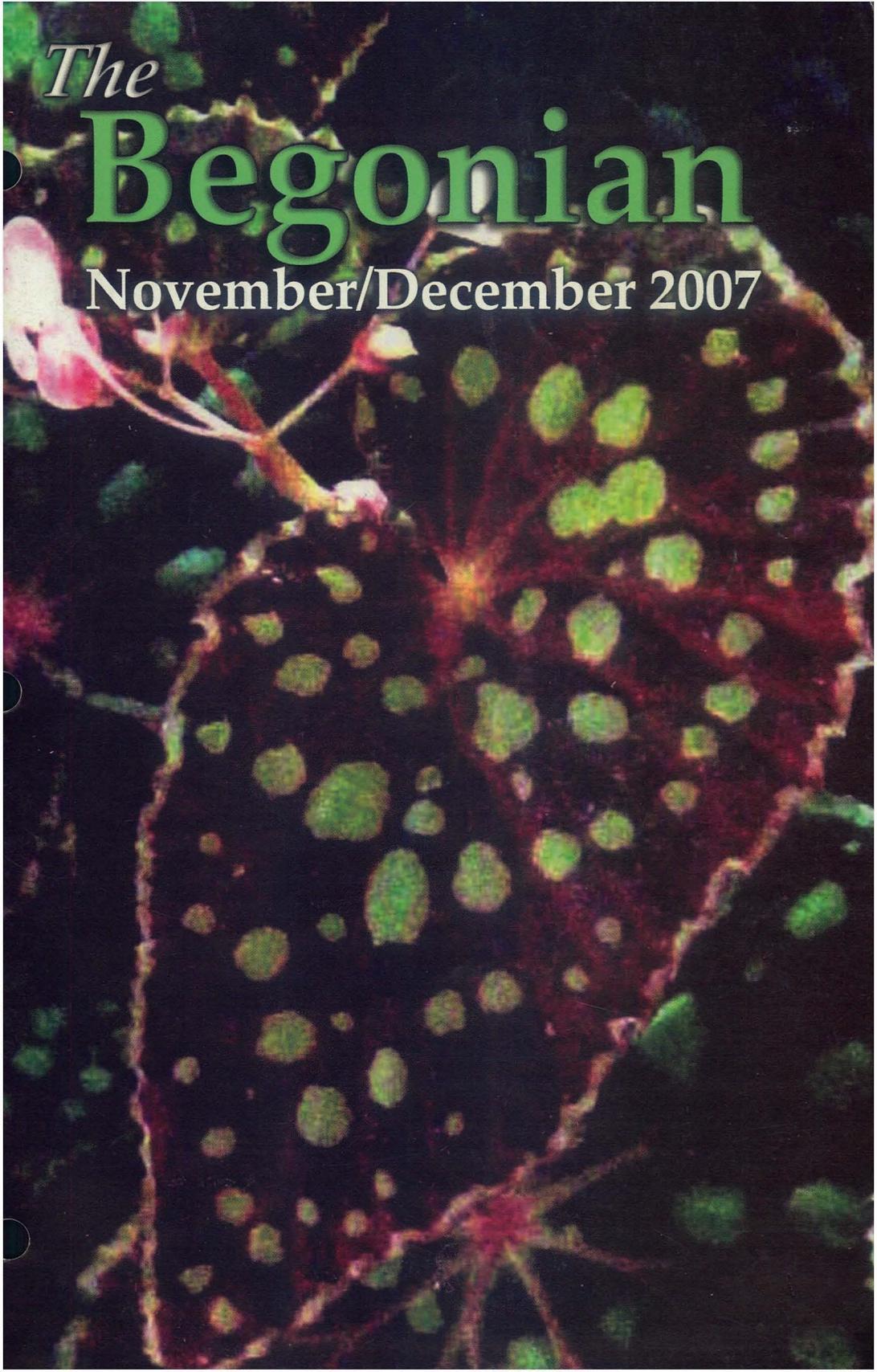


*The*

# Begonian

November/December 2007



# *The* **Begonian**

ISSN 0096-8684

Publication of the American Begonia Society

## **American Begonia Society**

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

### Aims and Purposes

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

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

To standardize the nomenclature of begonias.

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

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

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

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**Cover**

**Front:** Read about **Charles Henthorne's** striking brown leaved *B. chlorosticta* on page 235.

**Back:** **Rekha Morris'** photo of the lovely *B. palmata* is from the land of bat flowers.

# In This Issue

May you all celebrate the holidays in peace and happiness as you read about the experiences of our wonderful plant explorers whether abroad or in their own back yards! This issue is another brought to you in large measure this year by our holiday greetings donors listed on page 205. This issue is their way of sending their greetings for the season; join me in a big thanks to each branch and member.

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*Next Issue is the  
 2007 Convention Issue.  
 Please,  
 send your convention  
 stories and photos  
 before November 1!  
 Write a letter to the editor  
 to tell  
 Palos Verdes  
 what you enjoyed!*

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**Remember  
 All 2008 Dues  
 Should be In By  
 December 31, 2007**

## President's Message

The convention in Los Angeles is over and from everyone that I talked to said they had a wonderful time. Since I was in charge of the plant sale and so didn't go on any of the tours, I saw only a couple of the seminars so I can't give you an update on those, but I am sure we will be getting articles on those in the Jan./Feb. *Begonian*.

I do know that the plant sale went very well on Friday night because I looked over at the members grabbing plants and I couldn't see the carpet.

Plans for the convention in Houston are under way. I hope you can attend because I know I always have a good time in Houston. **Cheryl Lenert** will be putting updates in the *Begonian* so be sure and watch for those. The dates are May 14th to 18th, 2008.

**We are looking for a site for the 2009 convention so if any clubs are interested please let me know.**

All in the society would like to thank **Jan Brown** for her two years of service as ABS President. She is a busy lady and very active in the Westchester Branch doing their yearly show, the monthly newsletter, and she was also very instrumental with helping **Julie Vanderwilt** and **Jesse James** in setting up the Begonia web site. I am please to report that the newly redesigned web site is up and running. Please go to the site [www.begonias.org](http://www.begonias.org) and see what you think.

I am honored to be your new president for the next two years and I hope I can run the society as smoothly as Jan did.

I am eager to receive all of your clubs newsletters. You may send them to me at 9682 Featherhill Dr., Villa Park, CA 92861 or e-mail them to me at [m.sakamoto@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.sakamoto@sbcglobal.net)

Don't hesitate to contact me with

your comments and concerns for that is what I am here for.

In Friendly Contact,

*Mary Sakamoto*

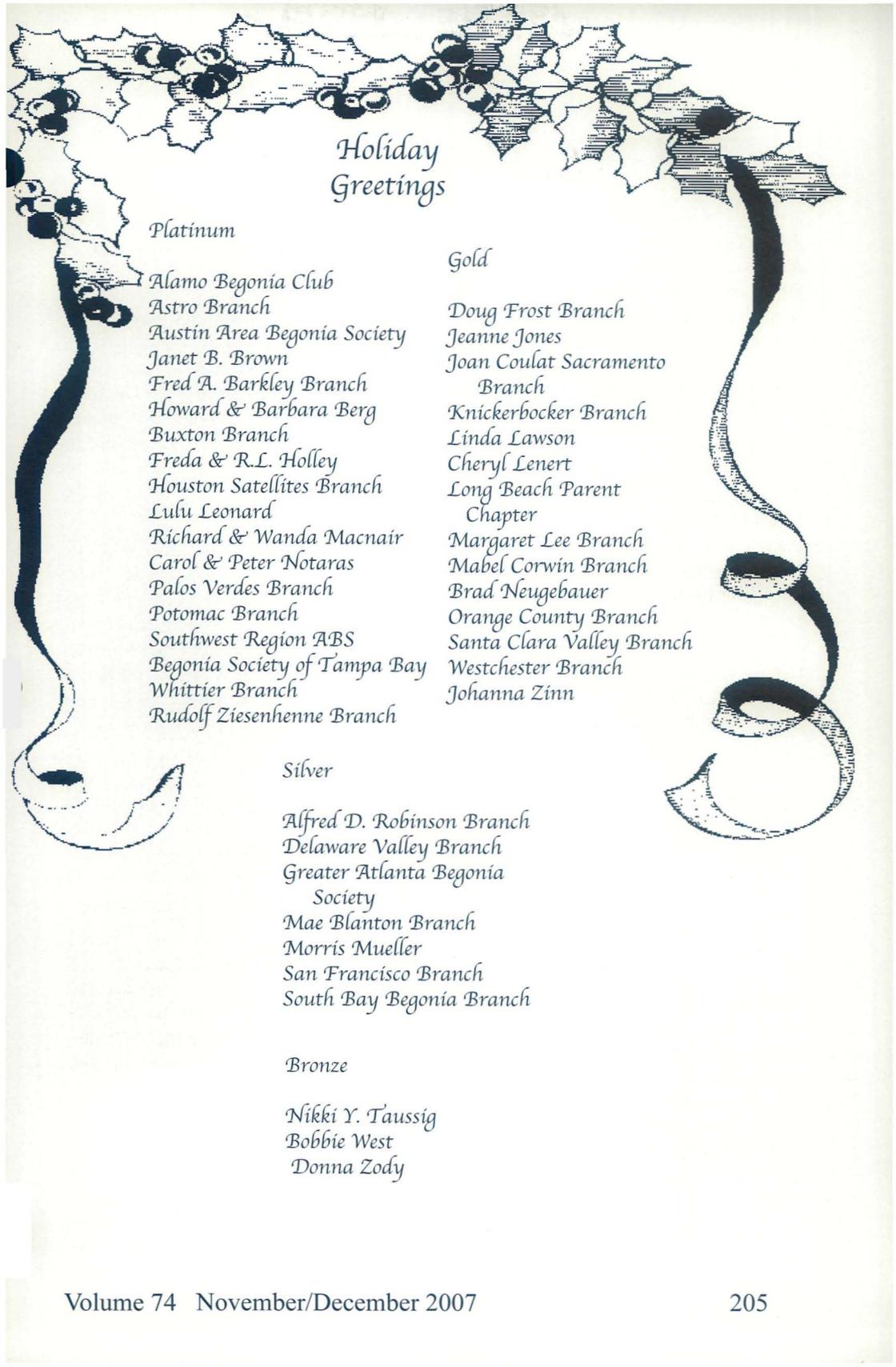
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## Editor's Notes

