliage you could expect that by crossing a red with a red, the offspring would also be red, and of course some reds would result from such a cross. But using named varieties, you could get quite a mix of colours, and red with red could produce pinks, oranges, picotees and many other colors in between.

In some varieties there is a dominant characteristic, something you will find out about over a number of seasons hybridising. A variety that always produces many reds is Jenny Barclay, although there is little sign of this in the flower, so a dominant gene in this variety is the tendency for reds. Other varieties can produce other things such as tall or

*Continued on page 229.*

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*Below, that fabulous tuberous display of plants grown by Paul Carlisle. Above, left is the outsized B. 'Mike Flaherty' on display on tour at Mary Sakamoto's. Next, is B. 'Mr. O'Flaherty'.*



## Master of Ceremonies: Mike Flaherty

The banquet at the ABS Convention doesn't usually get a lot of coverage, but still it is one of the highlights and this year it was made even more special by master of ceremonies Mike Flaherty with his wit and tales. Everyone dresses up at least a bit and conversations buzz as conventioners from near and far get together at large tables.

Mike Flaherty is already well known to many because his excellent photos highlight the "begonia group" and online messaging center where questions, observations and photos are exchanged. They know that Mike runs a place called "The Gazebo" from which he goes out to enrich the landscapes of the rich and famous including Oprah. We also know that his place is near Santa Barbara and the HiMark Nursery where Brad Thompson now lives the hybridizer's dream - he creates and others produce and sell his famous hybrids. One of the results of this proximity is that many of Brad's hybrids have been named after Mike under various titles such as "Mr. Flaherty", "Flaherty's Folly", and even "Mike Flaherty".

**Brad Thompson** won the A.D. Robinson award as you will see on page 237 for an older hybrid, B. 'Black Gold', but his hybrids were in evidence everywhere at this convention in show, sale, and at the banquet as table decorations. In fact, instead of the usual drawing for plants at this convention, every table had enough plants displayed that everyone got to take a Brad hybrid home! It is a good bet that somewhere among the beauties on display is another future Robinson winner.

In addition to his work as master of ceremonies, Mike Flaherty brought so many of his lovely plants to the show that he easily won the Showing is Sharing

award. That he also got the Sweepstakes award for most blue ribbons only hints at the beauty of his entries.

The tuberous entries in this show really make it special for those of us unaccustomed to see these fabulous flowered beauties. Mike grew B. 'Mission Bells' or assisted in displaying those provided by **Paul Carlisle**. One of these appears on the back cover, but there were so many gorgeous plants with HUGE blossoms! Brad Thompson has also been doing some tuberous hybrids and I believe one of Mike's favorites is B. 'Mission Bells'. Since the original plant was named, Brad reports that he has produced a whole series of these in different colors. I originally saw the first one entered in the new introductions in the LA show a few years back. It stood about a foot or so tall and so I thought it was a small plant. Not so! Mike entered it as a giant plant loaded with blooms even after its journey south.

We hear from that internet chat line that Mike Flaherty is thinking of retiring, maybe to Florida. Doesn't this make you want to go out and look for property for him in your area? Mike, you could have the largest search committee is the U.S. with no effort at all!

If a convention can have a star, then surely the 2004 ABS Convention star was its Master of Ceremonies Mike Flaherty.

In another illustration of how ABS members go to the limit to assist a branch that takes on the task of a convention, Brad Thompson and Paul Carlisle's contribution must be acknowledged as well. The plants at this show were truly outstanding and demonstrate how each area of the U.S. offers us new insights into our wonderfully varied plant family and the work of hybridizers in that area.

## In Memory Helene Jaros

Helene Jaros, an icon in ABS for over 32 years and mother of ABS past President Charles Jaros, passed away on July 15 after a brief illness. She was 86.

Most of you reading this know Helene because of her love of begonias - she was both an award winning grower and an ABS Judge. She knew everyone, and everyone knew her, and in 2002 Helene was recognized for her humanitarian contribution of spreading begonia good will to all she came in contact with as the winner of the ABS Eva Kenworthy Gray Award. At the time of her death Helene was a member of the Miami, Palm Beaches (charter member) and Tampa Bay (charter member) ABS branches, and she was also a member of the Tampa Bay Fern Society and the Aroid and Tropical Plant Club of Tampa Bay. In years past she also grew and belonged to african violet and bromeliad clubs.

