

The

Begonian

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The Begonian

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American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

Aims and Purposes

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

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

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

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

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

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

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Cover

Front: **Rekha Morris'** photo shows *B. biserrata* as she found it on her latest trip to Mexico.

Back: **Charles Henthorne** introduces two new Rex cultivars in this issue; this is the lovely leaf of B. 'Shaun's Dream

In This Issue

Articles

In Memory: Hugh MacLauchlan	46	Seed Fund	71
October in the Sierra Madre	47	Minutes of the Board Meeting	74
Begonias on the Rocks, Please	54	Coming Events	78
New Cultivars	59	Officers' Page	79
B. 'Shaun's Dream'	62		
Welcome to a New Branch	63		
A Convention Plea	63		
Begonias in Hanging Containers	64		
Review: <i>Begonias</i>	67		
Prune or Be Lost	70		

Regular Features

President's Message	44
Editor's Notes	45
Membership Notes	57
Conservation Comments	58
In the Mailbox	69

2006 ABS Convention

Miami

Begonias *I Never*

Knew It

Could Be Like This

Quick

Check your mailing label. If it reads
200605 or **200606**, your membership is about to expire.
Please renew!

President's Message

We are all looking forward to the convention which is just about to begin. This event is hosted by the Miami Begonia Society, **Julie Echaniz**, President. The Convention Chairman is **Tim Anderson** and his wonder filled nursery will be on one of the tours. The cochairman is **Charles Jaros** and he is also the Seminars Chairman. He has arranged for a dazzling array of speakers from all over the world. The Show Chairman is **Armando Nodal** and **Maxine Zinman** will be at her post overseeing the judging. She will also be conducting an ABS Judging School. We thank all these wonderful people who have worked very hard to make us all very happy begoniacs. They have survived 5 or 6 major hurricanes in the last two years and still have been able to put together a marvelous week for us. Hope to see you all there.

Just after the ABS Luncheon on Saturday afternoon I invite everyone to stay for the board meeting. If you have never attended a meeting, you should look on this as an opportunity to see how your society functions. The board will be very happy to have you take part and perhaps even contribute your suggestions. We will have an agenda prepared but will leave some time for add ons. If you have anything, let me know before the meeting. Our Parliamentarian is **Ann Salisbury** and she will be there to see that everything runs smoothly and according to Robert's Rules of Order. We have a new rule limiting time of debate and that should speed things up. Give it a try. It might just be fun!

It is with regret that I must announce the resignation of **Leora Henthorne** as Entries & Classification Chairman. Leora has served for a long time in this difficult and demanding post and we have come to accept the fact that she would always be

there. It will be difficult to find a replacement but Leora's pioneer work with the computer program has done a lot to make the task easier. She and **Brad Thompson** worked on into the night at our 1999 show to get the program working for the first time. The ABS will always be grateful to Leora Henthorne for her dedicated service.

Congratulations to **Jack Golding** on the publication of his book *Seeing Begonia*. It is a must for the library of any begonia lover and will be a reference work for many years to come. As Jack says in the introduction "This is dedicated to the many who look at their Begonia but do not see the details. Often, even if they do, they do not know the language necessary to describe them." Ann Salisbury is handling the distribution of this book and will be happy to fill your order. Thank you, Jack, for another great contribution of your scholarship to the American Begonia Society.

Spring is almost here and after a week of basking in the Florida sun we will head back home and, inspired by what we have learned at the convention, nurture our begonias with renewed enthusiasm. We will have seen a stunning show and the memory will linger for a long time.

Ending this letter I would like to thank Membership Chairman **Donna Marsheck** for the tremendous job she is doing in the dues transition. She has brought many members back into the fold. I close with the very clever acrostic that ends her membership letter. Thank you, Donna.

"We believe in
Being a part in the American
Begonia Society!
Education and the quest thereof!
Germinate & propagate!
Observe!
Networking with others!

Interconnection with ABS
members!
Admire the begonia!
Save the species!!”
Donna Marsheck

Have a great begonia year.
In Friendly Contact,
Janet Brown

Editor's Notes

This issue I have room to add these words - a bad sign! In other words, I am now out of material and need new items. Next issue will be done before convention material is available so a lot is needed!

With a little space, let me tell you a bit more about northern Louisiana. This is an interesting area, totally unlike the southern areas with which I had been familiar before. It is called the Ark-La-Miss on the radio and television because Monroe which is about 28 miles east of us is right in the center of the state traveling on I 20 (which also goes through Dallas and Jackson, MS). This also describes the terrain which is a blend of East Texas and Mississippi. I have mentioned before that the soil is deeply sandy with no rocks. As in the past, whenever we move to a new state, we always have the “most” something or the other weather. Here, it has been the record drought punctuated by the rains we got from Hurricane Rita. You’ve seen stories about the wild fires in Texas and Oklahoma, but these extended also into this area along with that drought. Fortunately, for the past few weeks we have been getting some rain and it is raining now as I write this.

RL has now finished the greenhouse and I have moved the begonias there. They had survived until then in an unheated lean-to covered with plastic and a small electric heater. Now, I can really tell you

tales about begonia survival! Although the temperatures have gone into the low 20s a number of times, I lost surprisingly few of the begonias, but none of them are looking like too much at the moment. I am pruning, trimming, and repotting madly to give them a new lease on life. Some really surprised me. One has been B. U484, which has now, I believe, been identified as a hybrid rather than a species. Not only did it come through the extreme heat and low humidity outside this summer, it is the best looking of the begonias after the cold.

I have several plants of *B. nelumbifolia*, all of which seem to be doing fine. The canes have lost most of their leaves, but look like they will recover. It seems that the rhizomatous are going to grow well here in general.

Begonias are commonly found for sale here in the nurseries in the spring and on display in gardens, many familiar ones that have apparently been given new names. There is also a Louisiana Technical University “Farm Store” here, run by their Agriculture Department, which sells begonias. I bought one recently that is huge and was labeled “beefsteak begonia” although it is not the *B. “Erythrophylla”* we know. Canes are also popular.

One thing I am anxious to discover is whether the *B. grandis* ssp. *evansiana* that I planted out last spring survived the drought and the winter. These were quite large plants, but they went dormant in the summer. I also planted out a couple of *B. fisheri* and *B. cucullata*. The thing I love about spring is seeing the dormant perennials come to life. I hope this spring that will include a few begonias!

Now send me your stories!!

~FH

Note: The photo of Rudy Ziesenhenné at 92 on page 11 of the last issue was by **Julie Vanderwilt**.

In Memory

Hugh McLauchlan

by Charles Jaros

The Ambassador of Begonias, this is truly an apt name to describe my dear friend Hugh McLauchlan. Hugh succumbed to cancer on January 5, 2006 hence a legacy of the Scottish Begonia Society and the American Begonia Society has come to an end.

I had invited Hugh to be a speaker at the 2006 ABS Convention in Miami and in our friendship Hugh graciously accepted. Hugh sent me a short biography of himself and I would like to take some excerpts for this memoriam.

"I saw my first begonias (tuberous) at the Empire Exhibition, Glasgow in 1938. The display was the work of the newly formed Scottish Begonia Society in 1936 and the display was quite spectacular and I was hooked.

However, within a year we were at war with Germany and I was in uniform until 1946 and fought in the North Africa campaign where I was wounded.

In 1947 my wife Betty and I chose a career in Show Business (*The famous speciality dance act of Babette and Raoul*) and the next 15 years were spent traveling Europe and the rest of the world. This enabled me to visit many famous Botanic Gardens and so increased my fascination for horticulture in general.

In 1961 we settled down for the first time in our lives and I set about designing a garden and setting up two greenhouses full of begonias.

I became President of the Bishopbriggs Horticultural Society and held this office for 12 years then became Honorary President. I also became President of the Scottish Begonia Society and held this office for two years and then became

Honorary President."

So as you can see Hugh was always into begonias and horticulture even as a young man.

You may wonder how Hugh became involved with the American Begonia Society; I am very happy to say it was through myself.

In the early 80's while we were living in Miami, the Miami Branch held its show at Fairchild Tropical Garden and the local paper The Miami Herald wrote an article about myself, my mother Helene and our begonias. Hugh and Betty's daughter Sandra was living in Miami at the time and saw the article. We were listed in the telephone book and Sandra called and mentioned that her parents were visiting from Scotland and that her father grew begonias. She asked if it would be all right for her parents to visit with us. Of course begonia growers are always eager to meet other growers so a time and day were set for our visit. Hence the Jaros family met Hugh and Betty and a wonderful long special friendship ensued. Hugh was enthralled with the different begonias I grew; he was mostly associated with Tuberous and Rex Cultorum. So I introduced him the other begonias groups and he was again hooked. I gave him several cuttings to take back including B. 'Charm' and *B. cubensis* hort. which he grew and shared with other Scottish Begonia Society Members. Of course I showed him the *Begonian* and again he was hooked and became a member.