On the opposite page is our list of donors through the Holiday Greetings program headed up by **Wanda Macnair**. Wanda's efforts have produced support in excess of the previous year during each of the years she has headed this up and we all owe her a big round of applause for her hard work. And on your behalf and my own as editor, I give a very big, special thanks as well to all those contributors appearing in the listing on the opposite page. Of course, Wanda sends her's as well. She is particularly pleased this year because not only are the branches contributing, but more individuals are as well. No matter how small the gift, they each make a difference. These donors have chosen to send their greetings to each of you in the form of this issue of the *Begonian* which this year is almost totally printed through their contributions!!

The Convention is over and I saw cameras everywhere! The Convention Issue will be January/February to allow time for you to get material to me. **Please send me your convention photos** as soon as they are available (please send duplicates so that they need not be returned - I prefer to keep photos on file for future issues). Remember, our readers prefer to see photos of begonias and because of our limited color space the only people photos to be used will be of the award winners. I hope that many of you will also write up your favorite aspects of the convention - the coverage means so much much more when there is a diversity of

*Continued on page 218.*



## Holiday Greetings

### Platinum

Alamo Begonia Club  
Astro Branch  
Austin Area Begonia Society  
Janet B. Brown  
Fred A. Barkley Branch  
Howard & Barbara Berg  
Buxton Branch  
Freda & R.L. Holley  
Houston Satellites Branch  
Lulu Leonard  
Richard & Wanda Macnair  
Carol & Peter Notaras  
Palos Verdes Branch  
Potomac Branch  
Southwest Region ABS  
Begonia Society of Tampa Bay  
Whittier Branch  
Rudolf Ziesenhenné Branch

### Gold

Doug Frost Branch  
Jeanne Jones  
Joan Coulat Sacramento  
Branch  
Knickerbocker Branch  
Linda Lawson  
Cheryl Lenert  
Long Beach Parent  
Chapter  
Margaret Lee Branch  
Mabel Corwin Branch  
Brad Neugebauer  
Orange County Branch  
Santa Clara Valley Branch  
Westchester Branch  
Johanna Zinn

### Silver

Alfred D. Robinson Branch  
Delaware Valley Branch  
Greater Atlanta Begonia  
Society  
Mae Blanton Branch  
Morris Mueller  
San Francisco Branch  
South Bay Begonia Branch

### Bronze

Nikki Y. Taussig  
Bobbie West  
Donna Zody

# Begonias in the Shade of Bat Flowers

by Rekha Morris

In late September, 2006 I finally succeeded in visiting Siang, an eastern district of Arunachal Pradesh in the eastern Himalayas of India. My goal here was to look specifically for two begonia species which had been documented once before in 1911-1912, *B. iridescens* and *B. scintillans*. Both of these species along with a few others had been found in the course of a British expedition whose goal was not botanical research but bloody retribution against members of the Abor tribe who had killed a couple of Englishmen in the then little explored mountains along the Dihang or Siang river. As a member of this punitive force Burkill had recorded *B. aborensis* Dunn, *B. burkillii* Dunn, *B. iridescens* Dunn, and *B. scintillans* Dunn. Since I had already documented *B. aborensis* and *B. burkillii* in both Pampupare and Lower Subansiri districts in 2005, I was anxious to find the other two species.

Despite the rain I set off for the mountains north of Pasighat, the major town in Siang, determined to get in at least a few hours of exploration the first afternoon I arrived there. As the road turned and twisted gradually uphill I caught glimpses of the Siang river below on the last lap of its long journey through the Himalayas [from Tibet and through Siang] to join two other rivers of Arunachal to become the Brahmaputra. The light intermittent rain allowed me to explore around small streams and water run off channels formed by the monsoons which had not quite ended. The first and only species I encountered for the first couple of hours at an elevation of 750'-1200' was none other than *B. burkillii*, which was as abundant in

these hills as *B. heracleifolia* or *B. nelumbifolia* are in parts of Mexico. Despite the dusky sky and rain soaked vines and shrubs drooping over and flattening the undergrowth, the olive dark leaves of *B. burkillii* with splashes of maroon-red on the undersides of their leaves were visible against the lighter greens of *selaginella* and moss carpeting boulders and stream banks. Among the scattered colonies of *B. burkillii* grew what appears to be a subspecies of *burkillii* with sienna flushed, silken brown foliage.

Near despair at the possibility of not finding another species besides these two before nightfall, and somewhat irate at the rain which had continued to drip on my head and shoulders much in the manner of the infamous water torture, I was on the brink of turning back when I noticed a long, narrow hollow along a steep slope which shimmered silver and green against the enveloping dusk. Instantly alive and alert at the possibility that this might be *B. iridescens*, I swiftly moved uphill. This hollow for about 15'-20' feet up was covered with a luxuriant cascade of green and silver cleft foliage which was unmistakably that of a begonia species, and one I had not encountered yet. Clearly it did not even remotely approximate the description of *B. iridescens* which **Jack Golding** had thoughtfully translated for me from Latin just prior to my trip. However, finding an unfamiliar species was a bright coda to an otherwise wet and gloomy afternoon. On my return to the USA this species was identified as *B. palmata* by Dr. **Mark Tebbitt**.

The following day was not bathed in sunshine but neither was it as dark and



Rekha's photos show *B. scintillians* above left, *B. burkili* right. Below we see the lovely bat flowers and if you peer carefully in the lower right hand you will see *B. iridescence* nestled below it.



dank as the previous day had been, and following the Siang through the mountains in the opalescent morning light was exhilarating. I had planned to move swiftly past the innumerable small colonies of *B. burkillii*, and head deeper into the mountains in search of the two species I had come to locate. However, seeing them without the twin impediments of rain and impending darkness of the previous day induced a slower, less precipitous and more thoughtful search of several of the sections already visited. My propensity to linger and loiter around begonia habitats no matter how many times I have been there before once more resulted in unexpected finds.

Looking up a steep and jutting cliff side I noticed what from below looked like a group of white bearded wraiths among the thick vegetation. Using my zoom lens to get a clearer view of this curious cluster, I was startled to find myself gazing quite literally into the mystifying faces of Bat Flowers or *Tacca*, which I had not seen in bloom before. As I moved my lens downwards to try and assess their height, I caught glimpses of variegated foliage beneath the enormous oblanceolate foliage of this species. Assuming that these were additional colonies of *B. palmata*, I slowly began scrutinizing the lower sections of this hill side. As soon as I got an unimpeded look at the first of these variegated plants I remembered Jack Golding's translation of Dunn's description of the foliage of *B. iridescens* as often having two leaves, lying flat against the soil, and marked by elongated silvery blotches.

And here finally were several dozen plants of this species. Those with the elongated lozenge shaped silver markings were by far more striking than the form with all green foliage. However, both forms had two dominant, widely ovate [almost orbicular] leaves from 6" to 8" resting flat

against the steeply inclined ground. Some had a couple of small emergent leaves, and most were so badly pocked by insect bites that it was difficult to find a set of undamaged leaves to photograph. This large colony of *B. iridescens* flourished in fairly deep shade with ferns and pepperomia under the huge 4'-5' outspread leaves of Bat Flowers and various small trees and shrubs at an elevation of about 1500'.

Although I continued to look for other colonies of *B. iridescens* in these hills, this was the only colony I found during this initial exploration in Siang. While *B. palmata* was not as abundant as *B. burkillii*, I continued to find small, scattered patches of *B. palmata*, some of whose leaves were all green and some lightly ringed in a paler shade.

Having found *B. iridescens*, I searched for *B. scintillans* more assiduously. Early that afternoon I finally located this species largely due to the slanting rays of sunlight which sparkled off the silvery foliage of a small plant of this species. In scouring this vicinity, I found a few more plants of *B. scintillans*, and realized why they had been so elusive. Their small 2 1/2" to 3" sage green leaves shading to near black along the central vein camouflaged them in the thick undergrowth. Some, however, had foliage which was so densely speckled in minute silver dots as to present an unbroken argenteous surface accentuated by the dark green shading along the central vein. The species name is fully justified by the riveting contrast between the claret underside and the silver and green upper surface of the orbicular, obliquely cordate foliage of *B. scintillans*.

Having identified and learned to look for them, I began to find *B. scintillans* in groups of three to five plants sprinkled on the cliffs at an elevation of about 1500'.

Neither *B. iridescens* nor *B. scintillans* were as profuse and plentiful as claimed in their original description. Fully satisfied though I was by these finds, I continued to explore further into this mountain range, and documented two other begonias which remain unidentified.