But begonias, ferns, and aroids were hardly her only hobby! Helene loved antiques, and she loved especially the abundance of antique dolls, teddy bears, shoes and china that she shared her home with. Ten years ago Helene took up the meticulous hobby of hand making authentically detailed reproduction porcelain dolls. Several of them were Florida State Fair award winners and two were donated to a recent ABS convention. And how she doted on her "dollies!" - with custom made period clothes, including antique shoes, jewelry

and accessories she scoured for in every shop in every city she visited.

And visit she did! In addition to regularly attending plant club meetings up and down the state of Florida, Helene has attended ABS conventions since 1978, and in recent years has attended most Get-togethers and board meetings as well. For the past 3 years she has attended the prestigious Philadelphia Flower Show, and this past April she judged the Miami Begonia Show, always stopping along the way to visit with family and friends.

Helene was predeceased by her husband Chuck (9 years ago) and one grandchild. She is survived by 3 children - sons Richard Kammer of PA and Charles Jaros, with whom she lived in FL, and daughter Valerie Noss of VA, 4 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. She had begonia buddies all over the world, and her passing will leave a huge void in the hearts and lives of all of us who knew her.

Helene loved the *Begonian*, eagerly awaiting its arrival, and always reading it cover-to-cover. For those wishing to make a donation in Helene's memory, the family suggests the Publication Fund of the American Begonia Society. [Send checks made out to ABS to Carol Notaras with a notation that they are for the Millie Thompson Publication Fund.]

**Dale Sena,  
Florida**

**Members at Large Newsletter  
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# Winter ABS Board Meeting

University of South Florida Botanical Gardens, Tampa, Florida  
February 24-26, 2005

The ABS Winter Board Meeting will again be in Tampa, beginning Thursday, February 24 through Saturday February 26. The Begonia Society of Tampa Bay is planning a great field trip for Thursday, packed full of places you won't want to miss.

Bob Koehler, the plant shop manager, is lining up great speakers for Friday at the USF Botanical Gardens where the gardens' species will be on display and begonias will be for sale. More speakers on Saturday with lunch and the Board meeting. **Shirley Brown** will host the evening part on Friday night with heavy appetizers and plenty of hospitality beverages to go around. More details will be forthcoming in the next issue of the Begonian. ALL ABS MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO COME!

*Continued from page 224.*

dwarf growth, a susceptibility to mildew, or other shortcomings. All these points will only become apparent as you use different varieties and types, and over a period of time you will develop a picture of their strengths and weaknesses.

In making any cross, be careful that you do not breed in faults. If you have a variety that is very tall, it makes sense to cross this with a shorter growing variety, otherwise you could create a beautiful flower on a tall growing plant that could be a problem to handle. ...

Sometimes you will be fortunate and find a seedling that is totally different to both its parents, one such grew for me in a bed of multiflora seedlings. This was a medium sized very ruffled pale primrose flower of 3 inches across, growing on a free branching plant. I used it in a number of crosses before losing it, but it has passed on many of its characteristics to its offspring. From this change seedling I now have a number of varieties that show great promise for container and basket growing.

If your interest is in nontuberous varieties, the capacity for variation is even greater than tuberous varieties, as the number of species used in the development of the Rex hybrids is immense. This is one of the reasons I find it annoying

when someone is referred to as a species man, when in fact they only grow canes or Rex Hybrids, and may not even have a species in their collection.

*An important remaining 2 or 3 paragraphs will be continued in the next issue of the Begonian.*

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**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. The species names (in italics) reported here are correct based on the latest information from **BEGONIACEAE**, Ed. 2; Golding, and Wasshausen. The descriptions published are from the literature and apply to the name submitted for the offerings.

**The Seed Fund needs donations of seeds. Seeds may be traded for listed seeds. Seeds may be ordered from the master list by name. If you have a special need ask the Seed Fund Administrator. Please pollinate your species begonias with pollen from other plants of the same species and contribute (or exchange) to the seed fund.**

Most packets of species seeds are \$1.50 all packets of cultivars (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 7.75 % sales tax. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, **payable in US funds ONLY**, to **The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund**.

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We are grateful to have new seeds to offer this month. The donors this month are Ann Salisbury and Bea Huckriede and Scott Hoover. These seeds have not been tested for germination!

