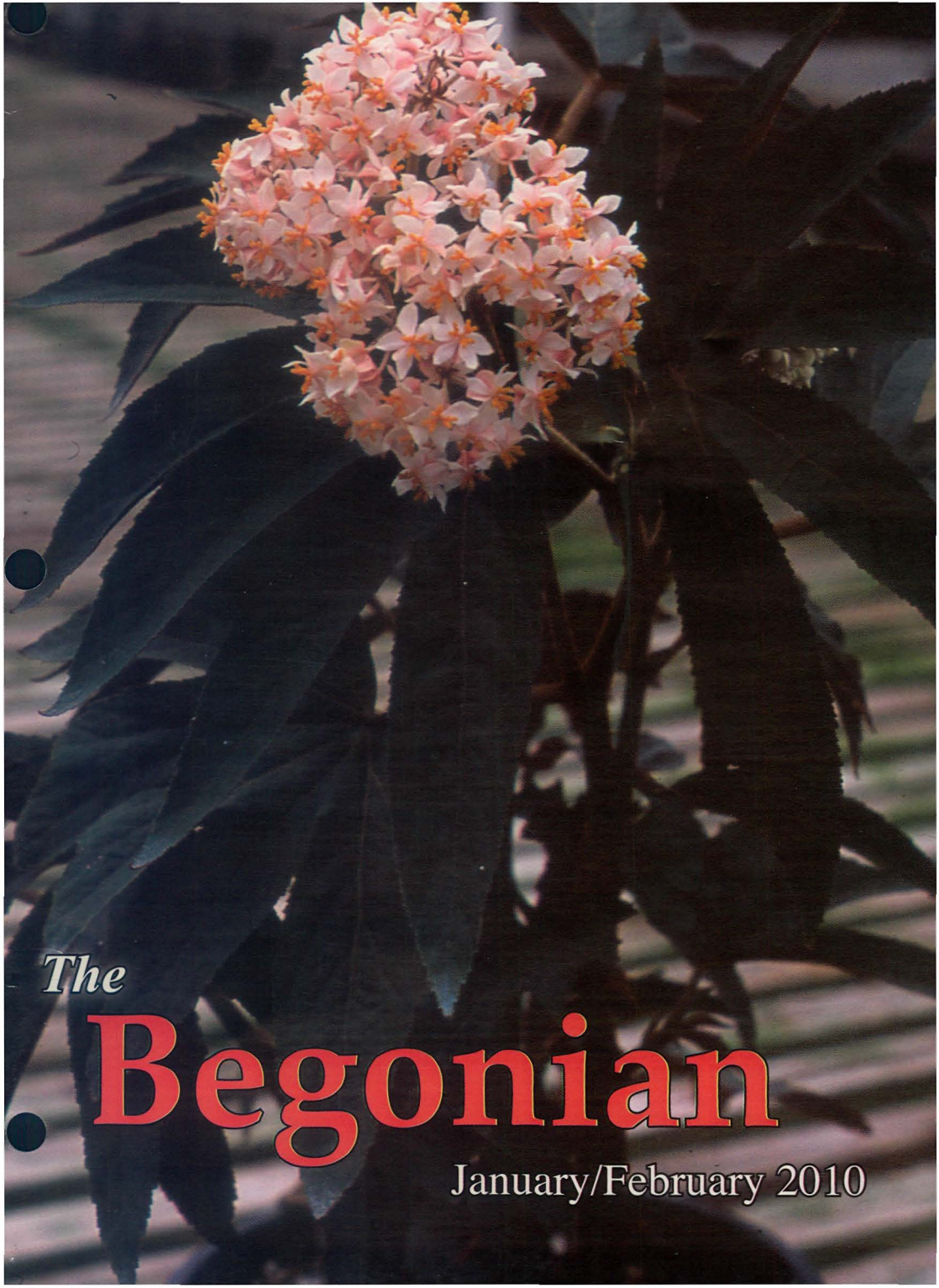
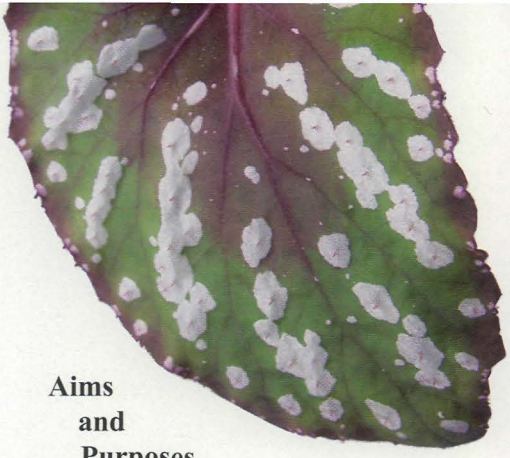


The Begonian

January/February 2010



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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Publication of the
American Begonia Society

American Begonia Society

Founded January 1932 by Herbert P. Dyckman

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B. U512 rewards the grower who offers high huidity and low light wiith surreally beautiful foliage.
photo by Jem Wiseman

Begonia ciliobracteata pg. 16

Begonia vietnamensis pg. 18

Begonia 'Lady Brown" pg. 23

In This Issue

Regular Features

Front Cover: *Begonia* 'Mike Flaherty' a cross between *B. juliana* and *B. luxurians* (article on page 24).
Back Cover: *Begonia ciliobracteata*. Johanna Zinn says about her plant, "The unusual peduncles are the succulent, upright structures with the blooms on top. Aren't the ciliated stipules and bracts lovely? Some of them even look as if they have been to the hairdresser to be curled!" (See page 16)

President's Message

Being President allows me some special privileges. One of the best is finding out what is going to be happening. I can assure you there are some pretty special things happening in 2010.

We should all be excited that we will be going to San Francisco in August for our Convention and Annual Board meeting. I think you are going to find this to be a very special event as the particulars become known.

We will also be invited to Ft Worth in May for a Southwest Region Get-Together to revolve around the Ft Worth Botanic Garden and the Begonia Species Bank.

Our web page just keeps getting better. I am thrilled every time I go there. Thank you, Julie.

What a stunning publication the Begonian has become. Thank you, Linda and all the contributors.

Our membership is increasing at a pretty steady rate. Thank you Paul for reminding us when dues are due so we don't have to miss any issues of the Begonian.

I have been informed by Mary Buckholtz, our Branch Relations Manager that we have several new Branches in the forming stages. How exciting is that?

I would like to appeal to everyone to get behind the three newly formed clubs and any new ones that become chartered. We can share our newsletters, share cuttings and plants, send suggestions for programs etc. It takes a lot of energy to get a group going and growing. It would be good for everyone to know they are not in this alone.

I would also like to encourage any individual or group (old or new) who would like to receive assistance to contact me or one of the Branches. Sometimes all you need is a little inspiration.

We are all in this together. We came to the organization because we were interested in begonias. Many of us discovered that some of our closest relationships have evolved from the American Begonia Society. Whatever our reasons for being here, we all want it to succeed for everyone.