One of these is a rhizomatous species which flourishes in extremely moist conditions in West Siang at an elevation of 700-800'. This species has obliquely ovate foliage which is either a light coppery green or all green with widely scattered, prominent white hair on the upper surfaces. These were just beginning their growth cycle so I found no flowers or seed capsules.

The second unidentified species may be a natural hybrid, as I invariably found it where the habitat of *B. burkillii* overlapped with that of *B. aborensis*. Although this species is taller than *B. burkillii*, it is a fraction of the size of a mature *B. aborensis*. The dark green elliptical leaves unlike those of *B. aborensis* are glabrous, but much like *B. burkillii* in having an irregular wide swathe of red splashed across the underside of each leaf. I found no flowers or seeds on this species either, but both appear to be robust species as they have grown more rapidly and vigorously than any of the other species from India except *B. xanthina*.

Although this initial foray into Siang was brief, it was remarkable for the range of foliar color and pattern on the majority of species I documented. Of the five identifiable species [*B. aborensis*, *B. burkillii*, *B. iridescens*, *B. palmata*, and *B. scintillans*], only *B. aborensis* has uniform green foliage although occasionally plants of this species will have leaves which are flushed red on their undersides. The two unidentified species, and what I have referred to as a possible subspecies of *B. burkillii*, each has distinctive foliar color.

Unusual as this is, it is quite possibly the sight of begonias growing in the shade of the mesmerizing and curiously elegant Bat Flowers which gives definition to this trip to document begonias in Arunachal Pradesh.

## Acknowledgement

I am indebted to His Excellency **Sri S. K. Singh**, Governor of Arunachal and his wife, Her Excellency **Srimati Manju Singh** for once again enabling me to document begonias in Arunachal. To them and their staff in Raj Bhavan, Itanagar, and especially **Sri Michi Paku**, A.D.C. to the governor, and **Sri Panthri**, Personal Security Officer to the governor, my deepest gratitude for facilitating my explorations in Arunachal. I also extend my gratitude to **Srimati Sadhna Deori**, Additional District Commissioner, Pasighat for her help and hospitality in Pasighat, and in enabling me to explore in Siang.

This trip to India in September-October 2006 would not have been possible without the generous financial support from various chapters and members of the American Begonia Society. I extend my appreciation to **Janet Brown**, president of the ABS, **Joan Coulat**, **Normand Dufresne**, **Charles & Leora Henthorne**, **Antoon Hoefnagels**, **Tom Keepin**, **Lulu Leonard**, **Morris Mueller**, **Carol & Peter Notaras**, **Thelma & Tim O'Reilly**, **Ann & Gene Salisbury**, **Johanna Zinn**, the Astro Branch, The Atlanta Branch, the Alamo Branch, the Begonia Society of Palm Beaches Branch, the Bessie Buxton Branch, the Dorothy Caviness Branch, the Potomac Branch, the San Jacinto Branch, the Begonia Society of Austin, and the Melbourne Begonia Society of Australia.

***Begonia santos-limae* Brade and *Begonia kautskyana* Handro  
are Distinct Species.**

by Jack Golding

I received the July 11, 2000 letter from D.C. Wasshausen and S.F. Smith of the USNH, advising that they considered *Begonia santos-limae* Brade 1943, and *Begonia kautskyana* Handro 1981, to be the same species. Hence, I listed *Begonia kautskyana* as a synonym of *B. santos-limae* in my **Species List in Begoniaceae Edition 2. Thelma O'Reilly**, who is growing a clone of *B. kautskyana* that she obtained in May 2000 from Marie Selby Botanical Gardens has been urging me to change my listing. Therefore, I have here reviewed the following citations, photos and correspondence.

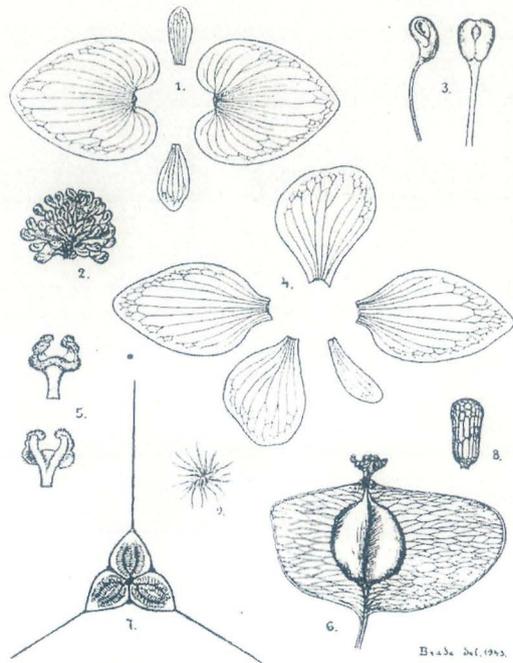
*Begonia santos-limae* Brade, Arq. Serv. Florest., 2:23, pl. 5, 1943.

Translation from the Latin by Jack Golding, Revised August 17, 2007.

Section *Begoniastrum* [= *Knesebeckia* ]. Herbaceous, stem oblique with roots; leaves peltate 8-10 veins, almost circular, 20-30 cm. (8 -12 in.) diameter, herbaceous, slightly fleshy, margin reflexed, clothed on both sides with very dense stellate hairs, on the upper side eventually becoming glabrous, with long petiole; erect petiole covered with appressed stellate hairs, 30-50 cm. (12-20 in.) long; stipules herbaceous blunt, ciliate, glabrous on the inside, outside covered with stellate hairs; peduncles erect, much longer than the leaves, covered with appressed stellate hairs, branched and apex often dichotomous, pedicels glabrous; bracts obovate, obtuse or almost circular, dropping off early, 10-18 mm. (.4-.7 in.) long, 10-16 mm. (.4-.6 in.) wide, glabrous on the inside, outside covered with appressed stellate hairs; flowers whitish-rose, male flowers, with 2 sepals [outer tepals] heart-shaped glabrous, up to 17 mm. (.7 in.) long, 15 mm. (.6 in.) wide, with 2 petals [inner tepals] ovate 7-8 mm. (.28-.31 in.) long, about 3 mm. (.12 in.) wide, filaments free or briefly connate at the base, anthers ovate much shorter than the filaments; female flowers with 5 lobes [tepals], glabrous, exterior ones ovate, up to 20 mm. (.8 in.) long. 12 mm. (.5 in.) wide, interior ones smaller, spatulate-obovate or linear, styles 3 barely connate at the base, branches twisted, faces covered with papillae; ovary at the base obtuse 3-winged, wings unequal, obtuse, 3 chambered, placenta divided in two; capsule at the base somewhat obtuse, apex retuse, glabrous, wings somewhat obtuse or circular, largest wing 12 mm. (.5 in.) wide; seeds cylindric.

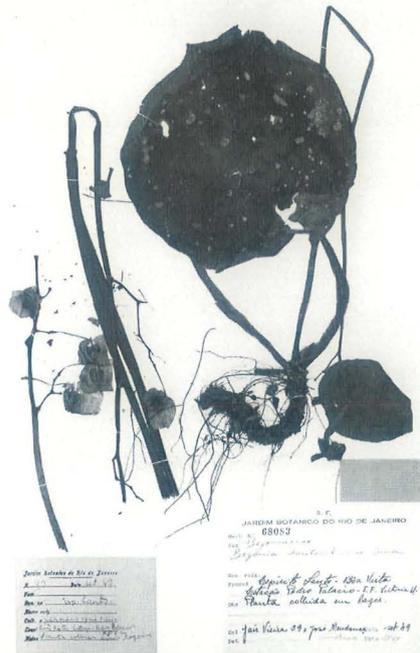
Habitat: Brazil, State of Rio de Janeiro, Santos Antônio de Imbê, municipal of Santa Magdalena. collector A.C. Brade, No. 11,635 & Santos Lima. April 1932.

Observations: This description was apparently derived from the Herbarium Specimen of the plant, collection No. 11635 by A.C. Brade and J. Santa Lima in 1932, which is similar to the Herbarium Specimen No. 68083 at the Jardim Botânico Do Rio de Janeiro, collected in October 1949, Plate No. 1. From these dried specimens it is not possible to ascertain the details of the cross section of the petioles. Mauro Peixoto, who in the early 1990's saw both species growing in nature at the Robert Kautsky Estate, reported that the petioles of *B. santos-limae* are round.

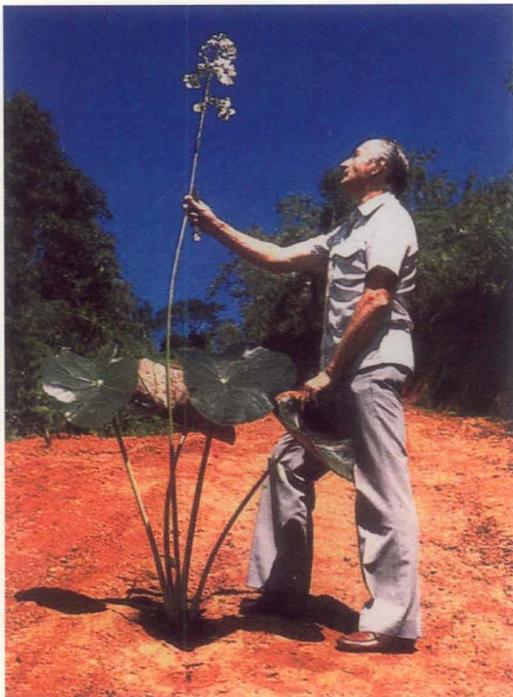


**Brade citations's Plate 5 *Begonia santos-limae* Brade**

Fig. 1 sepals & petals of male flower. 2x. — Fig. 2 stamens 4x.  
 — Fig. 3 stamen 10x. — Fig. 4 tepals of female flowers 2x.  
 Fig. 5 stigma (enlarged). — Fig. 6 capsule 2x. — Fig. 7 cross cut  
 of ovary 3x — Fig. 8 seed 30x. — Fig. 9 hair of underside of leaf  
 blade 20x.