*B. atricha* Miguel [*Petermania*]  
*B. boliviensis* de Candolle [*Barya*]  
*B. dipetala* Graham [*Haagea*]  
*B. dregei* Otto & Dietrich [*Augustia*]  
*B. kenworthyae* Ziesenhenné [*Gireoudia*]  
*B. multangula* Blume [*Sphenanthera*]  
*B. muricata* Blume [*Reichenheimia I*]  
*B. paleata* Schott [*Pritzelia*]  
*B. peltata* Otto & Dietrich [*Gireoudia*]  
*B. robusta* Blume [*Sphenanthera*]  
*B. 'Holley Moon'*  
U466 Indonesia  
U467 Indonesia  
U468 Indonesia  
U470 Indonesia

Orders from the Master List for 2004, published in Jan/Feb and Sept/Oct. Issues will be processed as usual. On your orders please indicate alternate choices in the event that the seeds you selected have been sold out.

## BEGONIA DESCRIPTIONS FOR SEED FUND

*B. atricha* (Miguel) A. De Candolle [Sumatra] (Sect. *Petermannia*) Stem Erect, glabrous. Scott says this is the most attractive of his recent collections.

*B. boliviensis* A. DeCandolle [Bolivia, Argentina] (Sect. *Barya*) Tuberos; stem tall and willowy; leaves long, narrow, and finely toothed; long nodding orange-red flowers in summer.

*B. peltata* Otto & Dietrich., [Mexico, Guatemala] (Sect. *Gireoudia*) Stems 1-3 feet, succulent, hairy; leaves peltate, ovate, acuminate, green with white felting above; flowers white on long erect peduncles in winter.

*B. kenworthyae* Ziesenhenné [Mexico] (Sect. *Gireoudia*). Erect succulent green thick rhizome to 6 in.; 12" X 8" leaves, unequally sharply lobed, basally cordate, serrate, red-ciliate, fleshy, slate grey, green veins, covered with a grey bloom; white flowers in many flowered cymes; winter.

*B. dipetala* Graham [India] (Sect. *Haagea*) The name means two petalled. Two feet tall. Thick stemmed, rigidly erect, brown, rarely branched. Leaves medium, ovate-pointed, doubly toothed, green with scattered bristly hairs, red beneath. Large, soft white to pink fragrant flowers in pendulous clusters. Collected in the Bombay area; has annual rainfall over 80 inches from July to October; sandy loam; temp. 68°F--86°F.

*B. dregei* Otto & Dietrich. [South Africa]

(Sect. *Augustia*) Stem with enlarged caudex, sometimes referred to as semi-tuberos, 1-2 feet; small maple-leaf-like leaves; blooms early spring to late fall. *B. multangula* Blume [Java] (Sect. *Sphenanthera*) Similar to *B. Robusta* described below except the stem is only 3 feet and the plant is nearly glabrous in all parts. Both plants grow at nearly a mile elevation in the rain forest. For more information and pictures of these two species see article by J Doorenbos, *Begonian* August 1980, pg. 213.

*B. muricata* Blume [Indonesia] (Sect. *Reichenheimia 1*) Rhizomatous; leaves more or less round-cordate, sharply dentate, indistinctly lobed, to 3 in wide, red-brown felted on the reverse; fruit less than an inch with 3 equally wide, thin membranous, rounded wings.

*B. paleata* Schott ex A.DC. [Brazil] (Sect. *Pritzelia*) Shrub like with distinctive foliage. The rough textured leaves.

*B. robusta* Blume [Java] (Sect. *Sphenanthera*) Similar to *B. multangula*; rhizome jointed at or below the surface; stem up to 6 feet; leaves asymmetrically ovate to 10 in. long, somewhat lobed; short inflorescences with white flowers are borne under the leaves; triangular fruits with two short wings and one longer one hang on the plant for several months with or without seeds; most parts of the plant are pubescent.

*B. 'Holley Moon'*-- Ann Salisbury

U466 [Indonesia]

U467 [Indonesia]

U468 [Indonesia]

U470 [Indonesia]

---

Nomenclature Editor Jack Golding asks that you make the following corrections in the Master Seed List published last issue:

After *B. edmundoi* change shrub to shrub.

*Continued on Page 218.*

# New Cultivars

## Official International Registrations 991

Gene Salisbury, Nomenclature Director

Applications to Register Begonia cultivars may be obtained from **Gene Salisbury**, P.O. Box 52, Tonkawa, OK 74653. Forms must be typed or printed in ink and accompanied by a \$2 check payable to the American Begonia Society. Clear photos for publication in the *Begonian*, drawing and dried specimens are requested. ABS is the International registration Authority for Begonia cultivar names. In the listing of the cultivar parents below, the female (seed) parent is given first.