I would like to hear from you. What do you suggest? *- Cheryl*

2010 Convention News

The secret is OUT! San Francisco and Joan Coulat (Sacramento) Branches will be hosting the 2010 convention, along with a lot of help from many other branches. For the first time in 20 years (I know it is about time we did it again) you will have a chance to visit this exciting city. We have several trips planned, but would like input from all of you. The dates are **August 17th to the 22nd**, with possible before and after trips which would extend the time at each end. I am working with several hotels and should have one chosen by the end of the month.

-Carol Notaras

The Work of Documenting U Numbers

Photo & article by Marci Oehler, Middleburg, FL

I had the pleasure of accompanying Mary Bucholz and Charles Jaros to Harmony Foliage Farm, Sorrento, FL recently to work on describing the begonias Ozzie Johnson had collected from China. My part of this was to drive, tour the greenhouses and purchase some fantastic plants while they did all the work. They are an amazing team as they dealt with the tedious task of scientifically describing the plants. Every detail is noted and recorded, then pictures are taken and correlated with the notes. General observations are also included. They both are extremely knowledgeable and thorough in addition to being wonderful people. The U number description and classification is a huge project and both Charles and Mary are dedicated to make it an invaluable resource and a must-have book for every "begoniac". Everyone should be grateful to all the plant collectors/donors who travel the world to bring us rare and unusual plants and to the U number Co-Directors who catalog and to Harmony who propagates the material for us. They all make the American Begonia Society a First Class Organization.

Your U number Co - Directors at work, Mary Bucholz and Charles Jaros.

Begonias at the US Botanic Gardens!

February 20-May 22, 2010 - Conservatory South Foyer

With more than 1,500 species, begonias are one of the largest plant families (genera) in the world. For the first time in many years, the U.S. Botanic Garden will display rare and species begonias in its collection that are seldom on view. From tree-loving begonias to undershrubs, from miniature to enormous, come and see the vast variety encompassed by this colorful plant family!

United States
Botanic Garden
245 First Street, S.W.,
Washington, DC 20024
202-226-4145

Two residents of the US Botanic Garden. Opposite page: B. elaeagnifolia *clambering up a stump. Left: The frilly* B. *'Moonstone'. Photos by William B. McLaughlin*

B. acetosella Craib and *B. longifolia* Blume: Giants among Indian Begonias

Photos & article by Rehka Morris, Pendleton, SC

B. longifolia with fruit from Lohit

During the 2007 trip to continue my documentation of the begonias of the northeastern Himalayas of Arunachal Pradesh, India, I was relieved to finally find a few immature plants of *B. longifolia* Blume in East Siang where I.H. Burkill had documented this species [referred to as *B. inflata*, syn. of *B. longifolia*]. In his account of "The Botany of the Abor Expedition" [Records of the Botanical Survey of India, X, no. 1,1924, p.412], Burkill records a number of sites where he documented this species, among them in a "pig-wallow" at 5000'. The few scattered plants I found at sites well below that in elevation, around 1500', were not as numerous as I had been led to expect after reading Burkill's account. During the last trip to E. Siang in mid-January 2009, I was pleasantly surprised at finding numerous plants of this species. These varied from immature plants of about 12-15" to one colony where each plant was well over 5' in height.

With *B. burkillii*'s conspicuous foliage and large flowers dominating the lower, open slopes of the ridges and cliffs of E. Siang in January, it was difficult to concentrate on any other species. Add to this the difficulty of identifying *B. longifolia*'s glabrous lanceolate foliage among the thick growth of shrubs from about 20' - 30' below. I am surprised that I found as many as I did. Growing in moist areas among assorted large ferns and shrubs, wild bananas, monstrously large aroids along the crest of cliffs or well above the open hillsides where *B. burkillii* held sway, there was little to distinguish *B. longifolia* among the surrounding verdure.

I might well have missed them altogether except for a narrow water run off channel with a large moss covered boulder lying at its base at an elevation of about 1500'. Small 6"- 8" plants with narrow, shallow toothed leaves and red stems growing on this boulder caught my attention, and in climbing up and examining both side of this channel I found several large, 4'-5' tall plants of *B. longifolia* swaying downwards over this water run-off channel. Several of these had a sprinkling of baccate fruit, unmistakably those of *B. longifolia*, dangling downwards. After this it took

little effort to pick them out among the thick tropical growth even from 20'- 30' below.

For the next 4 days I continued to document *B. longifolia* in the hills of East Siang at too many locations to enumerate but none above 1500' – 1700' in elevation. In the district of Lohit, on the far eastern side of Arunachal Pradesh, I continued to find *B. longifolia* at higher elevations, between 1500' and 4000'. At about 4000', I located a large colony some with fruit, and to my astonishment several of these plants were as tall as 10' in height. Contrary to published information that *B. longifolia* is lacking in rhizomes, these larger plants had short, rounded rhizomatous root systems.

In a long and comprehensive article, "Taxonomy of *B. longifolia* Blume [Begoniaceae] and related species" [Brittonia 55: 19-29, 2003], Dr. Mark C. Tebbitt describes *B. longifolia* and *B. acetosella* [section Sphenanthera].

With its origins in the "mountainous region between northeastern India and northern Vietnam", *B . longifolia* is presented as the most widely distributed begonia species in Asia with its habitat extending from eastern Nepal to Indonesia and Sulewesi. However, the find spots for in India in this article are somewhat confusingly presented.

Apart from the uncertainty regarding Clarke's 1879 reference and annotation of 'Birma' and 'Bhutan', the find spots of *B. longifolia* [syn. *B. inflata*] in India are somewhat confusingly presented. Under "Select specimens examined", Burkill's specimen from the "mouth of the 'Sireng ' is placed in Assam. The area which was explored by Burkill during the Abor Expedition was known as the North East Frontier Tract [NEFT] since1914, and excluded from nominal jurisdiction of Assam since 1936. This area has not been referred to as Assam for nearly a century. Without any clarification regarding present day Arunachal or Assam, or any indication as to the location of "Sireng", or even an explanatory sentence indicating that the region explored by Burkill is now in East Siang, Arunachal Pradesh, this find spot for *B. longifolia* appears as uncertain as "Birma".

Another find spot for *B. longifolia*, which is in India, is placed in Burma. In the listing of 2 specimens of *B. longifolia* examined from Burma, one is from the Kachin Hills and the other from "Theronliang Tidding Valley", where it was recorded by Kingdon-Ward [Tebbitt, Brittonia, 2003, p.26]. In the distribution map included in this article there is a single spot marked for *B. longifolia* in Burma. This is placed on the northern tip of Myanmar [Bur-

Both sides of the leaves of *B. longifolia*

ma] where it borders the eastern edge of Arunachal and what was eastern Tibet [now in China]. This appears to suggest that "Theronliang Tidding Valley" is in the Kachin Hills of Myanmar, which is not the case.