*Begonia santos-limae* Brade  
 Herbarium Specimen No. 68083  
 Plate No. 1



Left: *Begonia kautskyana* **Handro and Roberto Kautsky**  
**Plate No. 2**

Plate No. 2— The photo, taken ca. 1980, of Roberto Kautsky with *Begonia kautskyana* was printed in “A Beleza Exotica das Orquideas & Bromelias de Roberto Kautsky” published by M & M Publicidades e Promoções, Brazil, 1999.

Below: *Begonia kautskyana* **Handro, Harry Luther** photo May 1997.  
**Plate No. 3**

Plate No. 3 —The photo of *Begonia kautskyana* by Harry Luther in May 1997 was of the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, acquisition No. 1996-0542, that was collected from Roberto Kautsky in February 1996.



*Begonia kautskyana* Handro, Loefgrenia, 74:1, 1981

Translation from the Latin by Jack Golding, Revised August 17, 2007.

From all species known so far, this species differs by long petiole peltate leaves, 4-angled [square] petioles, racemose-cymose inflorescence and hair-covering of appressed stellate scales.

Perennial herb, without a stem, flowering 1.55 m. (61 in.) tall (according to Kautsky). I have seen in living state with barely a rhizome, creeping, thick-succulent, rigid, about 2 cm. (.8 in.) in diameter, covered all over with large scars from the insertion of the petioles and peduncles. Stipules unknown. Leaves in the young state most likely with densely adpressed stellate-scales, the two mature which are present are separate, exceeding long petiolate; one petiole 54 cm. (21 in.) the other 60 cm. (24 in.) long, thick-succulent, in living state square, in the middle with the sides measuring 8-12 mm. (.3-.5 in), toward the tip gradually narrowed, at the base thicker and in living state broadly four-convex-ridged, partly with adpressed stellate-scales ; blades more or less damaged, eccentric peltate, outline broadly ovate or almost circular, in living state succulent, in dried state papery, margins recurved, one measuring 33 X 30 cm. (13 X 12 in.) the other 55 X 37 cm. (22 X 15 in.) according to Kautsky up to 65 cm. (26 in.) long and 48 cm. (19 in.) wide), on the upper side sparse and underneath densely adpressed stellate-scales, 8 radiate-veins, veins on the upper side in living state barely impressed, in the dry state projecting a little, underneath in living state moderately projecting and thickly- succulent, in the dry state prominent. Peduncles not adherent, with circular cross-section, in the dry state with several fine linear lines and hollow, 70 cm. (28 in.) long, in the middle 8-10 mm. (.3-.4 in.) in diameter, toward the tip gradually attenuate, at the base a little thicker, partly with adpressed stellate-scales. Old inflorescence, raceme-cyme, flowers and fruit bent abruptly downwards; axis 30 cm. (12 in.) long and like the peduncles in the dry state with several fine linear lines and hollow, partly with adpressed stellate-scales, remaining cyme provided with four remotely scattered stipes, originating at the scarred tips a few cyme most likely diminished or perhaps furnished with one flower; the first internodes measuring 14 cm, (5.5in.) the second 6 cm, (2.5 in.) the third 5 cm, (2 in.) the fourth 2 cm,( .8 in.) the following shorter; cyme apparently carrying 2-3 dichasia, basal cyme with 3 cm. (1.2 in.) stipe, the following gradually shorter stipes. Bracts unknown. Male flowers few, all not adherent, white, provided with pedicels 10-13 mm long; tepals 4, outer 2 ovate-circular, base cordate, 12-16 mm. (.5 -.6 in.) long, 13-16 mm. (.5 - .6 in.) wide, interior ones smaller, ovate-oblong, base more or less somewhat abruptly shortly narrowed, 8-12 mm. (.3 - .5 in.) long, 4-7 mm. (1.6 - .3 in.) wide; many stamens, up to 3 mm. (.12 in.) long, inserted in short column; anthers obovate, tip broadly rounded, obliquely full of cracks; filaments and anthers more or less of the same length. Female flowers unknown. Capsules two not adherent, about 1 cm. (.4 in.) long, 3-cornered, 3-chambered, apex crown of styles, supported by slender pedicels 2-3,5 cm. (.8 - 1.4 in.) long, unequally 3-winged, greatest wing broadly ovate or ovate-almost circular, up to 2.5 cm. (1 in.) long and 2.5 cm. (1 in.) wide, the other wings shorter, equal, more or less obliquely obovate, about 1 cm. (.4 in.) long and 1.6 cm, (.6 in.) wide, in all capsules on both sides 3-5 mm. (.12 - .2 in.) across; placenta bifid. with blade bearing seeds on all sides. Seeds almost obovate-oblong, about 0.5 mm. (.02 in.) long.

Material examined: Brazil - State of Espirito Santo: in a cool place and growing on limestone rocks, at the place known for Carioca, 200-300 m (650- 1000 ft.) elevation, close to Baia Nova, Viana municipality, 26-Jun-1979. Roberto A. Kautsky, no. 638 (SP 166007. Holotype).

Observation: This description was apparently derived from the study of a live plants and the Herbarium specimen, No. SP 166007.

Mauro Peixoto, of Sao Paulo State, Brazil, had examined in the early 1990s both species growing in nature at Roberto Kautsky's estate. He has been distributing seed of *Begonia kautskyana* and has photos of its leaves and flowers on his web page <http://mpeixoto.sites.uol.com.br/begonia/kautskyana.html>.

Correspondence with photos discussing live plants of these two species with **Thelma O'Reilly, Wally Wagner** and **Mauro Peixoto**.

The detailed review of the above information clearly shows that *B. kautskyana* Handro is a distinct species from *B. santos-limae* Brade.

The most conspicuous differences between these species are:

The outline of the leaf blades that are: for *Begonia kautskyana* broadly ovate [SADT No. 49] with a roundly obtuse apex and for *Begonia santos-limae* circular [SADT No. 6].

The cross-section of the petioles are square for *B. kautskyana* and round for *B. santos-limae*.

Other significant variances are the details of the stamens, capsules and their wings.

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## Begonia Growers

by **Barry Mann, Australia**

from the *Queensland Begonia Society, Inc. Journal*, Vol. No. 54, Autumn 2004

There are three types of begonia growers:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. The novice grower      | one who learns from the experiences of others and tried to avoid making the same mistakes. |
| 2. The experienced grower | one who had make most of the mistakes, but still has a few to go.                          |
| 3. The expert grower      | one who has made all the mistakes and is now busy inventing new ones.                      |

The common thing in all these definitions is the word "mistake". We all make them; the most important thing is that we learn from them.

## In the Mailbox

by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

Recently, a friend of mine was traveling to Scotland for a Begonia show, and emailed me to find out my opinion on taking/bringing cuttings with her. I was doubtful on her success with cuttings because of the time involved in the travel prior to her getting home to Florida. But, she was stubborn and tried anyway. Voila! Success!

After her wonderful trip and experience, she arrived back in Florida and rooted her new cuttings, and she is reporting that most have taken and are rooting. This is fantastic! I am going to find out more specific info regarding how she accomplished this to share with our readers. I can imagine that she was very careful to prevent rot, but I believe living in Florida also helps. Returning to our hot, humid, rainy weather can only help cuttings root quickly.

**Q:** In your last column, you mentioned how rooting old, woody cuttings with growth nodes is a great way to start more cuttings of a favorite variety. But, when you are taking the cuttings, do you prune the plant back hard - and do you use Rootone? New York

**A:** I assumed that when cutting back a woody cane, growers understood that was the time to hack the plant back to freshen up new growth. Wrong! Well, I should NEVER assume because, well, I shouldn't.....but this is

THE TIME to cut back! Woody growth tends to become leggy, and the overall plant can become lopsided. Hack back hard, leaving only a foot to two left. The new growth will resume and produce a full plant.

As a caveat, another pinch in two months will fill the plant out. I always keep the feeding up, but I live in Florida and begonias grow all year here without a resting period. If you live in a colder/darker climate, a brief rest in midwinter might be wise. Rootone? While I do use it on rhizomatous leaves, I've never considered it a must for canes. It really is your preference.

**TIP FOR WINTER:** Near Christmas, feed your rhizomatous with a light bloom type fertilizer. As these plants are beginning their bloom season, they will benefit from the extra phosphorus and produce stronger, brighter blooms. Even a light spray with a 15-30-15 (and include a little fungicide at the same time) will help.

If you ever have any questions, email me at [gsytch@cs.com](mailto:gsytch@cs.com) or snail mail at 6329 Alaska Avenue, New Port Richey FL 34653...or call 727-841-9618. Happy Holidays and enjoy the wonders of the season! Best Wishes from Greg.