In 1985 I was convention chairman of the ABS Convention in Miami and I asked Hugh to be our banquet speaker. This was his first ABS function and what a hit he was, Hugh's exuberant personality was reflected in his lecture and his demeanor. Needless to say Hugh and Betty made many wonderful friendships in ABS. After his lecture Hugh brought

Continued on page 57.

October in the Sierra Madre When Tuberous Begonias Bloom

by Rekha Morris

October is the most vibrant month in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico.

The downpours of summer have given way to clear skies, and the hills once brown and parched are green and sparkling with wild flowers in bloom. It is not April showers which stir the roots of begonias into growth, but the rains of summer which are also responsible for the many devastating land slides in begonia habitats. Although most begonias are just beginning their growth cycle in October, a few such as the tuberous species from Veracruz and Oaxaca are either in full bloom or beginning to set seeds.

Although I had planned to concentrate entirely on Oaxaca during the October 2005 trip, the few begonia species such as *B. hydrocotylifolia* and *B. peltata*, which I had failed to photograph in their habitat in Veracruz state, nagged at my conscience with a persistence that I could not ignore. So we spent Oct. 14th exploring the environs of Rio Blanco near Orizaba, Veracruz, and were disappointed to document only three species, *B. nelumbifolia*, *B. heracleifolia*, and *B. manicata*.

On Oct. 16th we set out to find the old road to Veracruz and explore the environs of Rio Jamapa, northeast of Orizaba and Cordoba where begonias had been documented. Although the old road to Veracruz cuts through an area almost entirely given over to sugar cane and corn, there are pockets along Rio Atoyac and Rio Jamapa which are promising begonia habitats. However, to reach these one must stumble through fields of sugar cane and corn before reaching the high cliffs through which Rio Jamapa meanders. These cliffs are not only steep but covered

in thick growth through which we had to make our way often on hands and knees as the rocks were slick with mud and slime. After nearly twenty minutes of this crawling with cacti added to the mix of thorny and prickly shrubs and vines, I was about to give up on finding any begonias in the dank shade which characterized this cliff side. We finally reached a narrow ledge where we could walk upright, and as we stood wondering which direction to take in order to proceed further downhill I saw my first *B. peltata* growing at the base of a tree. From this point on and for another twenty or so yards, *B. peltata* grew in scattered patches along these near vertical cliffs. I had always pictured this species as growing in full sun, but here it was in almost full shade with a few patches receiving dappled sunlight. Although there were no plants in bloom, I managed to find a few seed capsules before deciding that I had had enough of this habitat where some little flying insect kept trying to burrow into my hair until I poured nearly an ounce of Tea Tree oil on my head.

This little side trip had taken the better part of the day, and although I knew that *B. hydrocotylifolia* was to be found not too far from this location, we decided to postpone our search for this species until after we returned from Oaxaca. On Oct. 16th we set out once again to look for *B. lyman-smithii* along the border of Veracruz and Oaxaca, but despite spending almost the entire day in the environs of Lake Temascal all I found were colonies of *B. wallichiana* and *B. heracleifolia*.

Disappointed we headed for Tuxtatepec for the night, and the following day, Oct. 17th found us once again along one of

my favorite routes, highway 175 which connects Tuxtatepec with Oaxaca City through some of the most spectacular and varied mountain scapes of this region. It is here that I have previously documented *B. wallichiana*, *B. heracleifolia*, *B. nelumbifolia*, *B. mariti*, *B. glabra*, several forms of *B. ludicra*, *B. pustulata*, and on a dirt road leading off this highway, a colony of *B. sericoneura*. This October not only did we encounter all these species in various stages of their growth cycle prior to blooming, but found three species which I had not documented in this mountainous terrain before.

The first of these we saw growing on rocks covered with mosses and ferns interspersed amongst scattered dwellings just south of Chiltepec. This species which I thought was a form of *B. sericonuera* is according to **Patrick McMillan** of the Clemson University Herbarium, *B. plebeja*, a species I had failed to locate on previous trips as it is dormant until the rains of summer spur it into growth.

Since this route to Oaxaca City winds through mountainous terrain often at the base of near vertical cliffs which are prone to land slides [and we encountered over two dozen this time], it often takes us almost the entire day to reach Oaxaca City. This generally meant that I have not been able to explore the last stretch of about 100 km before reaching Oaxaca City, as we nearly always drive through this section well after sunset and in the early hours of the night. So this time I had made a determined effort to start early in the morning, and to abbreviate all the many stops I normally make to enjoy the many begonias I have already documented in this cool, mountainous rain forest habitat, and to postpone exploring new sections until we were in the last 100 or so km north of Oaxaca City. So for the first time we were able to wind our way through this

southern section in daylight, and as a result I found two other species I had not seen here before. One of these is probably *B. fimbriata* which grew by a small waterfall, and the other is *B. U462*, a hybrid of *B. heracleifolia* and *B. nelumbifolia*.

About 70 km north of Oaxaca City we turned east towards Capulalpan to look for a colony of *B. fimbriata* documented both to the north and east of Capulalpan. We could not go north as the police had cordoned off that dirt route to stop the illegal felling of trees, and east of Capulalpan was one long stretch of landslides which eventually made the terrain so difficult and dangerous that we turned back. But not before we came across a splendid specimen of *B. biserrata*. This species has often been confused with *B. pedata*, which is also a tuberous begonia, and every time I thought I had finally located it, the specimens turned out to be *B. pedata*. Past a cluster of houses as we approached a turn in the dirt road, I saw a scattering of wild dahlias whose small vermilion blooms glowed molten amongst spires of indigo salvias. Enthralled with this floral vignette, I almost missed the tall stalks of *B. biserrata* in full bloom amongst a thick stand of low shrubs. It was almost dusk by this time, so after photographing and taking the largest specimen we headed for Oaxaca City.

The next day and a half I had reluctantly allocated to doing research in the two herbaria in this city, but soon my reluctance was replaced by mounting excitement as I discovered references not only to begonia habitats I had wanted to explore but to new ones where as yet unidentified begonias have been documented. Records at these herbaria indicated that both *B. fimbriata* and *B. pedata* were to be found east of Oaxaca City in what is known locally as the northern branch of the eastern Sierra Madre. In January 2005 we



Rekha Morris found, above left, what she believes to be B. daedelea. Above right is B. gracilis and below is B. peltata. All photos are by Rekha.



had driven into these mountains towards Totontepec and documented large stands of *B. fusca*, *B. sartori*, a sprinkling of *B. ludicra* and *B. oaxacana*, a small colony of *B. rafael-torresii*, and a species which I now realize is none other than *B. fimbriata*. However, I had not seen any *B. pedata*. On the afternoon of Oct. 19th we left the city and headed for the mountains past the pre-Columbian site of Mitla. I remembered these dry hills, and dreaded the three or more hours we had to drive through them to our first encounter with begonias. This time, on the contrary, the hills were greener than I had ever seen them, and the wealth of wild flowers in shades of yellow-gold, white, lilac and mauve created a textured patchwork of color I had not imagined possible in this terrain, which in January I could only describe in terms of **T. S. Elliott's Waste Land**.

About 50 km from Mitla as we skirted the base of a low hill covered in pines, I caught glimpses of something pink sprinkled at the base of these pine trees. The clear, vivid pink of these blossoms was suggestive of begonias, but I hardly expected to see them growing in a pine grove. But begonias these were, and none other than *B. gracilis* which I had documented only once before in Hidalgo state. Instead of the thick underbrush which is the norm in these mountains, this pine grove was like a temperate zone habitat with the ground covered in pine needles and a sprinkling of small shrubs. And among these were small colonies of *B. gracilis*, a pink simulation of the white anemones I have seen carpeting the pine forests of northern Europe. No taller than 12-14", they grew among tussocks of grass, on small mounds, and at the base of trees, their upward facing blooms in constant motion in the light afternoon breeze.