The Tidding River is in Lohit, Arunachal and not in Myanmar, nor does it flow into the Kachin Hills of Myanmar [Burma]. After a careful reading of Kingdon-Ward's account, I explored sections around the valley through which the Tidding River flows in approximately the environs of Kingdon-Ward's Theronliang [no such village currently exists in the area] in 2007 and 2009. On both trips I documented *B. longifolia* in several spots along the Tidding River valley and above it.

B. acetosella var. hirtifolia

In 2007 I also documented *B. acetosella* var. *hirtifolia* Irmsch. in the hills above the Tidding River in Lohit at two spots, one at about 4500' and another lower down at around 2000'. There were just a few of the small, ribbed berries on these, but the hirsute, lanceolate leaves with a vivid red splash along the mid-vein combined with these berries were clear markers in identifying this species, which has not previously been recorded for India. Dr. Tebbitt's distribution map shows only *B. longifolia* occurring in India, and this is reinforced in the body of the article as neither *B. acetosella* var. *acetosella* nor are mentioned as having been recorded for India]. In 2008-2009 I again documented several colonies of B. *acetosella* var. *hirtifolia* in Lohit, but none in E. Siang where I have documented so many *B. longifolia* colonies. My documentation of *B. acetosella* var. *hirtifolia* in 2007 is here presented as a 'new' begonia find for India.

Both sides of the leaves of *B. longifolia*

In January 2009 I decided to make a brief preliminary exploratory excursion to a district of Arunachal I had not visited, Upper Dibang Valley. This district lies between E. Siang and Lohit, but getting to it involved hours of bumping along on river stones of 12 mostly dry river beds, each over a kilometer wide. Each of these had a narrow stream running through, and since there were no roads we were following, no bridges, and no one to inquire for directions, at each of these we would have to stop while the chauffeur waded in the stream

to gauge the depth. Often this would involve trying several spots along each of these streams, some of which flowed rapidly out of the hills, before we found a place to drive across. By the end of that day we were all not only tired, as we invariably were while I aggressively pursued my hunt for begonias, but also sore and wet.

B. acetosella var. *hirtifolia* in Lohit

Despite this, early next morning I set off to look for begonias in the hills of Upper Dibang Valley. Within 45 minutes I located my first colony of *B. palmata* among which there were 12-20" high *B. longifolia*, and a profusion of a third species which I could not identify. The glossy, deep green ovate foliage of this species [*B.* U571 possibly *B. handelii*] created a thick, dark border at the edge of the cliff side, and continued into the water run off channel at its base. The cream /white variegated foliage of *B. palmata* twining through and around this dark, silken, foliar border, and the erect red stems of *B. longifolia* in the incipient stages of its growth created a striking arabesque of form, color and texture.

B. longifolia with berries in Siang

Continuing further in the hills, which at this time of the year were drier than the hills in E. Siang, I documented another colony of begonias, this time with five species, *B. palmata*, *B. longifolia*, the species with the dark, glabrous foliage documented at the previous site [*B.* U571], another unidentified species [now *B.* U572], and *B. acetosella* var. *acetosella*, which is here presented as another 'new' begonia find for India where it has not previously

continued on pg. 28

A trio of begonias photographed in the Garden of the Four Arts, one of the tour gardens at last year's West Palm Beach, FL convention. On the left is *B.* 'Marmaduke', to the right is *B. convolvulacea* and in the front is *B.* U002. Begonias pictured at the top are unknown. Photo by Mary Bucholtz

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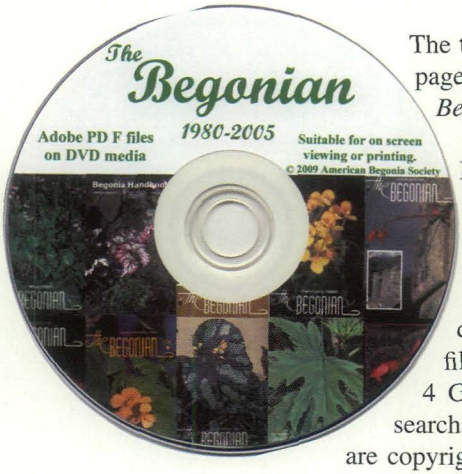

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Buy all three for $30 each, $50 for two and $75 for all three. We add a little for shipping on the website - http://www.begonias.org/shop/shop.htm

Kinds of Botanical Names

Article & photo by Kingsley Langenberg, Nomenclature Editor

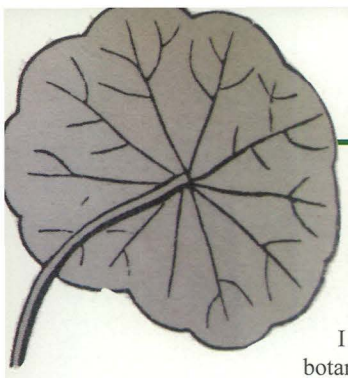
What is an Angel Wing Begonia? I do not know precisely nor does anyone else. But I searched the Internet for a definition of the term and the first website I found started out: "There are more than 1,000 varieties of begonias, stemming from the botanical family Begoniaceae coccinea..." Whoa! There is no such botanical family, so I did not bother reading much further. However, the reference demonstrates my point: someone just made stuff up. You find a lot of that on the Internet - especially on eBay. So please, reader, come to the Begonian or the American Begonia Society website for accurate information about begonias. It's my new job as Nomenclature Editor to see that such a statement does not sully these pages.

Consider this: If you were to visit your local nursery and ask for *Begonia masoniana* you might receive a blank look in reply. Ask for the "Iron Cross Begonia" for a more certain response.

"Angel Wing Begonia" and "Iron Cross Begonia" are examples of what botanists term a Common Name, that is, a popular name as opposed to a scientific name. Common Names come as they are. Scientific names come with baggage in the form of Latin text published somewhere. I will elaborate on that here in the future. Common Names do have their place, as my example shows, so they should not be shunned. Ideally, the nursery would label the plant: '*Begonia masoniana* "Iron Cross'". There is another kind of name that falls somewhere in between: *Begonia* 'Jim Wyrtzen' is the registered name of a hybrid cultivar.* Ideally, (again) all distributed named cultivars would be formally registered with the American Begonia Society, the International Registration Authority for Begonia. The procedure is not difficult and is not written in Latin.

***Cultivar** (n.) A selected plant variety maintained in cultivation by vegetative propagation.

Begonia 'Jim Wyrtzen'



A Word with You: Peltate

Article & photo by Claudia Goodridge

As a begoniac and general plantaholic, I'm interested in plant vocabulary, but sometimes I encounter such botany specific writing that I find myself reading with dictionary in hand, or skipping it altogether. I suspect I'm not alone, so I volunteered to focus on some of the begonia language we read but may not understand or have the energy to look up. Mind you, I'm speaking for myself; perhaps other ABS members understand all the technical language, but I don't. I joined the ABS, not because I know anything, but because I know very little. So … let me start with "peltate."

PELTATE: Great word. I first saw it some years ago, looked it up, and drew myself a little picture along with the definition that I posted on my bulletin board. That little memory trick worked, because "peltate" surfaced on p. 228 in the November/December 2009 issue of *The Begonian*, and I didn't have to use my dictionary. It's in this issue as well.