# Conservation

## Comments

by Bill Claybaugh

Conservation Chairman, ABS

### U497 May be Unique

In the fall of 2006 at the Southwest Region St. Louis meeting I was introduced to U497 for the first time. This is a very attractive plant that was brought back from Bangkok Thailand by one of our intrepid world travelers, **Dale Sena**. When I learned that Dale brought this variety back, I immediately bought three plants thinking they could be something special. I was initially wowed by the symmetric growth pattern, strong dark reddish green color of the leaves (maroon underside), and the sharply contrasting red petioles; overall a very pleasing combination. My longer term surprise came later when the plants bloomed. Being a rhizomatous variety, it started blooming in the spring along with all the other rhizomatous varieties (unfortunately, I didn't record the date). Months later I realized this plant was something special when in late August this plant was still in full bloom with numerous inflorescence, each with dozens of flowers. Each inflorescence had about six to eight dichotomous branches indicating there had been 30 to 100+ blooms per inflorescence during its blooming period. I checked my other rhizomatous plants (presently over 250 varieties of species plus cultivars) and found only a few still had an inflorescence and these had only a few flowers each.

Two of my U497 plants were in the large shade house where they receive daily overhead watering, heavy shade, and are grown at temperatures ranging from 70 up to 85 degrees F. The flowers, almost all staminate, were all pure white, as were the

very few pistillate flowers. In contrast, the third plant, the more vigorous of the three, was growing outside under an oak shade tree in filtered sunlight and was subjected to temperatures of 70 to 95 degrees F all summer. This plant had flowers with tepals that were strongly pink with only a small amount of white on the outer edges. Again, almost all of the flowers were staminate. When these flowers opened, the interior of each tepal was white with a faint tinge of pink showing through from the outside. This makes for a very beautiful inflorescence.

The habit of blooming so well into the late hot summer appears to me to be both unique and somewhat puzzling and creates two questions. The first is, is it truly a species? This plant has a very unique character that could be the result of crossing with something like a cane/shrub-like plant or a trailing scandent, which tends to bloom in the late spring to summer. The second thought is even more interesting and that is perhaps this is a unique species and could be used in hybridization to extend the blooming season of rhizomatous cultivars by several months.

Checking the "Tuber Group" in **Mildred and Ed Thompson's** book\* I find that "Tuberhybrids" all are summer bloomers and originated mainly from the species *B. boliviensis*, *pearcei*, *veitchii*, *rosiflora*, *davisii* and *clarkei*. These species originated in the Andean mountains of South America and were brought into cultivation and named in the middle of the 19th century. In contrast, the *Hiemalis* cultivars are winter bloomers and all originated from one species, *B. socotrana* discovered on the African island of Socotra in 1880. Thus *B. socotrana*, the only winter blooming begonia tuberous species, established a line of unique winter blooming tuberous cultivars that we enjoy today. I wonder if U497 is also a unique species that could change our outlook on rhizoma-



*Bill Claybaugh* photographs his *B. U497* plant with its flowers below, and above is its rhizome with its hairy stipules growing out of the pot.



tous cultivars and their blooming times? You can be assured that next spring, I will start a hybridization program to answer these intriguing questions. Who knows; we may be able to have rhizomatous cultivars that bloom for six to nine months each year and love the hot summertime.

*P.S.* As a postscript to this article, I decided to determine the *Begoniaceae* Section in which this plant belongs. Knowing the Section should help in selecting hybridizing "partners"; those which have compatible chromosome numbers.

Carefully examining the plant and using the J. Doorenbos book, *The Sections of Begonia* as a guide, ("User-friendly key to the Asian sections") I noted the following: Locules 3, Placental branches 2 per locule, Bulbils in leaf axil absent, Inflorescence with male flowers basal and female flowers distal, Perianth segments white or pink, Leaves asymmetric, Plant rhizomatous ... venation palmate ... styles forked once, stigma not kidney-shaped, Fruit dry dehiscent near the wings. This places *U497* in *Begonia* Section *Diploclinium*. This is a very large and variable Asian section of 117 species which is farther divided into three subsections mainly by growth habit. Our plant, *U497*, appears to be in subsection I, i.e., *Diploclinium I*.

Checking Doorenbos early work on Chromosome numbers, I only find one species examined in that subsection, *B. subnummularifolia* with a  $2n = 32$ . This information is somewhat helpful, but ultimately, one must just use a "trial and error" approach in selection hybridization partners using similar Asian species or cultivars. I will probably include several plants from Section *Platycentrum* too, because of their availability.

\*M.L. and E.J. Thompson "*Begonias*

*The Complete Reference Guide*" New York: Crown Press, 1981.

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*Continued from page 204.*

reporting. Even if it was just one tour, one seminar, or one particular sale or show plant that impressed you, please write about it for our readers!!

I hear rumors that some people think our pages have been too technical for the last few issues. This one again may fall in that category for many readers, but remember we are limited by the material submitted. So if you want to see more non-technical material, submit an article of that kind! Articles are always needed on your begonia favorites - or even non-favorites with the whys spelled out. Articles about growing and propagation methods are also needed. Although for many of you, these matters are familiar remember that for our new readers they will be eagerly read. If everyone contributes we will have a balance of material which is, of course, this editor's goal. Don't be timid and remember letters to the editor are great.

**A note to contributors - please don't use all caps or underlines.** The first is difficult to read and the latter is not recommended by the printer. I have to revise these and that's a place for typos to get in. Use bold or italics instead.

Finally, a personal note for those who got the cuttings of the new thick stem begonia, labeled I think Holley 07.01, at the convention, that one now has a name, *Begonia* 'Layer Cake'. As you know my hybrids often tell me their name, as this one did one rainy morning after our return; with its many branches from each node, it should be an apt name.

~FH

# Invitation from Australia

*from Ken Browne*

The 9<sup>th</sup> **Associated Australia Begonia Convention (A.A.B.S)** will be hosted by the Queensland Begonia Society Inc. in Brisbane. The dates set are from the 21<sup>st</sup> till the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2008 (Easter Weekend).

You are invited!

Australian Conventions are held only every 3 years and as you can imagine they require much forward planning, so bookings are essential to accommodate those wishing to attend. Accommodation is available at the Venue.

We are planning an exciting program of Rare Begonias not often seen today, so you can rest assured it will be an informative weekend in lovely tropical surroundings. Added to this, it is our intention to provide a very friendly atmosphere and venue that can be enjoyed by all. There will be Overseas, Interstate and Local Speakers, Special Begonia Displays and Plant Sales at the Convention. A hospitality area has been planned at the Venue for socialising.

Registration and "getting to know you" will be Friday Evening. On Saturday and Sunday afternoons there will be bus trips to local members' homes in the

greater Brisbane area to view their collections.

A field day trip to the Sunshine Coast Members' Gardens has been organised for Easter Monday.

We would like to welcome you to our Convention and trust it will be a memorable event for all Begonia Enthusiasts.

Please mark your 2008 Calender with the above dates **NOW**.

While you are visiting our "Great State" please take advantage of the opportunity to see the tropical beauties that Queensland has to offer.

For further detailed information, Registration Forms, Costs, etc. please feel free to ask either by writig, calling, or e-mailing the Organizer:

**Mrs Rae Matthews**

E-mailAddress:

**raemat@pivit.net.au**

Phone 07 54652575.

Postal Address:

23 Bushman St

Laidley 4341.

Queensland.

Australia.

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## **Begonias of Java and Bali** **March 26-April 8, 2008**

The New England Tropical Conservatory offers a special, botanical tour to the West Java and Bali regions of Indonesia, March 26 to April 8, 2008. The rainy season will be ending and the many begonias will be in bloom. You will visit the most interesting and accessible begonia habitats of West Java, two botanic gardens, and, along the way, enjoy the stunning mountain scenery, vistas of the Indian

Ocean, and fascinating historic sites and monuments. An optional Bali Extension (April 5-8) features a day at the Bali Botanic Garden with its superb collections of begonias and orchids.

Most of our days will be spent at elevations over 2500 feet, where daytime temperatures are pleasantly warm and evenings cool into the 60's. Our group will stay in comfortable 3 or 5 star hotels. All will have private baths. Some will be modern, others traditional, spacious hotels dating from Colonial days. Travel is by

*Continued on page 236.*

# Proposed American Begonia Society Constitution and Bylaw Changes

During the American Begonia Society Annual Meeting, September 8, 2007 the following proposed Constitution and Bylaw deletions and additions/changes were approved. These items are now being brought before the entire ABS membership for vote. Deleted items will be *italicized* and underlined; additions/changes will be in **bold print** and underlined.

## Constitution

### ARTICLE X – RULES OF ORDER

Section 1 – Robert's Rules of Order newly revised shall govern the conduct of all meetings and the decision of all questions not specifically covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

## Bylaws

### ARTICLE 1 – DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

Section 2 – The First Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in His/Her absence, or whenever the President is unable to perform the duties of the office. A vacancy in the office of the President shall be filled by the First Vice President. The First Vice President shall be included in planning and policy making during his/her years of services as a method of training for possible succession to the Presidency. As part of his/her duties the First Vice President will be the Public Relations Chairperson.

Section 3 – The Second Vice President shall perform such duties as are assigned to them by the President. As part of his/her duties the Second Vice President will be chair of the Grants Review Committee.

Section 3a – The Immediate Past President will offer assistance to the President in regards to the running and policy of the American Begonia Society. The Immediate Past Presidents duties shall include being Internet Advisor and chairman of the Finance Committee.

Section 4 – The Directors elected by each branch and regional organization shall attend the meetings of the Board of Directors of the American Begonia Society when possible, shall make such reports and recommendations as will further the interests of the Society, and shall file an Annual written report of the branch or regional organization activities with the Recording Secretary and President of the American Begonia Society at the Annual Meeting.