A few km further on was yet

another astonishing sight. At the edge of the road was a single orange-red tigridia in bloom. I have grown this species in my garden in Pendleton, but I had never seen one with a bloom as large and brilliant as this one. As I stepped out of the car to photograph it, I noticed a narrow cut in the hill side. Sensing that this was probably a small, seasonal stream now dry, I began examining it for begonias, and discovered several clusters of *B. pedata* in several stages of growth from 6" to about 12", but without any blooms. We continued to encounter several small clusters of *B. pedata* for the next 5 or 6 km, but only one group had flowered and was forming seeds. Although these grew on a ridge some 40' above the road, I scrambled up as best as I could to photograph them. Finding a stable spot I proceeded with my photography until Michael drew close enough to notice that I was standing on an anthill with ants crawling up my shoes and trousers. I watched fascinated as I could see that the neem spray with which I had covered myself was so utterly distasteful to them that instead of biting me they were in a hurry to get of my clothing. .

Some 15 km past a fork in the road heading towards Totontepec, we took a dirt road leading to St. Andres Yaa as it was along this stretch of the hills that *B. fimbriata* had been recorded in the Oaxaca herbarium. The first begonia I saw along this stretch was a cane begonia which appears to be a relative of *B. sartori*, and not too far from this were several clumps of a species which I later identified as *B. fimbriata*. However, the main colony of this species supposedly 6 km from the turnoff on to this dirt road had been reduced to rubble by a series of massive landslides. As we gingerly drove among the rubble I could see that in several sections there were narrow, inward curving cracks at the edge of the road indicating that with

the next rainfall these sections would also slide down hill.

With the sun low on the horizon and the road increasingly narrow and unsettled, we decided to turn back, and briefly explore the road to Santiago Zacatepec before heading back to Oaxaca City. Moist though these hills were from the intermittent showers which continued into October, we were unprepared for the dramatic transformation in the landscape as we turned eastward into the mountains leading to Santiago Zacatepec. Not only were the hills moist from the rains of summer, but a series of waterfalls and innumerable seepages created a rain forest habitat. Within minutes we had crossed over from the seasonally dry hills to a Shangri-la where begonias grew in profusion, and entire hills sides were covered with a geranium species whose foliage from a distance appeared vaguely reminiscent of some small lobed begonias. This was a habitat too rich to be savored in the fast approaching dusk, so we headed back with a view to returning there the following day.

So it was on Oct. 20th that we documented more of the cane begonia related to *B. sartori*, some 15 km of *B. fusca* edging the cliffs and along the road, a few isolated patches of *B. ludicra*, a species with glabrous, dark green leaves which might be *B. mariti*, and along every waterfall as well as on the rocks in the path of these waterfalls were large clusters of *B. fimbriata*. Rock outcrops and huge boulders in sections where there was less moisture and greater exposure to sunlight were covered in lichen, with a sprinkling of pink, red, and purple salvias, and lupins in several shades of blue. Although only *B. fusca* was in bloom, this was as enchanting a habitat as I have ever seen in Mexico. So it was with great reluctance that at the end of a day spent loitering amongst

waterfalls and cascades we headed for Oaxaca City, fully and sadly aware that it would be a while before I could ever return here again.

I had originally planned to explore a little of the Chimalipas region of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in eastern Oaxaca, however, my hours in the herbaria in Oaxaca City had opened up an area of exploration which I had never considered.

This was the eastern end of Pochutla district, an area of seasonally dry, low hills [approximately 500–800 m] which have traditionally been dotted with coffee plantations. With the current drop in the price of coffee, these are being abandoned and jaguars are making a comeback. To reach these we had to head further south and make our base in San Jose Pacifico, an hour south of Miahuatlan. Here a set of log cabins along a west facing hill side had provided a comfortable and picturesque setting for us to break our journey on a previous trip. On this trip we made it our base for about 4 days, even though it was at least 7 hours from the hills we intended to explore.

On Oct. 22nd we drove south to Pochutla, and then headed eastwards on the highway which runs parallel to the Pacific rim of Mexico. After about an hour and a half we turned north on a dirt road leading to Santa Maria Xanadi, about 22km away in the hilly terrain. From there we were to head further into the hills towards a coffee plantation, Monte Blanco. This was, according to the large road side sign, 7km. from Santa Maria Xanadi, but in fact proved to be nearly 10–11 km. with the last 3 km. of the dirt road zigzagging steeply up hill all the way.

Between 5 and 6 km. from Santa Maria Xanadi I saw tiny white flowers skimming the surface of several large boulders swagged with ferns and vines.

The small, asymmetrical leaves of this species are reminiscent of those of *B. pinetorum*, but differ from it in being glabrous and quite without any hair on the reverse of the foliage. It is a species which remains unidentified. After another couple of kilometers the road ended at the edge of a mountain stream strewn with boulders and without a bridge. Since I had been under the impression that Monte Blanco was 7 km. from Santa Maria Xanadi, and we had already come at least 6 km. from there, I decided that I would walk up the one km. which would bring me to the waterfall beside which was yet another unidentified begonia. So as Michael backed off from the edge of the stream to find a suitable place to leave the car, I jumped from boulder to boulder to cross the stream, and headed uphill. With dusk approaching I wanted to move as rapidly as possible to reach the waterfall, so I had already gone a little over a km up hill before Michael caught up to reveal the disheartening fact that according to the coffee planter in whose courtyard he had parked our car, Monte Blanco was 4 km from the stream. Since I had come so far, I continued upwards arguing that perhaps this information was inaccurate, and I could still reach the waterfall before it got dark.

We did not reach the waterfall that night, but in talking to the coffee planter Michael had also discovered that a team from one of the two herbaria in Oaxaca City had arrived there to continue to survey these hills, and had their base about a km. below Monte Blanco. So tired, disappointed and somewhat grimy from driving and walking on dirt roads, I reluctantly allowed **Silvia Salas** of CERBO to persuade us to spend the night at their camp.

The following morning we hurried up to the waterfall and photographed

the second unidentified begonia species. This species is probably the same as the species in the environs of Candelaria Loxiche, south of San Jose Pacifico, which is related to *B. stigmosa*. After this we were driven part way down this hill, and accompanied by a guide courtesy of Silvia Salas, we headed for the final spot of the 3rd as yet unidentified species mentioned in the records at the Herbaria in Oaxaca City. This entailed walking midway up a hill, then down to another mountain stream, this one known as Sandy River, crossing it below a series of cascades, and then up yet another hill. Panting and perspiring I persevered, now and then stopping to photograph the same small, white flowered begonia species I had seen the day before. After crossing the stream, the narrow path which frequently disappeared in thick undergrowth began to traverse increasingly shady areas of the jungle. With mosquitoes buzzing around and thorny shrubs impeding our progress, I decided to slump against a boulder to catch my breath.

As I moved aside some overhanging branches and vines to clear a patch of rock, I was startled into alertness by large maroon leaves with a fine reticulated pattern in bright apple green. We had finally arrived at the habitat of the third species, and this one is quite possibly the most unusual one I have seen in Mexico so far.

The boulders along a 30' stretch were sprinkled with this species, whose long, upright rhizomes grew hugging the vertical surface of the rocks. The large green and maroon patterned leaves were spread flat across the boulders all of which lay in deep shade. As I moved from clump to clump photographing this amazing species, I slowly began to realize that there was something vaguely familiar about this species. Since I had never documented this anywhere else, I began to think about

the various species from Mexico I had read about but never seen, and it was nearly an hour before I thought of **Rudi Ziesenhene**'s article on *B. daedelea*. This was a species found in Mexico in 1862 but never heard of since 1901, and known only from a brief description and one drawing. Since there are no herbarium specimens of this lost and legendary begonia, it will be impossible to demonstrate that this is indeed *B. daedelea*.

Finally satisfied by this journey into these seasonally dry hills [the river and the hills are totally dry from Nov./Dec. to June], we headed back to the coffee plantation where we had left our car, and drove back to Santa Maria Xanadi, in order to look for the 4th unidentified species which had been variously listed as being either 3 km. from Santa Maria Xanadi or 3 km. from yet another coffee plantation, El Tamarindo. Although no one in Santa Maria Xanadi appeared to know of this plantation, we finally located it 4 km from Santa Maria Xanadi, and to make sure that we had covered all the ground referred to in these divergent directions, we drove 7km from Santa Maria Xanadi, and I walked back most of this distance scouring the rocks and embankments for a colony of *B. heracleifolia* near which we would also find this 4th species. Although I found a large colony of *B. heracleifolia* 3km from El Tamarindo, there was no sign of any other begonia. After 3 hours of walking in sun and rain, I finally got back in the car and decided to head back to San Jose Pacifico, some 7 hours away.