Think "shield" and those galvanized garbage can lids we used as toy shields in the days when we actually p l a y e d o u t s i d e . That mental image pretty much defines " p e l t a t e . " M e r r i a m Webster says it comes from the Latin *pelta* and Greek *peltē* meaning small shield. In the world of begonia leaves (that are technically 'blades'), it describes the junction of a leaf with its stem (technically 'petiole' or 'stalk') – the peltate leaf/blade attaches to its stem/petiole/stalk somewhere in from the margin, pretty much near the center of the leaf – like your hand and the garbage can lid. Nasturtiums have peltate leaves, as does *Begonia 'Bill Byron,'* in Brad Thompson's article, p. 228 (November/December 2009). And wouldn't you know, there's a *B. peltata!*

Browsing through begonia and general horticulture literature, I found that peltate is used to describe both the stem-leaf attachment, and the leaf shape. But in the begonia world, it seems to refer most often to stem attachment, regardless of leaf shape. That works for me.

I went back to my Thompson, Begonias, The Complete Reference Guide, and to the 'net looking for examples of begonias with peltate leaves. I found quite a few, but also found more interesting vocabulary, so next time, more leaf terminology. How many in your collection have peltate leaves? Here are some that do:

B. conchifolia var. *conchifolia*
B. ficicola
B. goegoensis
B. hernandioides
B. lubbersii
B. lyniceorum
B. microsperma
B. nelumbiifolia 'Red Vein' and 'Rubra'
B. paulensis
B. quadrialata ssp. *quadrialata* var. *quadrialata*
B. scapigera
B. socotrana
B. tayabensis

Begonia nelumbiifolia var. *rubra*

Terrarium Begonias, Part 2: Types and Cultivation

Article and photos by Charles Henthorne, Plano, TX

In this part I'll continue to talk about, what in future issues, will end up as being, our complete way to start terrarium begonias from beginning to end. With so much interest in the last few years, both Leora and I are gratified to know that there are many more growers, both in the United States, and abroad, who are now trying and succeeding in growing and maintaining a viable terrarium or terrariums. In the past we have been two of only a very few to grow terrarium begonias. The reasons for that are many and varied. Several people have told us that they have tried in the past and failed to maintain a terrarium. Others have said that they could not figure out what type of container to use. More have told us that the plants just rot away after a few days or weeks. In the first part of this continuing series I listed more of the questions that arose from these same people. Now I will continue on.

Begonia imperialis likes medium, indirect light, cool temperature, and high humidity along with a light alkaline soil.

After the container is found and cleaned properly, comes the fun part of starting out on the adventure of beginning to develop the environment that is necessary for success. Part of the process is deciding what type of filtering material to use for the foundation of the potting medium. Leora and I feel that this is a necessary part of starting a terrarium. We have found that small sized horticultural charcoal is something that will keep our terrariums from becoming foul and sour smelling. Others use just a slight layer of perlite first, and then again, others just mix in a small amount of charcoal in the potting medium they use, and some use no filtering agent at all. Personal trial,

Attractive red hairs pepper the chartreuse leaves of *Begonia limprichtii.* For best growth provide this plant with cool temperatures, high humidity, and strong light.

error, and final personal choice comes into play here as it will on most of the steps I mention in the series. We lay approximately one inch of charcoal across the bottom of the container.

After laying the base foundation we then go ahead with our potting medium of choice. We have chosen, and found quite satisfactory, Millie Thompson's choice of material. That is, a mixture of long stand sphagnum moss, and perlite. We try to avoid the large chunk perlite, and also the very fine perlite.

After using hot water (the hotter the better), and leaving the moss in it until the water cools, we then squeeze as much out as we can. In the process we remove any debris such as roots, leaves, etc., from the moss. We then add perlite in the amount of ½ perlite to ½ moss. The mixture should be barely damp when placing your begonia in the container. The important thing to remember, when placing the potting medium in the container, is that it is not necessary to use over 2-3 inches in depth. Again, that is not the only medium that can be used. Some use orchid moss/perlite mixture, soilless potting medium, or potting soil. Again try to find what will be the medium of your choice.

In choosing which begonias we will cultivate in terrariums, we look at the size of the initial plant, then decide to use the whole plant or start with a

cutting or, if the plant is large and a cutting is impossible to obtain, then we will start our own plant from material from the original we would like to have. In the next article I will mention more about obtaining and starting plant material. We then place the begonia into a size appropriate (very important) prepared container, and repot when the size of the plant dictates that it needs to be done. We have found *B. limpricthii*, which I have written about in a previous Begonian, and *B. imperialis*, which I also have written about, as very adequate and successful plants for use in the terrarium.

Next comes the issue of the covering for your newly planted terrarium. Again, it depends on the variety of begonia that you have chosen. 50-100% humidity is the often quoted amount of humidity required of a terrarium begonia and we agree. We have found our coverings in garage sales, thrift stores, flea markets, and many other sources. We have a nice collection of lids and when we find a container, if it already does not have a lid, we just go through our collection until we find a satisfactory cover. We look for one which will either keep a container tightly enclosed or one that will allow it to "breathe" a little. Again, use whatever you feel adequate. Trial and error is a good way to learn what you will do in the future. Saran wrap is another possibility. Also having glass cut at a glass store. Have fun in choosing your cover.

In ending this article, I'll stress again, that it is by trial and error, that most people find their successful way of growing terrarium begonias. Those of us who have been doing it for years, will give you many different methods. But, choose your own, and try it. If it doesn't succeed, try another. It won't take many attempts before you succeed in finding the one that will be successful for you. We "old timers" would be glad to help in any way we can, for you to be successful, because we want many more people to become terrarium growers. Also, if anyone has a particular question, or problem I'll be glad to try to help. You can email me at charleshenthorne@yahoo.com. In the next part of this series in continuing on with this saga, I'll talk more about humidity and all its ramifications, pests/diseases, and also more begonias that can be used. So, jump in and join a growing population of satisfied terrarium begonia growers. It is FUN!

Another excellent candidate for terrarium culture is *Begonia* 'Millie Thompson' which wants high light, warm temperatures and high humidity.

B. ciliobracteata

Begonia ciliobracteata

Article & photos by Johanna Zinn, Fairfax, VA

About 18 months ago, I received a small division of a plant labeled *B. raynaliorum*. Since the parent plant had been in a terrarium, I placed it in cut sphagnum moss over charcoal and perlite in a terrarium. The terrarium was placed under full spectrum plant lights in the basement. When I researched *B. raynaliorum*, I found that it was a synonym of *B. ciliobracteata*. In my reading, I found that *B. ciliobracteata* is a variable species; my description below applies to the plant that I am growing.

Begonia ciliobracteata Warburg is a terrestrial rhizomatous begonia from West Africa first described by Warburg in 1895. My nineteen-month-old plant is eight inches tall and has a three and one-half inch long and one-half inch wide rhizome that is growing upward at a forty-degree angle. The rhizome is light green with a few reddened sections on the older portion of the rhizome. Sparse, soft, pink hairs are present on portions of the rhizome. A few months after obtaining my plant, I placed three leaves into the moss around the original plant. All have rooted, and all have distinctly upright rhizomes.