***Begonia* 'Kimjongilwa'**  
No. 991 *Begonia* (Unnamed  
Tuberhybrida x Unnamed  
Tuberhybrida) 'Kimjongillwha'

This tuberous hybrid has large flowers. The leaves are hairy, asymmetrical, elongated, and the plant is 10-30 cm high and 5 to 15 cm wide. Its leaves are a bright or deep green and are heart-shaped with a long acute tip. Leaves are 10 to 30 cm long and 5 to 15 cm wide. Margins are saw-like. Surface is lightly hairy with distinct grooved veins. There are 2 to 4 main veins and petioles are 6 to 8 cm in length. Stipules are 1.2 to 1.4 cm in length and 1 cm in width and are mild green.

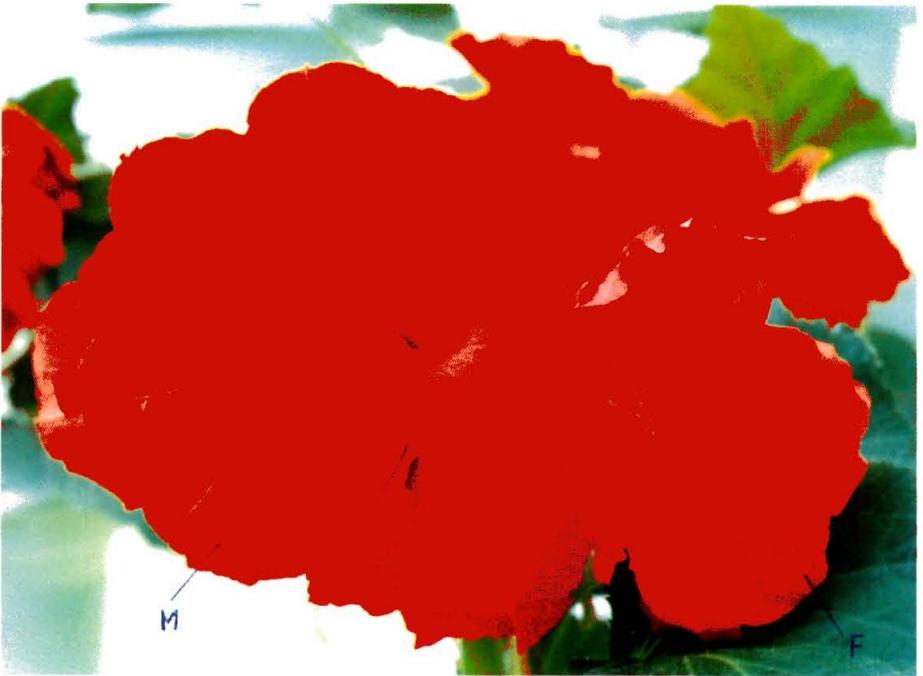
Flowers are bright red. Females have three winged ovaries. The outer petals are round and the inner petals are elliptical in shape. The diameter of the male flower is 25 to 45 cm and the female flower is 20 to 12 cm. Male flowers have 25 to 45 petals and female flowers have 4 to 5 petals. Flower clusters have 2 male and 2 female flowers. The length of the flower peduncle is 8 to 15 cm.

Unusual characteristics are that flowers are polypetalous with some even have 50 to 55 petals and its long period of bloom at four months. Flowers have a unique shape; they are roundish like the

rose form flowers and the petals are elongated and elliptical, flat and wave-like. The flower is graceful and smart to look at as it has harmoniously arranged structure within the contour of the flower. This begonia has been named after **General Kim Jong IL**, the great leader of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea. It was awarded a special Diploma and Gold Medal in the 12th International Flower Exhibition (FLORA Bratislava 1991) held in the then Czechoslovakia in May 1991 and also Grand Prize in the 1999 Kunming International Horticultural Exposition, China in May of 1999..

This hybrid was developed, tested, and named by Dr. Kamo Mototeru and has been tested by Master Li Wan Jun, Director of the Korea Central Botanic Garden in Pyong City.. The description was prepared by Professor Dr. Kim In Gi, Director of Research Institute of the Floral Plants Association in Pyong City in July 2004. It is available in the trade from Mr. Kang Nung Su, Chairman of the Korea Floral Plants Association of the D.P.R. of Korea. It has been presented for registration by Peter Rhea, Euclid Nursery and Landscaping, 13352 Euclid Street, Garden Grove, California 92643, phone 714-638-5115.

It was registered on August 4, 2004.