Although I was tired and dejected, my eyes refused to give up the search, and on the outskirts of Santa Maria Xanadi, across a stream and up a bare slope was a large colony of begonias resembling the *daedelea* look-alike, but with bright apple green foliage. I shot out of the car and crossed the stream in

breathless excitement, trying to protect my cameras from the rain while continuing to take photographs as rapidly as I could. The emergent juvenile foliage of this species has the reticulated pattern of the *daedelea* look-alike, so this species may well be a variant form of the former.

After these astounding two days in a section of Oaxaca I had never dreamt of exploring, the rest of our trip all but diminishes in significance. Nevertheless, on our return to San Jose Pacifico I once again explored the cliffs above San Pedro El Alto, the home of *B. chivatoa*, and this time found a small colony of *B. pedata*, *B. gracilis* and *B. chivatoa* growing together. On our return to Veracruz we headed back to the environs of Rio Jamapa on October 26th, and on the steep and slippery slope of a creek already dry, located two patches of *B. hydrocotilyfolia* growing in as much shade as *B. peltata*. Although tired, we decided to end the day by looking for *B. falciloba*, another tuberous species, along the lower slopes of Barranca Manzanaxtla near Orizaba. Fortunately some of these were in bloom, and a few had begun to set seeds and form tiny bulbils along the leaf axils.

Although October is not the best time for collecting begonia seeds, it is by far the most colorful time in the Sierra Madre, and a time when tuberous begonias bloom and add to the vivid floral display which marks the end of the rainy season and the onset of the dry months in most parts of Mexico.

Acknowledgement

Once again I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the ABS Grants Committee, chapters of the Southwest Region, and the Melbourne and Victoria Begonia Societies of Australia for the generous funds which made this trip possible. Additional support was also

received from the following chapters and individuals: The Dallas Branch, **Janet Brown, Joan Coulot, Normand Dufresne,** and **Thelma O'Reilly.** To all of these and to **Bruce Pearson** and **Michael Marino** of Tropical World, who make

their facilities in Veracruz available to us, I extend my gratitude.

Begonias on the Rocks, please.....

by **Craig Morell, Horticulturist**
Pinecrest Gardens, Pinecrest, FL
305-669-6942; CMorell@Pinecrest-FL.gov

I have the challenge and opportunity to renovate and restore a botanical garden; years ago it was a jungle for tourists, and is now a public garden. Once Parrot Jungle, the recently opened Pinecrest Gardens is a hybrid public garden and park. Pinecrest Gardens has a unique history and location on some of the last riverine coral and limestone outcroppings in South Florida. Some 60 years ago this site was truly in the midst of an urban Cypress swamp, and was turned into a parrot-filled tourist attraction which attracted visitors worldwide. In its later years (c. 1960) Horticulturist **Nat Deleon** started to introduce numerous plant groups, most notably New World palms, thousands of bromeliads, and what was then a fairly new group of plants: begonias. His work spanned over 30 years, and a great many of his introductions were new in those days, now commonplace in horticulture today.

Not surprisingly, many of these *Begonia* species thrived in the high humidity and almost year-round heat. The Gardens has numerous pockets of acid soil/muck/humus built up from the Cypress and Oak grove which comprised the core of the Gardens, long before it was a tourist attraction cum Gardens. The most notable and visible aspect of a casual walk through are

the hundreds and hundreds of feet of limestone and coral rock strata which emerge from the water course which bisects the eastern part of the Gardens.

This watercourse is a holdover from centuries ago when it was a flowing stream with a characteristic serpentine course. This leaves us with constantly wet, shady humid limestone and coral rockwork on which we could mount all manner of river-edge plants such as begonias, smaller tree ferns, *selaginellas*, and a virtually endless array of water-loving marginal plants. There are begonias already growing as 'natives'.

There are dozens of *B. heracleifolia* growing as volunteer seedlings on the wettest parts of the river course, but we also have some of them growing in un-irrigated coral walls in nearly all-day sun. My early experiments with rhizomatous begonias in the rockwork have taken hold, and we now have *B. imperialis* and *B. 'Manaus'* growing, albeit slowly at first. I plan to plant as many species as I can in these wet rocky areas, since they don't go dry at any time of year. Even in our semi-monsoon summers, these areas don't flood, either. The possibilities are endless for planting cane, rhizome, trailing-scandents and even



You may be able to visit this garden during the Miami convention. Above you see a begonia in place and below an environment that will obviously be ideal for many begonias.



some of the epiphytic bulbous *Begonia* species in the drier areas. We have rock areas in every gradient of sun and shade, from a walk-through valley of cactus and aloes in a free-draining coral mountain, to the wettest Cypress slough area which is perpetually muddy. We're only limited to the number of available plants and the time to plant them.

We've started a propagation program, and with help from local growers and hobbyists we're making a nice stock collection of plants to use for planting and further propagation. I'm hoping that we can avail ourselves of the extraordinary local talent and genetic resources, and combine them with our public access garden to show off what can be done in this local climate. I also have the luxury of space to test new varieties or show off types that are too large for most home gardens. We

have virtually unlimited wind-free vertical room for many of the larger growing cane types, and the real gift of some pockets of acid loam in which to show off these forest jewels. Given that 'a river runs through it', we have as close to native conditions for many tropical *Begonias* species as you're likely to find in the continental U.S., and I look forward to making it a civilized rain-forest once again. Every begonia grower I've met has lent valuable advice (and many wonderful plants !) to our efforts, and I anticipate a solid partnership with the plant community at large plus a reborn garden with so much potential.

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

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Continued from page 46.

tubers of the fabulous tuberous hybrids that are grown in Scotland and these were subsequently auctioned off much to the delight of the conventioners. The prices were astounding and all proceeds were donated to the convention.

Hugh made 78 trips to the U.S. or as Hugh put it "the good old USA". Many of these trips were to ABS Convention. ABS members have also enjoyed Hugh & Betty's hospitality while visiting Scotland, myself included twice where I was fortunate enough to meet members of the Scottish Begonia Society and attend their annual show at the Ayr Flower Show. In Hugh's last note to me he stated "I think I should now apply for dual nationality".

Hugh was instrumental in introducing many species and non tuberous hybrids to the Scottish Begonia Society. Today's shows now include a large section specifically for these begonias. Hugh was also a member of the Friends of the Glasgow Botanic Gardens and was very involved with their begonia collection. Hugh had won numerous awards for his begonias on both the local and national level and he was a perfectionist as a grower and exhibitor.

Writing this memorial makes me sad at his passing but also very, very glad that I and my parents had the opportunity to know and love this wonderful man and his wife.

Hugh, you will be missed.

Membership Notes

Many, many thanks to all of you who have responded so well to the call of membership dues due on December 31, 2005. The checks have been pouring in and the mailing list is increasing! As of December 27th, we have 862 addresses in the USA and 80 addresses outside of the USA, totaling 942 addresses. In the near future I hope to break this down into Branch membership numbers, Internet and other membership numbers, Nursery/Botanical Garden numbers, etc. An actual ABS membership number will always be hard to pin point since the \$25/\$45 Membership Fee is open to "house-holds". ABS still has 236 addresses on our "past due" list, and that is not a good thing. We have formulated a "past due" letter with a form to be returned and a new post card for immediate "past due dues" notification that I will send until we are all on the same pay date. One hundred letters and forms were mailed to those with dues due dates from 200507 to 200510 and twenty-five post

cards have been mailed for 200511/12. The response has been very favorable and many have sent in the past dues, thank you sooooo much!

We have 32 new members since November 1st: FL-8, NY-3, PA-4, CA-4, IN-1, KY-2, WI-1, MD-1, IL-1, TX-1, KS-1, GA-3, Taiwan-1, and welcome the Bonneville Gardens in Maricao, Puerto Rico and the Pinecrest Gardens on Red Road, Pinecrest, FL.

Thank you all for being so patient with me.

Until next time,

**Donna Marsheck,
Membership Chair**

Check your dues!

Make sure you are paid up.