Elliptical, leathery leaves with unevenly cordate bases emerge from cranberry red triangular stipules that are edged in similar colored cilia. The leaves are medium green on the top and cranberry red on the back. A few of the oldest leaves are five inches long and three inches wide. Green to red palmate veins are depressed on the front of the leaf; veins on the back of the leaf are red and raised with sparse white to pink hairs on them. The leaves are very asymmetrical; one side of the leaf is barely curved, the other is curved. The leaf margins are crenate [scalloped] and, on some of the leaves, the margins are puckered which gives the edge a ruffled look. The one to three and one half inch long petioles are light green and covered with a moderate amount of red hair.

On my plant, blooms emerge from unusual succulent peduncles [see photo on back cover]* that slowly elongate to one-half to one inch in length. The bracts are pale green to light pink and ciliate; some of the bracts form a curled shape. The peduncles send out pedicels with two males and one female on each. The blooms are located at the base of the leaves, but can easily be seen on my plant since the leaves grow upright. The

*Notice the unusual peduncles on my plant. ***[See the photo on the back cover]*** The peduncles are the upright succulent structures with blooms on top of them. The blooms, which open under the leaves, were so numerous for a few months, I couldn't see the peduncles, and didn't realize how unusual they appear. I haven't seen peduncles like this before. Please let me know if you can tell me anything about them. I can be contacted at jazinn@cox.net, or at 4407 Jensen Place, Fairfax, VA 22032-1718.

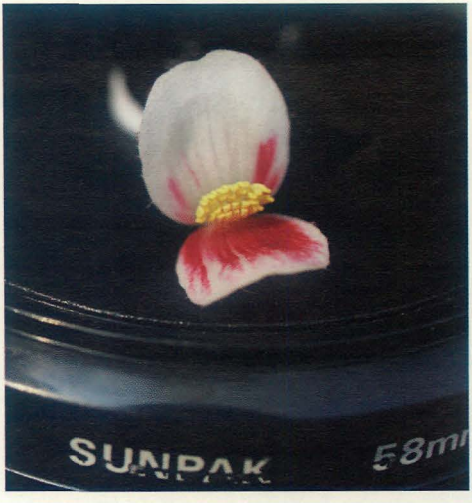
leaves appear to have a tendency to grow vertically, and may also be growing toward the lights on the plant stand. Male blooms open first. Male blooms have two tepals; the backs of the tepals are white with a pink to red center and base with sparse white to pink hairs. The inside of the tepals are white with the upper tepal marked with pink to red lines. On some blooms, the inner lower tepal has red markings as well. Tepal edges are sparsely lined with short white hairs. Female blooms also have two tepals. The bloom color and hairs are the same as the male blooms. The ovary is medium pink and has three triangular wings with pink hairs at the tip of each wing.

Above: The handsome, scalloped leaves on *B. ciliobracteata* Right: Closeup of *B. ciliobracteata* blossom

Although slow growing, *B. ciliobracteata* has become steadily larger and fills a fourteen-inch terrarium. It is growing in chopped, long fibered sphagnum moss placed over one third of an inch of charcoal, which is placed on one third of an inch of perlite. I change the moss in my terrariums once a year. Every two to three months, a day after I water my terrarium plants, I feed them with a liquid fertilizer diluted to one quarter to one half the recommended strength. At the moment I am using Schultz 10-15-10 Plant Food Plus, but other similar fertilizers should work well. Full spectrum lights left on for 12 hours a day seem to be enough to initiate and sustain bloom. My plant has been blooming for more than five months, and has had more than sixty blooms and/or buds at times.

B. ciliobracteata is a rhizomatous species, and may be propagated by dividing a plant, by rhizome cuttings, leaf cuttings, or from seed. I have been trying for months to set seed but have not been successful. Leaf cuttings and wedges are currently rooting well in lightly moistened one-half perlite and one-half vermiculite. The cuttings are in a closed clear container that has been placed under fluorescent lights.

B. ciliobracteata has a thick, firm leaf which makes me think that it might survive outside a terrarium if potted in a well drained potting medium and placed in a humid greenhouse. I have several cuttings started that I hope to bring to next year's conventions, and I will try one of those young plants in the walk-in-terrarium [humidity 60% to 70%] to see how it fares. Look for this lovely and interesting plant at the SWRGT or in San Francisco; I think you will enjoy growing it.



Begonia vietnamensis, *an attractive new species with peltate leaves from Vietnam*

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ABSTRACT. *Begonia vietnamensis* H. Q. Nguyen & C. I Peng (Begoniaceae; section *Reichenheimia*), a new species with peltate leaves from Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam.are described and illustrated. The new species bears a striking resemblance to several species from Peninsular Malaysia.

Key words: *Begonia*, Begoniaceae, section *Reichenheimia*, Viet Nam.

The genus *Begonia* L., contains more than 1,500 species distributed throughout the tropics and subtropics with the exception of northern Australia. Because of its large size *Begonia* has traditionally been subdivided into 66 sections (Doorenbos et al. 1998, Shui et al, 2002; Forrest & Hollingsworth, 2003; de Wilde & Plana, 2003). Most sections are recognized based on a combination of morphological characteristics, with tepal number and characteristics of the styles, stigmas, ovaries and fruit being particularly emphasized.

In December 2006, with support from members of the American Begonia Society, the first author conducted a Begonia expedition in North-Central Viet Nam to in an attempt to re-collect a Begonia species that was found several years ago. Some of them are determined as new species in section Coelocentrum. Plants of this section are, as a rule, dwellers on limestone cliffs or caves in karst regions in northern Vietnam that borders with Yunnan and Guangxi, China.

We were a bit disappointed to have collected only about half of the hunting list. However, a pleasant surprise in this trip was the discovery of three species of *Begonia* new to science and four that represent new records for the flora of Vietnam. One of the new species was found in Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park (PNKB-NP), a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It grew in shade on limestone derived soil and was rare. Our discovery of that new species in PNKB-NP is significant, because it links the *Begonia* flora of Vietnam with that of the Peninsular Malaysia. The new species resemble *B. tigrina* and *B. ignorata* (both of section *Reichenheimia*) described by

Top: *Begonia vietnamensis* leaf; Above: Plant in habitat.
All photos by Nguyen Quang Hieu

Ruth Kiew (2005) in her book "Begonias of Peninsula Malaysia", but it is distinct in having glabrous leaf stalks, female flowers open before the male flowers, and number of stigmas 3 or 4. With smooth foliages that are mottled reddish brown between the veins, this species has much horticultural potential. The new species is also similar to *Begonia kingiana* (section *Ridleyella*) from the Peninsular Malaysia in vegetative characters. A comparison of *B. vietnamensis* with *B. kingiana*, *B. tigrina* and *B. ignorata* are shown in Table 1.