Section 5 – The Treasurer shall receive and account for all monies of the Society and shall disburse the monies under the direction of the Board of Directors. The books shall be closed as of the last day of each month and a written report prepared and presented to the Board of Directors at the following Board meeting. The American Begonia Society shall obtain a bond with a surety company in such sum as the Board of Directors may determine. He/She shall make to the Board of Directors monthly and to the Society annually, a report of all receipts and disbursements. The annual report made by the Treasurer shall be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society and shall be accompanied by a report of the audits made by the audit committee of two members appointed by the President. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all tax payments of the American Begonia Society, excluding its Branches.

### ARTICLE II – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 2 – The Board of Directors shall meet at least four (4) times a year and/or monthly on call of the President, or in his/her absence by the First Vice President, the time and

place to be published in the BEGONIAN. These meetings may also occur via the internet and/or telephone conference.

Section 3 – When it is not feasible to hold a regular Board meeting the Executive Board may transact necessary business which must be approved by the Board of Directors by mail and/or email. Of the mail returned. a majority opinion shall determine approval or disapproval. The result of the voting must be recorded in the minutes of the next Board of Directors meeting.

Section 4 – Each elected and each appointed position on the Board of Directors is entitled to one vote in matters that come before the board. In the event of a committee or department co-chairman or co-directors, each co-chairman or co-director is entitled to one vote. In the event of a tie the President shall cast a vote breaking the tie. If a member of the Board of Directors is unable to attend such meeting/s, said Director may elect an American Begonia Society member in good standing to said proxy. Said proxy must be submitted to the President and Secretary in writing prior to the meeting.

### ARTICLE III – APPOINTED OFFICERS

Section 1a – The officers to be appointed by the President as Committee Chairman or Department Heads to serve as Directors on the Board of Directors for his/her term, or until replaced consist of, but are not limited to (in alphabetical order) Advertising, Audit, Awards, Ballot Counting, Book Store, Branch Relations, Business Manager, Conservation, Consulting Begonian, Finance, Historian, Internet, Judging, Librarians, Membership, Members-at-Large, Nomenclature, Nominating, Parliamentary, Program (slides and speakers), Publications, Public Relations, Research, Round Robin, Save our Species, Seed Fund (Clayton M. Kelly), Show, Show Advisory, Show Classification and Entries and Unidentified “U” Numbers.

Section 2 – the duties of the appointed officers shall be set forth in leaflet form and copies will be available from the Recording Secretary.

### ARTICLES IV – COMMITTEES

Section 5 – The Standing Committees shall be Finance, Audit, Convention and Show (and Show Advisory), Awards, Grants Review, Publications, Judging, Public Relations, Show Classification and Entries and Nomenclature.

Section 6 – The organization and responsibilities of the standing committee shall be as follows:

i – The Public Relations committee will consist of the First Vice President as Chairman.

### ARTICLE XIII – ANNUAL CONVENTION AND SHOW STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS.

Section 4 – All funds remaining after expenses have been paid will be forwarded to the American Begonia Treasury, except for 15% of the net profit which may be retained by the hosting Branch/s or Region.

**Ballots are to be received by the Ballot Counting Chair by February 15, 2007. Ballots are to be sent to: Ingeborg Foo, Ballot Counting Chair, 1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA. 92083**

**Please clip, vote, and mail the ballot on reverse of this page.**

# Ballot

## Vote on Constitution Changes

Approve

Disapprove

Article X

### Bylaws

#### Article I

Section 2

Section 3

Section 3a

Section 4

Section 5

#### Article II

Section 2

Section 3

Section 4

#### Article III

Section 1a

Section 2

#### Article IV

Section 5

Section 6

#### Article XIII

Section 4

**Clip and Mail to:**  
**Ingeborg Foo,**  
**Ballot Counting Chair**  
**1050 Melrose Way,**  
**Vista, CA 92083**

## Why grow begonias in terrariums?

by Johanna Zinn

Terrariums provide increased humidity. They allow us to grow plants native to locations that have higher levels of atmospheric humidity than our homes can provide.

Terrariums can be used to showcase a special plant or plants.

Plants in terrariums demand less care. They need less water and fertilizer, and the enclosed atmosphere can protect the plants from pests and diseases. For example, I grow a few plants in terrariums that are susceptible to mildew.

Propagation is more successful in terrariums. The increased humidity in the enclosed atmosphere allows the leaf or stem cutting to retain moisture until roots are formed.

Stressed plants can be placed in terrariums to recuperate.

*Send your terrarium questions to:*

*Johanna Zinn, 4407 Jensen Place,*

*Fairfax, VA 22032, Ph: 703-323-7513;*

*jazinn@cox.net Are you having trouble*

*with a particular plant? Johanna can*

*likely help. We are fortunate to have*

*Johanna volunteer to do this regular*

*feature on terrariums as she is well*

*known not just for her skill at terrarium*

*growing, but for getting many of our*

*temperamental species to grow for her.*

*Help her make this a good column for*

*beginners and experienced growers alike.*

*Experienced growers can help out by*

*giving her questions that they are asked;*

*these questions and answers may be new*

*to our readers. ~FH*

**BEGONIA DIPETALA GRAHAM. VAR HYDROPHILA (C.B. CLARKE) SANTHOSH & SEEMA -  
A LITTLE KNOWN ENDEMIC SPECIES OF THE WESTERN  
GHATS OF INDIA.**

**SANTHOSH KUMAR E S**

**Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute, Palode**

**Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695562, India.**

**santhoshkumares@gmail.com**

**Introduction**

Charles Baron Clarke was a Professor in mathematics and his keen interest in botany made him a remarkable botanist and his contribution to the Begoniaceae of India still worthwhile and he named a lot of enigmatic specimens of *Begonia* housed at Kew Herbarium collected from Indian subcontinent while contemplating the Begoniaceae of the then British India. *Begonia dipetala* var *hydrophila* was one among his novelties described in 1879 as a variety of *B. malabarica* Lamk. During that time the identity of *B. malabarica* was much confused and circumscription of that species has a wider dimension including most of its allied species as well. This dispute was continued until Santhosh et. al. (2005) put forward some recent finding on the identity of *B. malabarica* from Kerala, India.

*Begonia dipetala* var *hydrophila* is an endemic species of the Western Ghats of India. This is a thick stemmed *Begonia*. The stem is reddish to pink in colour having leaves arranged on either side of the stem. Leaves are obliquely ovate, semi-cordate at base, acuminate at apex, in young seedlings they are dark green with white spots but at maturity these spots will disappear. Flowers are white or light pink in colour and in short axillary racemes, both male and female flowers have two perianths. Stamens are yellow in colour. Ovary is dark pink or reddish in colour, truncate apex and has three wings.

Like its sister species, *B. dipetala* var *hydrophila* also seen near the stream banks in shady places. It is seen occasionally on dripping rocks and in rock crevices, but in all the times it prefers to live in or near the water. This may be the reason why Clarke has named its epithet as '*hydrophila*' meaning 'living in water'. When we walk through the evergreen forests of Western Ghats particularly in the southern parts, with elevations between 100-800 m, we would come across this species elsewhere. But this species is often confused with *B. fallax* A. de Candolle, which also has the same characteristic. However their lax inflorescence and more robust habit, male flowers with 4 perianths and female with 3 perianths lobes make them a remarkable species from *B. dipetala* var *hydrophila*. This is an ideal semi shade loving plant ideal for front yard of house as a pot plant.

As a (semi)shade loving plant, it can be suitable for woodland landscape and also thriving well in shade houses. The pest and diseases are comparatively less and it is also used for a variety of medicinal uses by the local communities. The juice of the entire plant is said to have a leach repellent property by the tribal people. They are also eating this plants as a raw food because of their sour taste.

**Propagation**

This plant can be propagated through seeds as well as from stem cut-



*Photo to the left shows the stem and leaves of **B. dipetala** var. **hydrophila** while the colorful flowers and leaf reverse of this plant are shown in the photo below.*



tings. Seeds are powdery and are get ripe during November to March. Seeds collected from mature capsule were immediately sowed in fine river sand. Care should be taken to avoid excessive watering. Usually 48-65% seeds will be germinated within 28-38 days of intervals. Seedlings will be ready for transplanting only after 6 months time. Peat moss and coarse river sand in 3:1 ratio or potting soil (compost) and coarse river sand in 3:1 ratio are ideal growing medium for the rapid establishing of seedlings.

### Conservation

Fortunately, this species has not found a place in any of the IUCN [World Conservation Union] categories so far. The high rate of reproductive capabilities and survival rate also will be the added advantages. However the habitat loss, particularly for low level evergreen forests for different developmental activities may be affecting its further expansion. Anticipating the impending disaster, as an endemic plant with horticultural potential, this plant can be conserved in botanic gardens, public parks, homesteads, etc and hence ensure its ex-situ conservation as well.

### Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to the Director, TBGRI for the facilities provided and for the constant encouragements.

### REFERENCES

**Santhosh Kumar E.S., Seema G. Gopal and G.M. Nair 2005.** Re-appearance of Rheede's *Tsjeria-narinampuli* - Its identity after the discovery and a note its allied species. *Begonian* 72 (Jul/Aug): 135-140.

**Clarke C.B. 1879.** Begoniaceae: In Hooker, J.D. (Ed.) Flora of British India. 2: 655. L Reeve & Co. London

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## SUMMARY of MINUTES of BOARD MEETING AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY

**Oklahoma City, OK, April 28, 2007**

The September 2006 Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed and corrected to include **Mildred L. Thompson** on the Conservation Committee rather than **Brad Thompson** and to report 35 branches in the Society rather than 34. The minutes were approved as corrected.

The Society is solvent with a total of \$79,918.84 cash assets as of March 31, 2007.

An exchange of trophies with the Scottish Begonia Society is planned for August in Scotland.