You can always check with Donna at:

**918-333-1587; dmarsheck@
yahoo**

Conservation Comments

Bill Claybaugh
Conservation Chairman, ABS

Astro Website Update

The Astro web site has undergone a major update. Approximately 80 new pictures of cultivars have been uploaded, bringing the total number of cultivated varieties pictured to approximately 485 (210 cane-like, 221 rhizomatous and rex, and 54 others). These photographs are arranged for easy viewing in two manners. The first is just an alphabetically listing, divided by the "horticultural classification system" as defined by M. L. and E. J. Thompson in their book, *Begonias the Complete Reference Guide*. This is a convenient way to view a picture of a plant if you know its identity. The second method is a "pictorial" search arrangement in which all of the plant pictures are arranged by Divisions and Classes as defined by the current ABS Show Schedule. Briefly summarized, the arrangement is as follows:

- Division A, Cane-like
- Division B, Shrub-like
- Division C, Thick-Stemmed
- Division D, Semperflorens
- Division E, Rhizomatous
- Division EE, Rhizomatous, Unusual growth/foilage: Rhizome Erect
- Division EEE, Rhizomatous, Distinct foliage, Unusual surface and/or coloring
- Division F, Rex Cultorum
- Division G, Tuberos/Semi-tuberos
- Division H, Trailing or Scandent

A typical Division is further divided into 5 to 24 different classes, again following the ABS Show Schedule. Total number of Divisions is 10 and the total

number of Classes is 86.

One deviation from the Show Schedule occurs in Division A, where the usual five classes are slightly modified because of the large number of entries. (210 varieties) This revised Division is as follows:

Division A

Class 1. Superba-type

Class 2. Canes with generally red or silver leaves

Class 350. Green leaved plants with definite spots or splotches

Class 450. Green leaved plants with out definite spots or splotches

Class 5. Tall canes, over 4 feet at maturity, not superba-type.

Again, because of the large number of plants involved, the two new classes 350 and 450 are farther subdivided into subclasses of plants with (a) white flowers, (b) light pink flowers, (c) pink flowers, (d) red or orange flowers, (e) unknown flower color.

For the most part, these horticultural divisions, and classes are familiar to most members so the overall arrangement is relatively easy to use. In general, an unknown cultivar can be located and identified in a matter of minutes.

The pictures used in the website were taken at ABS and South West Regional Conventions, commercial nurseries, and at private collections. A few pictures were donated by other members and are recognized as such. To view this collection of pictures just log on to <http://ab-sastro.tripod.com>.

New Cultivars

Official International

Registrations 992 and 993

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*, drawings 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 'Shaun's Dream'

No. 992 *Begonia* (B. Rex cultivar [unnamed] x Rex cultivar [unnamed]) 'Shaun's Dream'

The Rex cultivar, photo on page 62, is large and erect with dark green leaves. The leaves have white irregular markings over the entire leaf with a dark burgundy edge and veins. They are peltate, spiraled, and acuminate. They are 6 to 12 inches with a width of 4 to 5" Margins are crenulate. Leaf surface is rugose and sparsely hairy. Leaves have 5 main veins. Petioles are 8 1/2" long, red, and downy. Red stipules are 1 inch long and 1/4 inches wide.

Flowers have pink tepals over red ovaries. Tepals are roundly obtuse. Both male and female flowers are 1 1/4". Male flowers have 4 tepals, females 5. Flower clusters have 3 male and 2 female flowers. There are many flower clusters. Blooms are extremely large and vary in color in different lights.

This cultivar is similar to some of the older Rexes, but this one is a very strong grower with multiple leaf stems. It thrives on high humidity and likes a potting medium to be on the dry side between waterings,

This plant was developed in 2001 by **Charles Henthorne**, 2200 Glen Forest Lane, Plano, Texas 75023. The plant first bloomed and was first distributed in 2005. It was shown that year at the 2005 ABS Convention when many cuttings were distributed. It has been tested and recommended for registration by Gene Salisbury. It is available from Charles Henthorne at the above address.

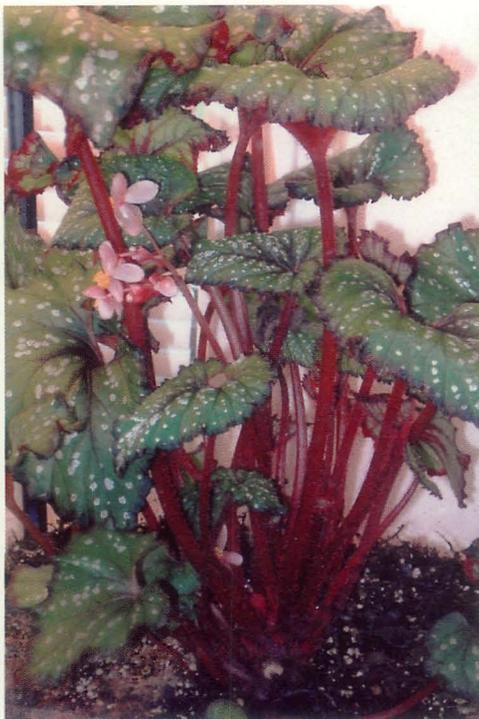
It was registered on November 8, 2005.

Begonia 'Shaun's Fantasy'

No. 993 *Begonia* (B. Rex cultivar [unnamed] x Rex cultivar [unnamed]) 'Shaun's Fantasy'

This Rex cultivar is erect, silver blue flushed with burgundy edges. Leaves are 4 to 6" wide and 8 to 10" in length. The margin is crenulate with a rugose surface. Leaves have 6 main veins. Petioles are 8 to 12" long, burgundy red in color with downyhairs. Stipules are 1" long, 1/4" wide and red in color.

Tepals are roundly obtuse. Males have 4 tepals, females 5. Flower clusters have 3 males and 2 female flowers. The extremely large blooms come in late fall



Here is *B. 'Shaun's Dream'* in full plant above left, flower above right, and leaves below. Photos by Charles Henthorne.





B. 'Shaun's Fantasy' leaves, flowers, and below the full plant. Photos by Charles Henthorne.



to extremely large blooms come in late fall to early summer.

This plant is a very heavy bloomer with very large flowers. Leaves are an unusual shade of silver with a blue tint. It is very easy to grow. It is sturdy plant that propagates easily.

This plant was developed in 2001 by Charles Henthorne, address above, and first bloomed in 2004. It was first distributed in 2004.

This plant has been grown and tested by **Clay McGee**, 2311 Westbrook Dr., Carrollton, TX 75007; by **Don Miller**, Northhaven Gardens, Dallas, TX; and by **Gene Salisbury**, P.O. Box 452, Tonkawa, TX 74653. This plant is available from Charles Henthorne at the address above.

It was registered On November 8, 2005.

B. 'Shaun's Dream'

By Charles Henthorne

For a hybrid rex begonia that has large showy leaves, and is reminiscent of the old rexes, I strongly urge growers to consider giving my new Rex, which I have named B. 'Shaun's Dream', a try. Even for those who love the new Rex hybrids that have lots of subdued or bright colors, or a combination of both in their leaves, this is also a rex that will not disappoint them. Each spiral leaf is a showpiece in itself.

This is a Rex that has been tested by many people throughout the United States, including Gene Salisbury, Don Miller, **Tom Keepin**, and **Cheryl Linert**. I have also sent starts of this plant to Ohio, Florida, and California. In asking Gene Salisbury for his opinion of this new rex, he stated that it is a very full plant, with many large leaves, is a good strong grower, and is much like the old wonderful rexes in its appearance. His trial plant has also been in full bloom for some months.

Along with the very large leaves, one can also enjoy the very large pink blooms when it is in its blooming cycle. I was pleasantly surprised when this plant bloomed, to see that the plant had both individual male and female blooms that were large and beautiful to look at. The blooming period has lasted from May

to November, and my plant has just recently stopped blooming. Along with the magnificent blooms, its leaves develop a spiral upon maturity, which is a pleasant surprise, as immature leaves have no indication of a spiral at all. The leaves are also decorated with white spots, which have a hair protruding from each of the spots. The entire leaf is outlined with a burgundy border. Along with all of this, the stems are covered with short bristle like red hairs, making this a great plant to add to a collection.

When I started the 'Shaun' series with the introduction of B. 'Shaun Henthorne', hybridized by **Michael Kartuz** and registered in 2003, I had no idea that it would be followed by two more Rexes. The next one in the series is B. 'Shaun's Fantasy', and now B. 'Shaun's Dream'. This will be the last of the new begonias with Shaun included in the name. By the time this article is published the registrations should be completed for these last two in the series. Please look at the registration information in the *Begonian* for the plant description, which will tell the size of the leaves and all other vital information concerning the plant.

I have found that growing this

plant in a terrarium, and under artificial lights for approx. 6 hours a day, that the plant has a tendency to grow more upright than a normal Rex typically would grow, outside of a terrarium. Gene Salisbury has grown his *B. 'Shaun's Dream'* in his greenhouse, and his plant has more of the growth pattern of a typical "Rex" begonia. His has a more rhizomatous growth than an upright rhizomatous. The plant seems to like growing in 70-90% humidity. One thing is certainly clear. That is that this plant is a large plant that requires its own space to spread out and do its thing.