It is noteworthy that in cultivation the new species' staminate flowers dropped in bud despite that well-formed fruits were seen in the wild. Such precocious staminate flower drop was noted in some natural hybrids in Taiwan (Peng and Chen, 1991; Peng and Sue, 2000), but not in other natural hybrid such as *Begonia* × *chungii*, whose staminate flowers were fully open (Peng and Ku, 2009). Whether the staminate flower bud drop is a result of hybridity or possible adverse greenhouse condition remains to be studied.

Thus far only three species of *Begonia* with peltate leaves are known to occur in Vietnam, all restricted to limestone areas. Two of them, *Begonia phuthoensis* H. Q. Nguyen and *B. cavaleriei* H. Léveillé, are assignable to sections *Coelocentrum* and *Diploclinium* respectively. The new peltate *Begonia* here reported belongs to section *Reichenheimia* because its ovary has

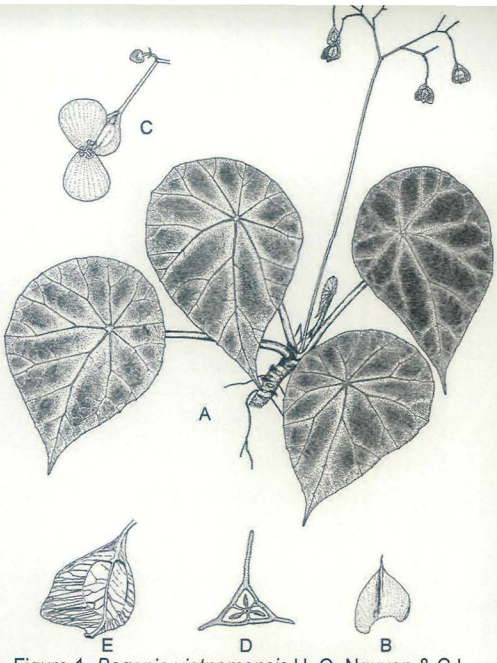

Figure 1. *Begonia vietnamensis* H. Q. Nguyen.& C.I. Peng A. Habitat; B. Stipule; C. Pistillate flower; D. Ovary, cross section; E. Dry fruit. (Drawn from holotype, *Nguyen Quang Hieu et al.* 262). Line drawing by Shin-Ming Ku.

3 locules and each with an undivided placenta. Section *Reichenheimia* is a polymorphous group of about 50 species distributed throughout much of the tropical and subtropical Asia (Doorenbos et al., 1998; Kiew, 2005; Tebbitt, 2005). The polymorphous characters include plants being tuberous or rhizomatous, leaves peltate or basifixed, and the varied number of tepals ranging from 2 to 5 or 6.

Begonia vietnamensis H. Q. Nguyen and

	Begonia vietnamensis (sect. *Reichenheimia*)	*Begonia kingiana* (sect. *Ridleyella*)	*Begonia tigrina* (sect. *Reichenheimia*)	*Begonia ignorata* (sect. *Reichenheimia*)
Petiole	Glabrous	Glabrous	Sparsely hairy	Hirsute
Leaf margin	Eciliate	Eciliate	Sparsely ciliolate	Long-ciliate
Pistillate tepals	2	4	2	2 (or 3)
Styles	3 (or 4)	3	3	3
Ovary	3-locular	2-locular	3-locular	3-locular

Table 1. Comparison of Begonia vietnamensis with B. kingiana, B. tigrina, and B. ignorata

C. I Peng, *sp. nov.* TYPE: Vietnam. Quang Bình Prov. Bố Trạch distr., Sơn Trạch comm., Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park, grow in rock crevices limestone in the lowland, 173 m, 29 Dec. 2006, *Nguyen Tien Hiep, Nguyen Quang Hieu, Tran The Vinh 262* (holotype, HN!). Figure 1.

Species nova similis Begoniae tigrinae, *sed a qua differt petiolis glabris (in* B. tigrina *pilosis); etiam similis* B. kingianae, *sed a qua differt floribus pistillatis tepalis 2 instructis (in* B. tigrina *4).*

Acaulescent herb. *Rhizome* prostrate, 4–6 mm in diam., glabrous, unbranched. Stipules persistent, red, triangular, 7–10 × 5–7 mm, apex pointed, ca. 0.2 mm, margin entire; *leaves* tufted; petiole red, glabrous, 13—16 cm long; lamina upper surface dull or pale green or mottled with reddish brown between the veins, glabrous, lower surface similar to upper surface, thinly succulent in life, thinly papery when dried, slightly asymmetric, peltate, broadly-ovate, 9–14 × 6–9 cm, apex accumulate, ca. 2 cm long, base rounded, margin toothed, venation palmate, main veins 7–8. *Inflorescence* axillary, peduncles erect, glabrous, 28–32 cm long; *bracts* caducous Flowers pink to white; *staminate flowers* dropped in buds and fully opened materials not seen, bracteoles obovate to oblong, ca. 6 × 1 mm, margin entire; *pistillate flowers* with pedicel ca. 1 cm long; *bracteoles* absent; *tepals* 2, white, ovate, ca. 6.4 × 3.2–4 mm, apex rounded, margin entire; *ovary* green to white, glabrous, ca. 8 mm long, wings 3, subequal, ca. 3.5 mm in diam., 3–locular, *placentation* axile, placentae 3, one in each locule, undivided; *styles* 3 or 4 , free, ca. 3.6 mm long, yellow, bifid, stigmas in a spiral band. *Fruits* pendulous, green, dehiscent between locules and wings, glabrous.

Acknowledgments. The field study was conducted by the first author with the support from the American Begonia Society and New York Botanical Garden. We are thankful to Prof. Qiner Yang (IBSC) for his assistance with Latin diagnosis, Dr. Nguyen Tien Hiep and Prof. Phan Ke Loc for their photography.

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Begonia vietnamensis Clockwise, from top: Closeup of plant in habitat; Pistillate flower; Inflorescence; Portion of rhizome, showing stipules. Photos by Nguyen Quang Hieu

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.

Below is the current list of seed available from the Seed Fund. Please self pollinate your species begonias, collect the seeds and send them to the seed fund. We depend on your contributions of seed to make a wider variety of species available to the members.

A special "thank you" to all of our seed contributors this past year: Beatrice Huckriede, Ronit Band, Roberto Brin, Joan Campbell, Joy and Gary Cook, Jacky Duruisseau, Mike Flaherty, J. Hafer, Rekha Morris, Charles Myers, Marci Oehler, Thelma O'Reilly and Wally Wagner for their seed contributions.