A sum of \$3000 was allocated for the design of the new website from **Ben Franklin's** estate bequest and the website is expected to be running soon.

The supply of back issues for January-February and March-April 2007 is exhausted. A motion to inform new members of this problem and tell them that their *Begonians* will start with the May-June issue passed.

As of April we continue to have 35 branches and one regional branch in the Society and a new branch is forming in Rhode Island.

A slate of officers was announced as follows: **Mary Sakamoto**, President;

**Cheryl Lenert**, 1st Vice President; **Johanna Zinn**, 2nd Vice President, **Richard Macnair**, Secretary, **Carol Notaras**, Treasurer.

Membership includes 830 United States and 71 foreign dues paying members.

Two grants were approved, \$1200 for **Rekha Morris** and \$200 for **Patrick Worley** to collect *Begonia* in India and Peru, respectively.

The 2008 Convention will be in Houston, Texas.

One-year complimentary memberships were extended to the seven active members remaining of the defunct Canadian Begonia Society.

Respectfully submitted,

**Richard Macnair, Secretary**

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## Some Propagation Tips by Dot Mann, Australia

(Excerpted from the *Queensland Begonia Society, Inc. Journal*, Vol.51, Winter 2001, p. 39, "Propagating Begonias")

I like to propagate on wet days

If you are having trouble growing a plant, strike a leaf or cutting and start another plant.

Before pruning for cuttings, make sure the plant is well watered and has been given enough time for the stems to become firm. If you have cuttings that become limp, I stand them in water until they become firm.

Small leaves of new plants are easiest to propagate from, because they are more plentiful and they fit into propagation tubes or boxes better. Leaves can sometimes continue to grow while striking.

Always remove any decayed matter from your propagation boxes as they cause damage to other cuttings or leaves.

Sometimes you may think cuttings or leaves have rotted and didn't strike, but sometimes a new plant comes up later.

I do not use any striking agents, but over the years I have tried a few.

I do not continually sterilise, though it is important to use clean sharp cutting tools. I use small stainless steel scissors.

Ensure the propagation mix is pre-watered before putting cuttings down, and then kept evenly moist.

As I remove a new plant for potting up from my propagation boxes, I put another leaf or cutting in its place.

I regularly fertilise my propagation boxes with half strength fish based fertiliser.

Sometimes when a leaf has struck, I will then cut some wedges from it (this is handy when leaves are scarce).

I remove the bulbils from my tuberous begonias (i.e. *B. sutherlandii*), as the plant dies back, and keep them in barely moist peat moss until new growth appears in spring.

I always take cuttings with a non-flowering node, as everflowering types tend to flower from almost every node. To obtain cuttings, I cut back the plant some weeks earlier, so i can take cuttings from the new growth.

....

The products we use for propagation include:

1. Sharp quartz sand: excellent during the warmer months, but too cold during winter.
2. Equal parts sand with equal parts perlite or vermiculite.
3. Equal parts peatmoss with equal parts perlite or vermiculite.
4. Pure perlite or vermiculate, for plants going interstate or overseas.

*Thank you, Dot. ~FH*

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## Oh, No! This Can't be *Begonia chingii* Irmscher!!

by Freda Holley

When last I wrote here about Louisiana weather (late June), we had had a great spring and early summer of lower temperatures and cool weather, but then August arrived with zero rainfall and interminable days of high 90s to 100s temperatures. Before a rain finally came in the closing days of August, many of those begonias I had brought home from OKC's SWR plant sale were barely alive and a few were dead. But one, of which I would not have expected survival, lived on in good condition. My label on it says *Begonia chingii*. Naturally, I was elated and wanted to share news of a heat hardy Chinese begonia of which there are not many. You see it on the opposite page, some leave bedraggled, but still looking vigorous.

You will see that it has leaves which have proven attractive to both slugs and caterpillars. A generous dose of diatomaceous earth took care of the former and time has dispersed the latter. The large leaves, 11" x 10" on long petioles (up to 14"), with those pronounced, elongated drip tips are a clear green and look very species like.

The growth pattern of this plant is clearly rhizomatous with rhizomes that reach 1" in diameter. Unfortunately, it had not bloomed by the time the heat hit.

I began researching this plant, but found little other than its listing in *Begoniaceae* and a listing, without a photo in **Jack Krempin's** Australia book, *Begonias*. Oddly this begonia was first described in 1939, but none of my other references had any information. The figure in *Begoniaceae* is little help since it has only a leaf and what I took to be a flower. **Jack Golding** was kind enough to provide me with a copy of Irmscher's description

with a subsequent translation in *Flora of China*, 3:166, 2007. And it is here that I ran into trouble. The translation of the first lines follows:

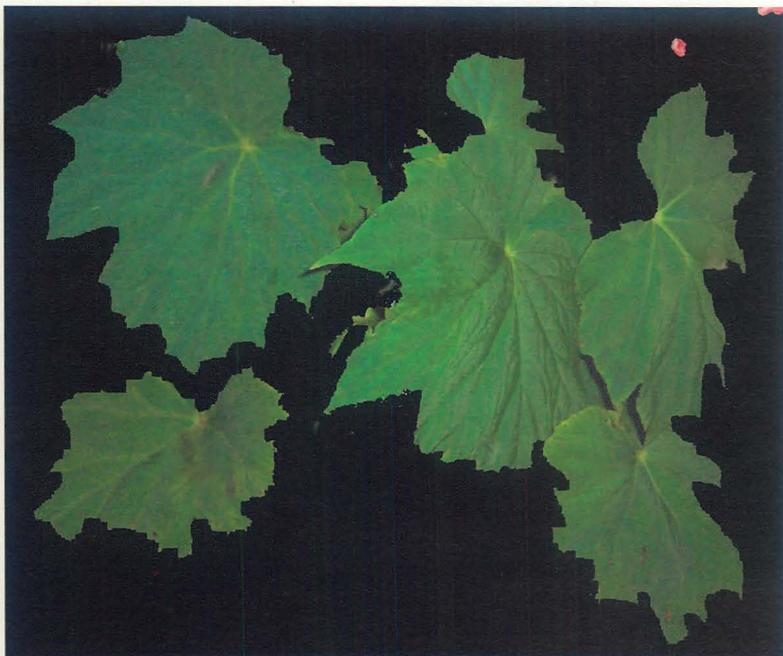
Herbs, deciduous. Tubers 3-15 mm in diam. Leaves 1 (=3), basal or on very short stem, stipules triangular ovate, 3.9-1.2 cm., margin ciliate, apex cuspidate; petiole 6.8 - 13 cm [2.67" - 5.11"] cm., pubescent, blade ovate to broadly ovate, overly symmetric, 7 -14 x 5 - 9 cm [2.75" - 5.5" x 1.97" - 3.4"], very thin when dried, vil-  
lous, venation palmate-pinnate, base cordate, margin serrulate, apex acute or acuminate. ...

Next, I turned to the web, always a rich resource these days, and found there a herbarium specimen from the Herbarium of the Metropolitan Museum of Natural History Academia Sinica, Nanking, China from the *Flora of Kwangsi* taken apparently in 1990 by **Cheng-yi Wu**. Again this conforms to the description above.

The problem of course is that this plant of mine is obviously not tuberous, first of all, and the leaf does not fit in size or appearance. The leaf petioles are long, the leaves large and lobed.

Still, whatever its name, I find it a delightful plant whose soft, light green leaves with those long drip points are as attractive to me as they are to the slugs and caterpillars.

It is always distressing to discover that a plant whose identity you felt secure in is not what it should be, but it is not always a bad experience since one is quickly led into a rewarding search that almost always makes one's knowledge of begonias deeper and richer. Fortunately, even with-



To the left is the begonia labeled **B. chingii**.

Below, are the begonias **B. 'Suncana'**, left, and **B. 'Stars and Strips'**, Bill Claybaugh's hybrid. (**B. nelumbifolia** x **B. sericoneura**). Both grow in the ground, portending good things to see on our visit to Houston in May.



out the blooms I could say that this was not *B. chingii*, but many times the description does not leave us so fortunate.

Since I suspect there were a number of these plants taken home from OKC, per-

haps this will alert others to the inaccuracy of the name and prevent it going further under this name. Perhaps also, someone will know its true identity.

---

## Letters to the Editor

### Could *B. U508* be...

The *Begonia U508*, page 196, the *Begonian*, September/October 2007, reminds me very strongly of *Begonia* (Rex type) 'Jeanne d'Arc' (= Joan of Arc), of unknown origin too; perhaps are they the same thing. I wonder how long the Lyons (France) grower has had it in cultivation. I got a cutting in Paris some fifteen years ago, and I remember this plant very well, for the crosses with 'Fireflush', both ways, yielded only pure Fireflush plants...

Sincerely

**J.-R. Briois,**

j-r.briois@orange.fr

### More on Leaves on Paper

Just before going to LA I started to propagate 5 leaf cuttings. Among these were two of *B. subpeltata* from the only plant I got from seed of the one I brought back from India in 2005. At any rate when I went to check on my plants after returning from LA just about a week later, imagine my astonishment at finding that all of them including the two of subpeltata leaves had sent out tiny roots! **I had followed Bill Claybaugh's latest suggestions on propagating on paper.** That is, I had followed his suggestions in a general sort of way without sterilizing the container, water, paper, etc. I just spread a sheet of moist paper towel in one of these plastic containers in which we buy croissants, and lo and behold, **success!!**

Since Bill had written about it in the **Begonian** I thought others would be interested in this bit of success. I am delighted as so often the leaves of my Indian species and tuberous species simply rot when I try leaf propagation in water.