Above is a photo of the male and female flower of *B. 'Kimjongilwa'* and opposite is a photo of its leaf.



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## NEWS: ABS, Branch, International

**Scott Hoover** presented to the 5th International Flora Malesiana Symposium 2001 a paper authored by W. Scott Hoover, **Carrie Karegeannes**, **Harry Wiriadinata**, and **James M. Hunter** entitled "Notes on the geography of South-East Asian *Begonia* and species diversity in montane Forests". which has now been published in *Telopea* 10(3): pp. 74964. The abstract follows: "Field reconnaissance of *Begonia* in lower montane forests of Sumatra and Sulawesi, Indonesia was undertaken in 1995 and 1998, with formal research expeditions being conducted in lower montane forests of West Java in 2000 and 2001. Forty-seven mountains have been explored in Indonesia, by mostly single samplings along elevational gradients on each mountain. Taxonomic determinations have been made for most of the *Begonia* collected in 2000 and 2001 and species of the section *Sphenanthera* were recognized, observed and photographed in Sumatra and Sulawesi. In 1977 and 1978, wet tropical forest at the Carentaria mining exploration site at the Frieda River, West Sepik, Papua New Guinea was explored for *Begonia*. Many different *Petermania* species were diversified along elevational gradients. Field observations at this West Sepik site suggest populations of individual species were often restricted to one or several small, localised colonies along stream margins within the 25 km<sup>2</sup> site.

**Mark Tebbitt** tells us that *Begonia U388* has been in analysis by two botanists in Asia and is not after all *B. longicilata*. A new paper describing this as a new species will appear soon. We'll keep you posted, but in the meantime change your labels back again to *B. U388*!!

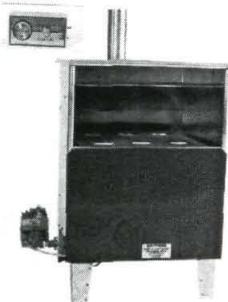
Palos Verdes Branch (CA) had their annual show and sale on August 8th, 2004. There were 100 plants to be judged. The Best In Show went to a beautiful Rex Cultorum *Begonia* 'Marion Louise' grown by **Bob Golden**. Sweepstakes was awarded to **Louise Korobkin** and Showing is Sharing was given to **Carol Knight**. Best Novice was awarded to **Becky Coffey** for her beautiful cane *Begonia* 'Irene Nuss'. Nineteen Cultural Awards were given in this outstanding show.

**Jackie Davis** sent in a great story and photos of the Capitola Begonia Festival in Santa Cruz County, CA. This is a wonderful event held over the labor day weekend in which there is a water carnival with floats created from begonia blossoms. Why begonias? The Mid County Post on July 27, 2004 said, "Because from the 1930s to the 1970s, over 90 percent of the world's begonias came from Capitola and the Brown Bulb Ranch in Capitola. The Brown family had come to Capitola at the turn of the century and worked hard to develop the cultivation of the spectacular begonia. But it's not the blossom of the begonia that is worth money, it's the bulb. So local bulb growers such as the Antonelli brothers and the Brown Bulb Ranch were more than happy to donate the flowers for use in the parade and in return grow appreciation for the beauty of the Pacific Begonia." [Of course, tuberous should probably be inserted before begonia in this quote.] The floats in the photo are gorgeous and this would make a great labor day vacation destination for ABS members.

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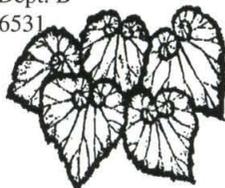
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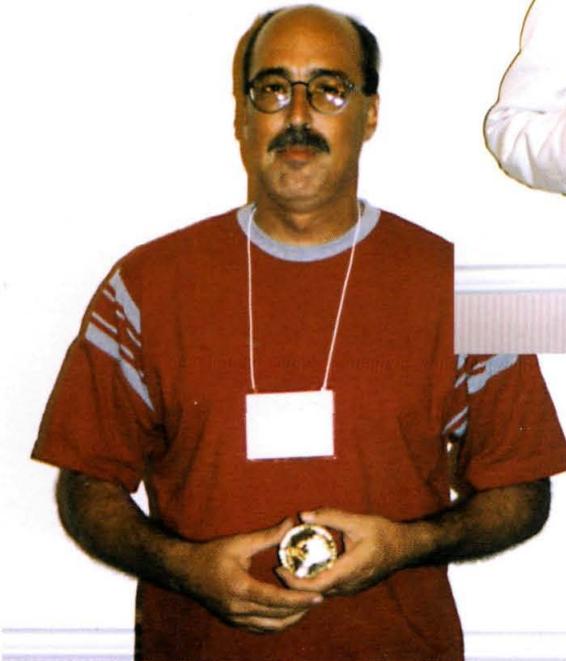
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At left , **Maxine Zinmann** beams over her Dyckman Award , and below right is **Charles Jaros** with his Eva Kenworthy Gray Award. Belowleft, **Brad Thompson** holds the Robinson Medal (See Begonia 'Black Gold' in the September/October 1999 Begonian, page 190). Photos by **Johanna Zinn**.