With our Texas weather finally cooling down into a fall mode, we have been busy moving our outdoor begonias into a sheltered area for the winter. We have numerous plants that have seeds developing and we are excited about harvesting and propagating them. We anticipate many new and exciting plants as the end result of our efforts. With most of the seeds being harvested from canes, I am looking

forward to trying my hand at growing new little canes from seed. I know that, with our climate here in Texas, the canes will be much more practical, and we will have much more success with them out of the terrariums.

In ending I would like to encourage others to give our editor articles for possible inclusion in the *Begonian*. An article on likes or dislikes, new hybrids, trips, new local discoveries, and new ways of growing or propagation, diseases or pests, are just a few ideas that one could use. The list goes on and on, and is endless. With all members contributing articles, Freda should have boxes of articles that she could go to in times of need. Everyone please consider writing something. I'm sure she wouldn't object to having her mailbox and email loaded with articles each month during this next year.

Welcome to a New Branch

Mary Bucholtz, Branch Relations Director, presented the request for branch status to the September 17, 2005 Board Meeting and the request was approved and the Charter presented.

Let's welcome the Riverside Branch of California to our midst.

Remember it only takes 7 members in a location to create an ABS Branch. If you are interested, contact Mary:

Mary Bucholtz
1560 Lancaster Terrace, Unit 1008
Jacksonville, FL 32204
904-353-9111

Convention Photos

Please! Those who attend the convention, **remember your editor**. Unfortunately because of moving and new residence woes, the editor is going to be unable to attend this year's convention. Therefore, from those who do attend, we **beg photos, stories about your adventures, your impressions, summaries of seminars, etc.** to make the convention issue (July/August) a great one.

It promises to be an outstanding adventure for all who do attend and, no doubt, the plant sale will be the best of all. Let us all know about new plants that you spot there.

Finally, no location has been found to host the 2007 convention. Don't let us be without one; please volunteer! FH

Begonias in Hanging Containers

by Enid Henderson

This article is from The Queensland Begonia Society, Inc. Journal, Vol. No. 69, Summer 2005, Australia with our thanks to them and Enid Henderson.

The set subject for today is begonias in hanging containers and as you can see, begonias are well suited to being grown this way. Choose plants that have a naturally spreading or trailing habit of growth.

You will notice that we use the word container and therefore are not limited to basket shaped containers. Most of our members use plastic containers as wire baskets with liners tend to dry out too quickly. I have not found the self watering pots to be very suitable as roots can rot with too much water. Also, I always remove the detachable saucers that usually come with the plastic baskets. This makes for better drainage which is an important factor in growing good begonias.

When growing begonias this way, if they are hanging quite high up, you may think you will not be able to enjoy the beauty of the foliage. However, quite often there is an additional bonus of beauty with many plants, especially rhizomatous, when viewed from below. Looking up through the foliage, a maroon underside or the interesting design created by the veins makes an attractive sight.

One important tip with growing begonias in hanging containers is not to overpot. Putting a small plant with a small root ball into a large container will often lead to its demise. Move plants up gradually from one size pot to the next.

Growing Medium

Soil should be a light porous mix but one

which will not dry out too quickly. A heavy mix with a large plant can put too much strain on weak hangers or on the hanging structure and also on the grower who does the lifting - and that's usually me at our place (as Pete has a bad back).

Watering

This weight factor is an even more important factor with the current watering restrictions. I grow a lot of plants in baskets and now, in order to give them a good watering, I have to lift them down and set them in a container of water, at least once a week. In winter, once a week may be sufficient, but in summer, more frequent watering will be required, possibly daily when conditions are severe.

Fertilising

Controlled release fertilisers are suitable for use when first establishing the plant in the container. A follow-up program with a liquid soluble fertiliser will be beneficial prior to flowering time and when plants are producing new growth.

Most of the horticultural classifications are represented here today with the exception of Rex Cultorum and Tuberhybrida. Rex Cultorum begonias are not suitable for hanging containers as it is difficult to provide the humidity they require. And unfortunately the spectacular pendulous tuberhybrida are not ideally suitable to growing in Brisbane.

Plants on the Bench

Semperflorens: *B. schmidtiana*, *B. 'Charming'*, *B. 'Charm'*

Shrub-like: *B.* 'Trilby Gem', *B.* 'Coral West', *B.* 'Pink Dragon Wings', *B.* 'Christmas Candy', *B. edmundoi*, *B. listada* (distinctive foliage).

Cane-like: *B.* 'Margo'

Rhizomatous: *B.* 'Nite Satin', *B.* 'Autumn Leaves', *B.* 'Bright Eyes', *B. dayii*, *B.* unnamed (John Miller hybrid)

Trailing-Scandent: *B. radicans*, *B.* unknown, *B.* 'Yorke's Nocturn'

Tuberous/Semi-Tuberous: *B. dregei*

Begonias in hanging containers will do best in a shaded/semi-shaded protected area and benefit from good air circulation.

[The reader's list will probably vary from that in Australia. If so, why not send the editor your list of favorites for hanging containers. A published set of lists from around the country should make interesting reading for all of us! FH]

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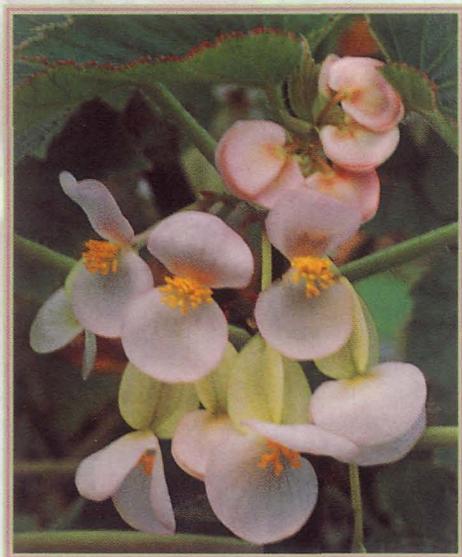


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BEGONIAS



Cultivation, Identification,
and Natural History

MARK C. TEBBITT

Review:

Begonias The Cultivation, Identification, and Natural History by Mark Tebbitt, Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Lucky indeed are we begonia addicts. Added to *Mike Smith's Begonias* with its exquisite photos of tuberous and other begonias grown in New Zealand and **Ruth Kiew's** remarkable book on the begonias of Malaysia, we now have another new book: *Begonias The cultivation, Identification and Natural History* by Mark Tebbitt of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Mark is both scholar and grower so he brings us both scientific insight and horticultural practicality in his book's pages.

Following chapters on the history and cultivation of begonias, I found the third chapter which discusses aspects of the genus *Begonia* particularly interesting. Diversity, ever the fascinating aspect of this genus, is revealed in all its aspects from leaf to ovary and stamen to seed. Illustrations of these, I believe by **Paul Harwood**, are helpful. Equally of interest and new to me was Mark's revelation that based on DNA sequence evidence, the *Begoniaceae* is closely related to the *Cucurbitales*, best known to most of us for cucumbers! How apt then is the common name, the cucumber begonia, for *Begonia convolvulacea*? We also learn about and see *Datisca canninbina* which is one of two species of the genus *Datisca* which is the closest relative of the *Begonia*. There are photos and sketches that illustrate the kinship.

The greater part of the book is dedicated to keys to and detailed descriptions of the *Begonia* sections and species. These should be helpful to all of us in the perennial problem of identification of our plants. Each of the species descriptions first gives

botanical descriptions.

This is followed by historical and cultural notes. Mark's horticultural experience shows in the practical growing information which is included for most species listed.

Appendices give sources, recommended begonias for beginners and for terrariums, measurement tables, and a glossary of terms.

There is also an appendix on "New combinants and synonyms" which alerts us to recent changes in species names. The most interesting to me was to find that *Begonia macduffiana* is now given as a synonym of *B. corallina*. I have long suspected that genetic analysis would show that a number of the species cane-like would actually just be variants.

The photos in the book are outstanding. Some are of the locales from which Mark has collected. There are photographs and descriptions of some species I have never seen before including *B. goudotii* from Madagascar; *Begonia dewildei* from Gabon; *B. polilloensis* from the Philippines; *Begonia silletensis* subsp *mengyanensis* from China; and others.

In short, this is a book that must be added to every serious begonia grower's library. It is widely available from online sources or may be ordered from bookstores. It is published by Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2005 in association with The Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Thanks, Mark, for a great addition to our begonia literature.