I am going to take photos of the rooted leaves so I can include it for the article for **The American Gardener** as an illustration of one way of propagating begonias. I think it is well worth illustrating this as I have never had such quick and uniform success before. One of the leaves which sent out roots in less than a week on paper had been in water for a week before, and all that was happening was that the end of the stem kept rotting slowly and progressively. I cut off the rotting end, and placed it on paper as directed, and it also has roots. What I have not seen are any signs of roots emerging from the leaves themselves.

**Rekha Morris,**

shivavana@juno.com

### And Bill Claybaugh Replies

Rekha, congratulations on your recent success. The "paper" technique does work, and it is so simple. I also sometimes just ignore all precautions and put the leaf parts on plain wet paper in a "shoe box terrarium" and it works. I will caution about one thing. I think that even a small amount of fertilizer causes more trouble than good. The algae will quickly cover the paper and damage the small roots if fertilizer is applied when the leaf is still on

*Continued on page 236.*



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In this issue thanks for featured seeds described below go to **Ed Bates, Morris Mueller, Michael Ludwig, Thelma O'Reilly, and Dean Turney** for their seed contributions.

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***B. heracleifolia*** 'Pyramidilio'

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**U #319**

**U #320**

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Mixed rex hybrid seed

Mixed rhizomatous hybrid seed

***B. crassicaulis*** Lindley [Guatemala] (Sect. *Gireoudia*) 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. heracleifolia*** Cham. & Schlecht 'Pyramidilio' [Central America] (Sect. *Gireoudia*) Rhizomatous; leaves 1 foot across, hairy, 5-9 deep narrow lobes, toothed, bronzy green tinged with black near margin; petioles 10-18 in. long, stout, tinged with red, prominent ruff below the blade; flowers rosy pink, fragrant; peduncles 2-4 feet long..

***B. U103*** Ziesenhenné [Bolivia] tuberous, stem green, succulent 2-3 feet high; leaf blade 3-5 x 1 1/2 to 3 inches, medium green, glabrous, lobed, serrulate, flowers white sometimes flushed pink, glabrous.

***B. U319*** this unidentified begonia is a *B. cucullata* type, tall to 6 feet

with large attractive white flowers when grown under lights, bright pink flowers when grown outside. Original seed collected by **Thelma O'Reilly** in South Australia from plant in **Ted and Joyce Williams'** garden.

**B. U #320** [Ecuador] tuberous, pink or white flowers with strong rose-like fragrance and variable number of male and female tepals, from four to ten. Flowers usually appear first followed by the leaves. Same as **B. U237** collected by **Scott Hoover** in 1988.

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**DISCLAIMER:** The seeds distributed by the seed fund are identified as received from the donors. 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.

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See Save Our Species address, page 239.



Above is *Charles Henthorne's* photo of his *B. chlorosticta* to contrast with *Gene Salisbury's* photo of his plant below.



## *B. chlorosticta* variations?

by Charles Henthorne, Dallas (TX) Area Branch

Ocassionally I have come across begonias that seem to show variation in their coloration. The amount of light, temperature, growing medium, etc., seems to affect the begonia and its growth pattern. As examples my *B. Shaun's Dreams*, grown in a terrarium under fluorescent lighting has a more defined outline burgundy color, and its basic green is more of a lime color with very defined and large white spots.

**Don Miller** has grown one huge plant of this in the greenhouse at Northaven here in Dallas. It has been grown under shaded natural light, and its color is a darker green, with minimal spotting, and a very pale edging of burgundy. So I wondered how *B. chlorosticta* would compare, and I started to look into listings on the internet, and looking in old *Begonians*. I also did some comparisons using those source materials to compare our *B. chlorosticta*. Of special interest to me was a plant that Leora had in her collection before we were married. It is a brown *chlorosticta* and is a real standout in our collection or in any show that it has been shown in.

Recently **Jack Golding** was approached with the question as to whether we could call this a variation of the green *B. chlorosticta*. His response, paraphrased was: The color of a leaf should not be considered when the question of variations comes into mind. With this in mind I started to evaluate our growing environment and its' effects on our plants. We have grown our green *B. chlorosticta* right beside the brown *B. chlorosticta* for years. There has been no difference in lighting, watering, or temperature on either one. Throughout those years we have moved both plants very occasionally to different areas in the plant room, but always they were in the same growing environment to-

gether. The results were that both plants have flourished and we have been able to obtain many new plants of both colors, to share with others. **Gene Salisbury** has recently written about his green *chlorosticta* that came from us in the form of a cutting we took to him a few years ago. There also was a photo of that plant in the publication *Begonial Leaflet*, newsletter of the SWR.

Going further I have visually compared the blooms on our plants, both male and female, on both colors (the green and the brown), and have found that both have the same appearance. Both plants grow the same, have the same leaf shape, and in almost every way appears to be the same. The only difference seems to be the coloration of the leaf itself. So it seems to be, at this point in time, and in my own opinion a variation of color of the same *B. chlorosticta*. The photos, which I have included, show the rich brown color of the leaf on our own plant, and the other photo shows the green plant.

I have found some very distinct green color variations in the photos shown on different pages on the internet. Also in various publications there are photos which seem to indicate that there are different subtle variations to the green color. But nowhere have we found the brown form listed, nor have we found photos of any brown ones that different growers might have. The only brown colors that we have observed are some very light brown colors of some of the photos that are shown on the internet. These browns are the same browns as ours, only ours are very distinct and are evenly colored throughout the whole leaf. I realize that some people might say that these variations shown in different photos of the green *chlorosticta*

could be due to several different reasons. Reasons such as mentioned above, lighting, temperature, flash bulbs, etc. But after my evaluation of those reasons I could find no probable cause for our difference in the colors.

**Jack Golding**, wrote an article in the *Begonian*, March-April 1995, which included some great photos of the green *B. chlorosticta*.

In it he included very informative information on its origins, and also on its flowering habits. In this article Jack states that the many plants of *B. chlorosticta* that are now in cultivation are probably all progeny of the original 1967 cutting from Kew grown and propagated by **M.L. McIntyre**. Leora cannot remember where her cutting of the brown *B. chlorosticta* came from. I would really like far more attention paid to this most interesting plant by those more qualified to make judgments on questions such as "variations" in the *B. chlorosticta* saga. Leora and I would be glad to contribute a cutting of our brown *chlorosticta* to any such person who would take on that challenge. I would be glad to hear from anyone who has *B. chlorosticta*, and hope that people such as **Millie Thompson**, **Jack Golding**, and **Mark Tebbitt** would also take an interest in this question and come up with an answer.

---

*Continued from page 219.*

chartered coach, train and air as noted on the itinerary. The group travels from Bandung to Baturaden on train at the urging of our NETC guide, **Scott Hoover**, who wants the group to enjoy the scenic mountain vistas.

Scott Hoover will accompany the group. The tour schedule coordinates with the AABS Convention, March 21-24, allowing a one-day break between

the two events. The tour operator is International Ventures & Travel (IVAT), a well-respected organization with which one of our NETC Board members has extensive experience. \_

Contact: New England Tropical Conservatory, PO Box 4715, Bennington, VT 05201, ph. 802-447-7419, netrop@sover.net or Mary Fuqua, 413-458-5336, mm.fuqua@verizon.net.

---

*Continued from page 230.*

the paper. I suggest you wait until the leaf is in a soil mix before applying fertilizer.

**Bill Claybaugh**,  
absastro@hotmail.com

### And Rekha Responds

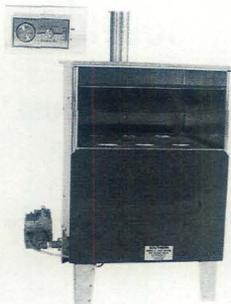
I just checked for fungal growth on the paper and roots on which I had gently sprayed a mild solution of vitamin B1 for plants + kelp, and found none. The tiny white roots on the 3 leaves of *B. subpeltata*, one leaf of *B. burkillii*, and one leaf of *B. integrifolia* have grown longer, however, there is no sign of any roots on the single leaf of *B. palmata*. All these as you know are species I have collected in the eastern Himalayas of India except for *B. integrifolia*, which is a tuberous species from south India.

Just as a precaution against fungal growth from the premature application of fertilizer which Bill warned me about I sprayed the paper and the roots with another mild solution of Vitamin B1 and dry, powdered neem leaf tea today. On a weekly basis I water all my begonias with a much stronger solution of the dry, powdered neem leaf tea as it prevents fungal infestation, and being a natural insect repellent, seems to keep my plants free of spider mites and other such destroyers of begonias.

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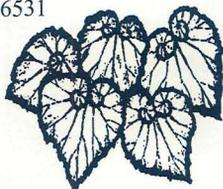
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## COMING EVENTS

**March 22-26, 2008, Association of Australian Begonia Societies Convention in Brisbane, Australia.** Begin you plans! See page 219.

**May 14-18, 2008, American Begonia Society Convention/ Southwest Region Get-Together, Houston.** Houston is furiously making things ready for ABS Convention 2008. You know you can count on Texas hospitality and lots of begonias. The Sheraton Hotel Brookhollow is the hotel and it is half way between our two major airports. Mark your calendars for May 14 through 18. Ya'll come and see us. **Cheryl Lenert**

**Deadline for the January/February 2008 issue is  
November 1, 2007**

*Remember: A New Editor is Needed! Volunteer  
Yourself or Someone Whom You Know Would be Good  
- Contact Mary Sakamoto, President!*

---

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