## 2004 ABS AWARDS: Wonderful Times in San Diego

by Ann Salisbury

The annual ABS convention was held in the delightful city of San Diego. This was my first experience as Awards Chairman. You cannot imagine how excited and nervous, I was before the presentations. The Winners were all dedicated and had gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the ABS.

The Herbert P. Dyckman Award is presented to a person who has rendered long term or very outstanding service for the ABS, above and beyond the normal duties in office or as a member. This years award was presented to **Maxine Zinman**, Judging Chairman. Maxine has devoted many hours in her duties as Judging Chairman. She has displayed her talents in making sure everything goes right at the ABS convention shows. We should all make an effort to thank her for a job well done.

The Eva Kenworthy Gray Award is given either for writing or for contributing something of spiritual value toward cementing good will and harmony among members. **Charles Jaros** was our winner. Charles has served as President of the ABS, show chairman and is currently Slide Librarian. He has spread goodwill and harmony in every adventure where he has been involved. Charles has also contributed articles to the *Begonian*. Charles is a very deserving winner.

The Alfred D. Robinson Medal is given to a cultivar that has been released for at least 5 years but not over 15 years. This year the award was given to *Begonia* 'Black Gold'. Its hybridizer was **Brad Thompson**. *Begonia* 'Black Gold' was registered in 1998, registration number 970. It is a supberba type cane with bronze/green leaves and red underside. It has fragrant pink blooms.

The Rudy Ziesenhenné Award is presented to the current or retired editor of the *Begonian* is presented for the outstanding use of contributions of members and others and for leading and strengthening the membership in their study of begonias through the excellence of editorship. This year the award was presented co-jointly to Karen Bartholomew and **Chuck Anderson**. They served as co-editors from 1979 to 1982. Karen assumed the editorship alone from 1982 to the fall of 1983. Chuck served as president of the ABS. For all the work they did together and alone, recognition is long overdue. Both are very deserving recipients. **Joan Coulat** accepted the awards for Karen and Chuck and read a very nice thank you note.

At this time, I would also like to remind readers that next year, we may award not only the above, but three new awards. I urge readers to begin thinking now about nominations as the timeline may be fairly short next year. These new awards will be: 1) The Tim O'Reilly Award for an ABS member spouse who does not grow begonias, but nonetheless contributed in numerous outstanding ways to the Society; 2) the Margaret Lee Award will assume the second purpose of the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award which is the "contribution of something of spiritual value toward cementing good will and harmony among members (The Eva Kenworthy Gray Award will again be only for "Contributing original material toward helping the rank and file members further their study of begonias."); and 3) the Gene Salisbury Award which will be for practicing outstanding horticulture which spreads new species and hybrids among our members.

## COMING EVENTS

**November 6, 2004 10:00 am to 1 p.m.:** Delaware Valley Branch/ABS will host Darrin W. Duling, curator of the Glasshouse Collections of the New York Botanic Garden on "Collecting Begonias in the Rain Forest of Brazil. For more information contact Bernie Wiener, 229 Ellis Road, Havertown, PA 19083, ph. 610-446-2160 or wiener@voicenet.com.

**February 24-26, 2005, Winter Board Meeting:** University of South Florida Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL. For further information see page 229. More information to follow next issue.

**2005 ABS Convention:** Awaiting a Branch Volunteer

**2005 Association of Australian Begonia Societies National Conference in Beautiful Ballarat.** Friday, March 11 through Sunday March 13, 2005. Registrations are being taken by the Treasurer, 9 Kelley Grove, Preston 3072, Victoria Australia. Accommodations are limited so register early. Convention Chair is Diana Lawrey who may be contacted at (03) 9898 8863.

**2005 SWR Get-Together: Plano, Texas.** Date and details to follow next issue.

**Due date for articles for January/February *Begonian* is  
November 1, 2004; announcements due by  
November 15.**

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