~FH

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by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

In the "Year of the Hurricane, Part II", we have watched mother nature wreck havoc on all parts of the United States, but none worse than the northern Gulf Coast. Rippling effects were felt elsewhere. Here in Florida, Fred's partner in crime, Wilma, ripped South Florida with surprising fury. Luckily, my yard escaped all of this - I had enough with Jeanne and Frances in 2004, thank you!

If you were lucky enough to escape, too, then hopefully your yard and your begonia collection look great. One thing I have learned through all this, is that no matter how hard you prepare, there is no preparation good enough. I have learned to allow mother nature to take her hit, and that with time all does recover. My own collection returned, albeit differently, from the winds of 2004. My conditions - treeless yard (all trees blown down by the twins in 2004) with shade cloth over structures called shadehouses - are vulnerable to winter's freezes, springs' winds and hurricane season. I will just try my best and expect the worst. That way, whatever survives will be a pleasant surprise.

It has been a while since I have last written, obviously busily putting my life back together. However, I always reply to questions sent in a timely manner. Some of the more interesting questions include:

Q: My begonias bloomed late this summer, into fall. Now, what do I do to bring them into bloom next year? (Delaware)

A: Since this was about tuberous begonias (I later found out), general care is as follows: Keep them stored dry and cool,

but not freezing, for the winter. You may, or may not, take them out of their pots. Once spring arrives, repot in fresh soil and add bone meal and blood meal to the light, porous soil mix. Place in a brightly lit spot and watch the bulbs return to life. Once actively growing, feed biweekly with a good, balanced plant food. The bone meal will help the blossoms as the season continues. In climates that tend to be cooler or cloudier, spray monthly with a fungicide.

Q: I have been growing an angel wing in my office, and it is getting tall and lanky, and has never bloomed. Is there anything I can do to make it grow bushier, and perhaps bloom? (California.)

A: Move it into brighter light immediately. Then, cut it back to 1/3 of its size. Once the soil dries out, feed with a good balanced fertilizer and watch the new growth be sturdier, thicker and darker. If the light is bright enough, and the variety is known to bloom well, your begonia should thrive. Office light is just not sufficient for angel wings. They require some sunlight during the day.

If you have a question, or comment, email me at gsytch@cs.com or call 727-841-9618, or write via snail mail: Greg Sytch, 6329 Alaska Ave, New Port Richey FL 34653. Let us all pray for a mild winter and an early spring!

**Beginners, want growing advice?
Greg has it for you!
Have a problem?
Greg knows the solution!
Write him!**

Now is the Time: Prune or be Lost!

As spring approaches, we have a chance for a new beginning on our begonias.. Now is the time to prune, prune, prune and to repot and to feed. Here are some reasons and tips excerpted from a **Brad Thompson's** article "Pruning" included with the January issue of the Westchester (CA) Branch Newsletter.

First some reasons to prune:

...

2. To make your begonias more compact and full. Pruning forces your plants to send up basal growth and to branch. Without this pruning, many begonias can grow rangy and tall with little side growth. Pruning is a way to training begonias to grow in a more orderly and pleasing shape.

3. To train your plants to grow a specific way. To grow begonias as bonsai, standards, trellis, or other unusual ways require attention to pruning to achieve those desired results.

4. To force your begonia to grow to a certain shape. In order to grow begonias in baskets or as tall specimen plants requires proper pruning to train them. Most begonias grown in hanging baskets don't normally grow in a perfect basket shape. Most have a tendency to grow upright and must be pruned to keep them in a basket shape. ...

5. To keep your plants to a manageable size. If left to their own devices most begonias will grow large and rangy and may outgrow their available space. By pruning you can

keep your begonias smaller and have room for more plants.

6. To increase the amount of bloom. When you prune your plants properly you force more branches. The more branches you have the more possible blooms you have. If your begonia only has a few branches you can't expect it to produce lots of flowers since it will have limited tips from which to bloom.

Pruning Basics

1. Only prune healthy plants.

2. Prune any time after the middle of February. Although plants can be pruned any time of the year, this is the best time to do it. I usually have finished or topped pruning by the end of April...

4. Prune out old and unsightly growth. Stems that have several pruning scars from previous years should be pruned out completely. In basket plants, remove new upright shoots as they come up, pruning to the lowest outward facing buds....

5. When pruning shrubs and especially hairy leaved begonias, wait for new shoots...prune out old shoots, leaving only new shoots coming up. Most shrubs have a tendency to die back to the soil line when cut, so you might as well cut them out to begin with.

6. Don't prune and repot at the same time. This is too much of a shock for the plant.



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CLAYTON M. KELLY SEED FUND LISTING

The Margaret Lee Branch, San Diego County, CA

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

The seed fund is a project of the Margaret Lee Branch. The tasks of processing orders are distributed among several members of the branch. Ed Bates receives the orders and sends the orders by e-mail to Mike Ludwig to be filled from the current seed bank. At the next meeting the filled orders are returned to Ed Bates to be mailed.

At our monthly meetings members help to clean and package seeds for the seed bank. All seeds are tested for germination by various members before they are added to the list and made available in the *Begonian*.

Mike Ludwig maintains the seed bank and reports the status at each meeting. Ed Bates prepares the Seed Fund message for each issue of the *Begonian*. Each year, in the Jan/Feb issue, a complete inventory of available seeds is prepared and printed in the *Begonian*. In each issue new additions to the inventory are listed along with deletions of "sold out" items. There is insufficient room for descriptions of the entire list in a single magazine. All new additions to the seed fund and selections from the inventory list are described in each issue of the magazine.

Send orders, comments, suggestions, or complaints to:

Edgar A. Bates

13232 Ocean Vista Road
San Diego, CA 92130

[Ed Bates is changing Email addresses and the new address will be available in the next issue.]

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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Canada only: 1-12 packets, \$1.10; 13-24, \$1.46; 25-36, \$1.82; 37-48 (2 cans) \$2.35; 49-60, \$2.71.

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

All other international mail: 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68.

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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. Hybrid names are made consistent with the "ABS Check List of

Begonia Hybrids" edited by Howard Berg dated 9/13/2005.

Addition: Unidentified from Roberto Brin of Panama



Begonia
'Mosaicos'
in a photo by
Roberto
Brin

Begonia Descriptions for Seed Fund

New this issue: Seeds of the begonia pictured above were contributed by Roberto Brin of Panama. He writes that this unidentified begonia has grown in his patio for more than 40 years and spreads all over the place. The name assigned is Brin's. **Important!** These seeds have not been tested for germination. No description has been provided other than the picture.

B. albo-picta W. Bull (sect. *Gaerdtia*) [Brazil]. Shrubby, branched stems. Two inch elliptic-lanceolate leaves glossy green with silvery white spots, short petioled. Small greenish-white flowers in summer.

Limited quantity.

B. boliviensis A. DeCandolle (Sect. *Barya*) [Bolivia, Argentina], Tuberous; stem to

3'; petiole short, hairless; blade green lanceolate; flowers pendulous with narrow pointed orange to red tepals; in summer.

Limited quantity.

B. carolineifolia Regel (Sect. *Gireoudia*) [Mexico, Guatamala] Large erect rhizome; large palmately parted leaves on long petioles; flowers large, pink, with dark pink spots; late winter to early spring.

B. crassicaulis Lindley (Sect. *Gireoudia*) [Guatamala] Erect rhizome; glossy, dark green, palmately lobed handsome leaves drop in late winter; blooms on bare rhizome then leaf out after the blooms have faded.

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

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

B. cucullata Willdenow [Brazil], (Sect. *Begonia*) [Brazil] Shrub like, Stems to 3' little branched; leaves to 4", inrolled at base, glossy green; flowers in summer, white to pink.

B. dipetala Graham (Sect. *Haagea*) [India] 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 in summer; sandy loam; temp. 68°F—86°F. **Limited quantity.**

B. echinosepala Regel (Sect. *Pritzelia*) [Brazil] Two foot tall shrub with small, elongated, narrow, serrated ribbon like leaves, gracefully arching stems; fragrant white flowers with white hairs on tepal reverse. The name means prickly sepaled, sometimes called "peach tree begonia"

B. fischeri Schrank (Syn. U129) (Sect. *Begonia*) [Central & S. America] A highly variable shrub with many varieties. Var. *fischeri* has erect red stems to 2'; medium, puberulent green leaves, red flushed on

back; palmately veined; pink blossoms and winged carpels throughout the year. Very prolific.