Packets of seeds of species and U numbers 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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B. angularis
B. aborensis Dunn
B. barkeri
B. boliviensis
B. burkillii
RM-AR-786
B. carolineifolia
B. cathcartii = *B.* U545
RM-AR-842 (Tentative identification)
B. cathayana
B. cinnabarina
B. coccinea
B. convallariodora
B. convolvulaceae
B. crassicaulis
B. cucullata var. *arenosicola*
B. descoleana
B. dipetala
B. dregei
B. fischeri
B. glabra
B. glandulosa (dayi)
B. griffithiana
RM-AR-806
B. incarnata
B. involucrata
B. karwinskyana
B. kenworthyae
*B. longifolia** RM-AR-804
B. ludwigii
B. luxurians
B. manicata
B. mariti
B. multinervia
B. nelumbiifolia
B. oaxacana
B. obliqua (pink fl)
B. obliqua (white fl)
B. palmata
RM-AR-790
*B. palmata** = *B.* U567
RM-M-677 (Unusual form)
*B. perakensis**
RM-AR-826 (Tentative identification)
B. peltata
B. reniformis
B. reniformis/vitifolia (red form)B. sericoneura
B. sikkimensis
B. silletensis subsp. *silletensis*
RM-AR-488
B. U083
B. U412
B. U498 (LIMITED)
B. ulmifolia
B. udisilvestris
B. umbraculifera
(LIMITED)
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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.

Begonia luxurians and its hybrids

Article & photos by Brad Thompson, Vista, CA

Begonia luxurians is a well known and popular species. Its popularity stems from it's large size and unique compound leaves that give it a palm look. Discovered in 1848 in Brazil, *B. luxurians* is probably the tallest growing begonia species, easily growing 8 to10 feet tall when grown in the landscape. In a pot it is usually more constrained but can still grow large. It blooms continuously in the warm months with large clusters of tiny white flowers. Its compound leaves can easily get over a foot in diameter. *B. luxurians* doesn't respond well to conventional pruning, for two reasons. One: Once it starts blooming it blooms at every node up the stem so there is no place for side shoots to grow. Two: Cut stems often die back to the ground or if they do branch, they branch awkwardly. The best way to prune is to wait for new shoots, usually in the spring, and then prune the old stems to the ground when the new shoots are a foot or two tall. The new shoots will quickly grow tall replacing the old stems. Cuttings are best from new shoots but growing from seed is the best propagation method and makes stronger plants.

Although *B. luxurians* is impressive in its own right, its unique qualities have made it a popular species to use

Left: Mature B. luxurians
Below: B. 'Paul Hernandez'

in hybridizing. The following are just a few.

B.'Paul Hernandez' is probably the largest growing shrub with textured hand shaped leaves that can get two feet long or more. It can easily grow into a specimen 6 feet tall and nearly as wide. I saw such a specimen in Mabel Corwin's yard. B. 'Paul Hernandez' is the result of crossing *B. luxurians* with *B. ghertii*. This begonia is one of the most impressive begonias for the perfect combination of size, texture and blooms.

B. 'Lee's Luxurians', *B.* 'Rudy's Luxurians' and *B.* 'Vista Quest' are all *B. luxurians* seedlings with an unknown parent. All are different in the degree that they inherited the compound trait of their parent and coloration. All three grow to six feet tall. All three share the flowering clusters of *B. luxurians* but have less flowers per cluster and larger flowers.

B. 'Mrs. Fred T. Scripps' is the result of

continued on page 26

Above: B. 'Vista Quest' photo by Michael Kartuz.
Opposite page, top: *B. luxurians* . Bottom: *B.* 'Mrs. Fred T. Scripps'

A delightfully tiny orchid, *Haraella odorata*. Photo by Linda Tamblyn

IN THE MAILBOX

Growing Orchids with Begonias

by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

If you are a true begoniac, then you also grow other plants with your precious begonias. In the past few years, I have been "bitten" by the orchid bug but good! Having ADD (Adult Distraction Disease) lol - I constantly require changes to keep my attention. The amazing Begonias have always satisfied this with rhizomatous, canes, trailing, etc. But, then orchids came along. They come from every corner of the world, with different blooming seasons. Some are epiphytic, other lithophytic, still others will thrive as terrestrial plants in my shaded landscape. Oh my god, what a find!

Well, I soon discovered the similarities in growing these two together. They happily reside in my backyard shade houses without additional heat or cover. Our mild Florida winter, with that occasional cold snap, make growing either easy. A cover of frost cloth takes care of anything in the 28-32F range, and my more sensitive orchids reside underneath the benches during these cold snaps to take advantage of the warmth from the ground. EVERY plant will stay outdoors except for a few specimens that are cherished or a rare variety. Begonias have always taken the cold for me, and now orchids do, too.

Both enjoy well-drained soil mixes, and although I grow orchids in a bark or coconut husk based mix, I use sponge rock or perlite as my drainage material. Small pieces of charcoal are mixed in both for added sweetness and drainage. I foliar feed both, and add fungicide whenever I remember. I rarely measure, but rather just "eyeball" (as Rachel Ray reminds me)! Growing as long as I have, I am confident my measurements are close enough. I could go on and on, but if you are looking for a wonderful companion, try orchids. Do an orchid search, and you will see a wonder of plants to choose from, many growing in cooperation with begonias. I have also used this knowledge to improve my begonia growing. How, you may ask? Email me at gsytch@cs.com and I will tell you!

Luxurians continued from pg 25

crossing *B. scharffiana* and *B. luxurians*. It is bright green and grows into a large specimen plant with hairy hand shaped leaves about a foot long, many with small leaflets in the center. It is a shy bloomer but so impressive in size and structure that it is still well worth growing just for the foliage.

B. juliana crossed with *B. luxurians* resulted in *B.*'Lady Brown' and *B.*'Mike Flaherty'. Both are more compact than the other hybrids, growing usually three feet tall. *B.* 'Lady Brown' has leaves that are less cleft, broader, and more dark green whereas *B.*'Mike Flaherty' has darker bronze leaves that are more narrow and dark bronze. Both have clusters of cream flowers with pink ovaries and slightly scented.

The Follys (*B.*'Thompson's Folly', *B.*'Freda's Folly' and *B.* 'O'Flaherty's Folly') are the result of crossing *B. echinosepala* with *B. luxurians*. All grow 3 to 4 feet tall. All three have bright green leaves with a different edge or cleft. O'Flaherty's has the largest flowers, more than twice as big as the other two which have small dainty flowers. All three have a cinnamon spicy scent.

Although condensed, I hope you learned a little about *B. luxurians* and it's hybrids. I'm sure there are more hybrids to come.

B. acetosella Craib and *B. longifolia* Blume

continued from pg. 9

been recorded.

The second unidentified species from this location grew upright, about 18-24" high with serrated lanceolate foliage with cream variegation. I had not encountered any begonia which resembled this one in the previous trips I have made to Arunachal. It was vaguely reminiscent of *B. longifolia*, but without any flowers or fruit it was another mystery begonia of great elegance [now *B.* U572].

By the time I had finished photographing and searching for begonia flowers and capsules/berries in the dense growth, which also had a sprinkling of the white flowered *Impatiens mishmiensis*, it was well past noon and time for us to head east to Lohit if we were to get there without having to negotiate dirt tracks through forests with no markers or villages to guide us in the night.