B. glabra Aublet (Sect. *Wageneria*) [West Indies, Mexico to Ecuador]; scandent species forming roots at nodes; heart shaped, medium green, waxy leaves, light green stems and petioles; pale green flowers.

B. gracilis var. *martiana* A. deCandolle (sect. *Quadriperigonia*) [Mexico], Also known as "the hollyhock begonia." The upright, unbranched glabrous stem to 2 feet arises from a tuber; orbicular to lanceolate, crenately toothed fleshy pale green leaves; blooms with very short peduncles grow up the stem among the leaves like hollyhocks; at the axils of older leaves bulbils form which fall off and start new plants. The plants go dormant in cool weather and the tubers will not survive cold weather. The plant tolerates bright light and demands high humidity. From high altitude.

B. grandis Dryander (Sect. *Diploclinium II*) [China] Erect stems to 1 foot; medium green leaves with purple veins narrowing towards pointed tips; bright pink flowers in summer; bulbils that form in the leaf axils drop to the ground to grow new plants in the spring. This species is quite hardy. Cultivated variety 'Alba' has white flowers.

Seed Wanted!!

Send your seed to the Seed Fund.

Isolate your species, self-pollinate them, save the seed.

Hybrid seed also wanted.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

American Begonia Society San Francisco, CA, September 17, 2005

President **Howard Berg** conducted the meeting. **Wanda Macnair** read the Aims and Purposes of the Society.

A motion to omit reading the minutes of the May 21, 2005, meeting in Dallas, TX, and accept them as published passed.

Treasurer **Carol Notaras** presented the financial statements for the last quarter and the fiscal year. For the last quarter May 1 to July 31, 2005, the general fund had a beginning balance of \$3857.10 and an ending balance of \$5121.22. Income and disbursement for this period was \$16,586.30 and \$15,322.18, respectively. The combined *Begonian* mailing, seed fund and general fund balances were \$5595.27 beginning and \$5578.08 ending. The savings account totals were \$67,036.42 beginning and \$61,930.25 ending. The savings dropped due to a large transfer from the money market account to the general fund. The combined checking and savings accounts totals were \$72,631.69 beginning and \$67,508.33 ending. For the fiscal year August 1, 2004, to July 31, 2005, the general fund had a beginning balance of \$9726.49 and ending balance of \$5121.22. Income was \$64,769.99 and disbursement was \$69,375.26. The combined *Begonian* mailing, seed fund and general fund balances were \$9979.58 beginning and \$5578.08 ending. Savings accounts totals were \$54,772.34 beginning and \$61,930.25 ending. Combined checking and savings accounts totals were \$64,751.92 beginning and \$67,508.33 ending. The statements were accepted.

Membership Secretary **Arlene**

Ingles presented the membership report for the period March to August, 2005. The total membership as of August 31 was 1053. This consisted of 82 free, 61 life, 830 paid domestic and 80 paid foreign memberships.

President **Berg** announced that this was **Arlene's** last report as Membership Secretary and that **Donna Marsheck** is assuming the Membership Secretary duties. He thanked **Arlene** for her years of service as well as those of her late husband, **John Ingles, Jr.**

Audit Committee Chair **Paul Tsamtis** reported that the books of the American Begonia Society appear to be in order as of August 31, 2005.

Business Manager **Gene Salisbury** read three motions that were acted upon separately. The first motion addressed meeting procedure. He stated that after several years of attending ABS Board Meetings, he believes that it is the consensus of many members that the meetings are too long and too confusing. In an attempt to alleviate this he recommended the following change in the form of a motion. A time limit of three minutes of floor time is proposed per person, with additional time granted at the discretion of the parliamentarian. This motion passed.

The second motion related to house-keeping. **Gene** recommended that a back-up recorder with a microphone be purchased to record floor discussions. It will be amplified so that all can hear and at the same time recorded. The tape will be given to the Secretary for verification, eventually being sent to the Historian for archiving. The tape will be available should any misunderstanding arise about the proceedings. This motion passed.

The third motion addressed meeting agendas. It is proposed that a member submit a request to be heard at least 45 days prior to the next board meeting. The

subject will be given and the executive board will review and advise and place on the agenda as decided. The agenda will be ready 3 weeks before the meeting. Exceptions will be granted at the discretion of the executive board. This motion was tabled to the Miami meeting.

In addition to the above motions, the Business Manager resumed discussion of the proposal to change the dues due date from a staggered system to a single due date for all members. This discussion resulted in a motion to set the dues due date for all members at December 31 starting in 2005 with a prorated dues schedule for 2006. This motion was seconded and passed 15-3. The prorated schedule is attached.

A motion to give new members joining throughout the year a complete set of Begonians for the year also passed.

Ballot Counting Chair **Ingeborg Foo** reported that very few (only 45) ballots were received for the election, probably because there was only one candidate for each office. The number would likely increase if there were more candidates.

Bookstore Chair **Cheryl Lenert** reported that some of the out of date publications are being removed from the bookstore list and she will send an update of availability to the Begonian Editor.

Branch Relations Director **Mary Bucholtz** reported that ABS has 35 branches and one regional branch. This includes the loss of the Wheatheart Branch in Oklahoma and the Fort Lauderdale Branch in Florida and the gain of a new branch in Riverside, California. Efforts to form a new branch in Austin, Texas, were unsuccessful. There is a possibility for a new branch in Spokane, Washington. During the year we heard that the Greater Chicago Branch is meeting monthly. In California, a branch name change was granted resulting in the Leslie Hatfield Monterey Bay

Branch. Also during the year the Branch Relations Newsletter and the Program List with yearly updates were discontinued. A motion to grant a branch charter to the Riverside Branch in Riverside, California, was passed and the charter was presented to the new branch. A directory of branches was distributed.

Nomenclature Director **Gene Salisbury** reported information received from **Thelma O'Reilly**. She stated that unidentified Begonia numbers have been assigned through *B. U494*. *Maureen O'Reilly* collected seed of *B. U492* in Peru and shared it with the Seed Fund and members of the Margaret Lee Branch. She is preparing a report on this and identifying species for the *Begonian*. An update on unidentified species is ready for the *Begonian*. **Mark Tebbitt** has examined and identified 22 Begonias. Thelma continues to supply species seed to the Seed Fund and pursue species identification.

Charles Jaros presented **Tim Anderson's** plans for the 2006 Convention in Miami and invited everyone to attend. Convention T-shirts with Begonias were available for \$25 each.

Slide Librarian **Charles Jaros** reported a slow year with few requests for programs. Two new slide programs are available, one by Charles and one by **Millie Thompson**. Millie also prepared CD's of these two programs and Charles gave her due credit and thanks. Please contact Charles at the address in the *Begonian* for details.

Member at Large Newsletter Editor and Internet Editor **Sandy Boyd** reported that the newsletter will soon be on the website and the printed version will be discontinued.

Historian **Jeanne Jones** once again requested Branches to send her copies of newsletters on a regular basis.

Judging Chair **Maxine Zinnman**

reported sending cultural certificates to 2 branches and that there will be a judging school at the Miami Convention.

Seed Fund Chair **Ed Bates** reported that all problems with the Seed Fund appear to have been solved.

Holiday Greetings Chair **Wanda Macnair** reported a total of \$2602 collected thus far. Donations after the meeting brought the total up to \$2653.

Branch reports were presented for

Buxton, Barkley, Joan Coulat Sacramento, Astro, Margaret Lee, San Francisco and Palos Verdes Branches.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Macnair,

Secretary

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Publication!*

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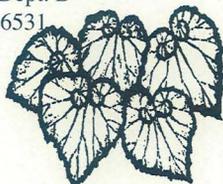
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COMING EVENTS

March 2-6, 2006 ABS Convention in Miami, Florida at the Sheraton Miami Mart.

April 29, 2006, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Annual Plant Societies Sale at Waltham Field Station, 240 Beaver St., Waltham MA. All mannaer of plants are available - indoor plants, terrarum plants, perennial plants, succulents, others. For information contact Wanda Macnair at 617-876-1356 or wmacnair@msn.com

September 16-17, 2006, Buxton Annual Show combined with the local Gesneriad Chapter, Tower Hill Botanic Gardens. For more information contact Wanda Macnair at 617-876-1356 or wmacnair@msn.com

SWR Get-Together: Information coming.

March 22-26, 2008., Association of Australian Begonia Societies Convention in Brisbane, Australia. Begin your plans! More information to come.

**Due date for the May/June 2006 issue is
March 1, 2006**

The Begonian

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