Dark form leaves of *B.* U574

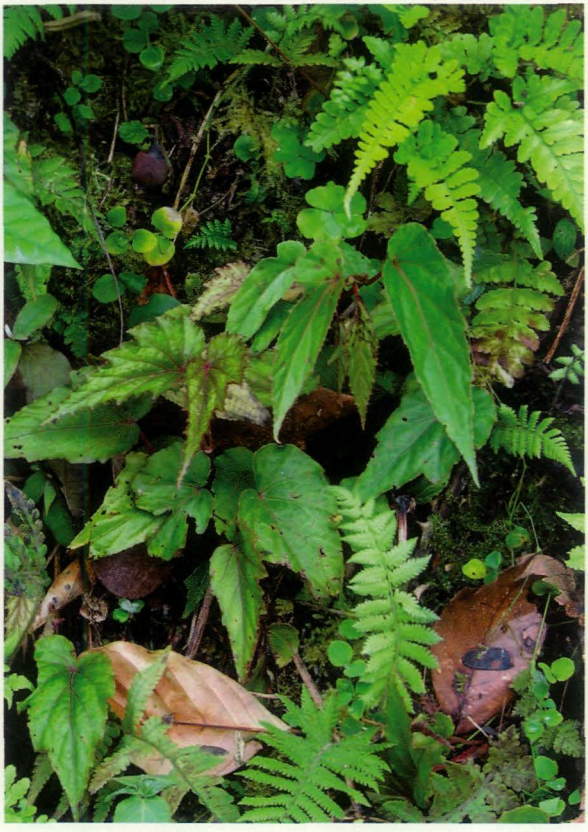
Although I have not found any *B. acetosella* Craib in Lohit to date, on the 4th day of exploration in Lohit I came across a small stand of begonias above the Delei River where there were two forms of a species which resembled the upright, narrow leaved species which I had documented at the second site in Upper Dibang Valley, U572. One of these had dark, almost black-green variegation on dark leaves with carmine-purple undersides, and the other had much lighter, almost chartreuse leaves with a splash of pinkish- red on its leaves, which on the underside were reddish maroon with creamy- green variegation . These grew among *B. longifolia* which had obviously seeded themselves from larger plants growing further up the cliff side, and a narrow band of dark leaved *B. palmata* at the lower edge of this wide, gently sloping embankment. This section of the hills just above the river was an appropriately moist habitat which I had learned to associate with both *B. longifolia* and *B. palmata*. This unidentified species [*BU 574*], which I have not found anywhere else in Lohit, was obviously and abundantly happy in this moisture laden soil and ambient air.

Like *B. palmata* this unidentified species grows from narrow rhizomes and tended to root where it came in contact with the dark, damp soil. But unlike the much wider, pal-

B. U572 with *B. palmata*

mately lobed foliage of *B. palmata*, the lanceolate, serrated leaves of this species were vaguely similar to those of *B. longifolia*. On my return to the USA months later, I registered the two forms of what I decided was the same species as *B.* U574.

The tentative identification of *B.* U572 and *B.* U574 in late July was as surprising if not more so than my initial encounter with these in the second half of January 2009. Dr. Ching-I Peng of Academia Sinica in Taipei, Taiwan had scheduled a visit to me and my begonia collection in July. Intimately involved with the documentation and study of Chinese begonias, and familiar with the begonias of southeast Asia where he has explored for begonias in Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines and other countries, Dr. Peng and his institute maintain a large collection of species begonias from Asia, including those from the northeastern Himalayas which I have documented so far. During the four long days we spent looking at and talking about begonias, I showed him pictures of the 20 unidentified species I have documented in India so far.



B. longifolia with one form of *B.* U574

As we examined photos of *B.* U572 and *B.* U574 he looked slightly puzzled, and asked me if I had considered their being natural hybrids. I had hesitantly begun to think along these lines, and instantly said '*B. longifolia* and *B. palmata*'. I had no sooner said this then he smacked his forehead and said, " I have recently published an article on a hybrid of *B. longifolia* and *B. palmata* which I have named *B. longifolia X B. palmata* var. *chungii* for the elderly botanist who showed me this small colony in Taiwan."

The two forms of *B.* U574 grew in a small colony where there were no other species besides *B. longifolia* and *B. palmata*, and *B.* U572 grew with both these species, *B. acetosella* and *B.* U571. One interesting point regarding these hybrids is their foliar color which may well be derived from that of *B. palmata* growing in their vicinity. *B.* U572 grew with a colony of white / cream variegated *B. palmata*, which may well explain its cream variegation. The *B. palmata* which grew in the small colony with the two forms of *B.* U574 had monochromatic dark green foliage with a darker, almost blackish green defining the central sections of its leaves. This may well be reflected in the form of *B.* with dark green leaves [without cream or white variegation] with carmine-red undersides. Although Dr. Peng was reluctant to come to any conclusion without a careful and detailed examination of all the significant parts of a begonia, he nevertheless admitted that if it is a hybrid of the two species [*B. longifolia* and

B. palmata] with the widest range stretching from the eastern Himalayas into Taiwan, then mine were " far more beautiful than his hybrid", which are a plain green! We now await the results of a detailed analysis of *B.* U572 and *B.* by Dr. Peng and his team of botanists and taxonomist at Academia Sinica.

Acknowledgement

The 2008-2009 trip to document the begonias of Arunachal and Meghalaya in India was made possible by the support of His Excellency S. K. Singh, Governor of Rajasthan, and his wife, her Excellency Srimati. Manju Singh; His Excellency General J.J. Singh, Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, and his wife, Her Excellency Srimati Anupama Singh, and Sri Prashant Lokhande, Secretary for the State of Arunachal Pradesh. Without their support, hospitality, and interest in this project I would not have been able to travel through the largely restricted areas of Arunachal in search of begonias. My grateful thanks go also to the competence and diligence of our chauffeur, Sri A. C. Das, and the vigilance and agility of the Personal Security Officer attached to the Governor of Arunachal, Sri Haga Challa, who not only watched over our welfare but clamored up several cliffs to bring down begonias I could not reach.

During this same trip I also explored the Western Ghats of Karnataka, and owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Irwin Soans and his wife Maureen, who made me welcome in their house. The trip to look for begonias in the Bababadun Hills would have been greatly impoverished without the presence of Mr. Irwin Soans, who not only arranged for a reliable chauffeur and car, but brought his inimitable wry sense of the comical to lighten some of the more grotesquely scary moments of this trip.

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Mary Sakamoto, president of the ABS, Johanna Zinn, chairperson of the Grants Committee, Janet Brown, former president of the ABS, Normand Dufresne , Antoon Heofnagels, Freda and R.L. Holley, Lulu Leonard, Carol and Peter Notaras, Thelma O'Reilley, the Atlanta chapter, the Astro chapter, the Buxton chap-ter, the eight chapters of the Southwest Region of the ABS [Alamo, Astro, Fred A. Barkely, Mae Blanton, Dallas, Houston Satellite, San Jacinto, the Austin Area Begonia Society], and the Begonia Society of Melbourne, Australia.

Rekha Morris, Aug. 2009

Above: *B. acetosella* var. *hirtifolia.*
Below: *B. acetosella* var. *acetosella* Dibang Valley

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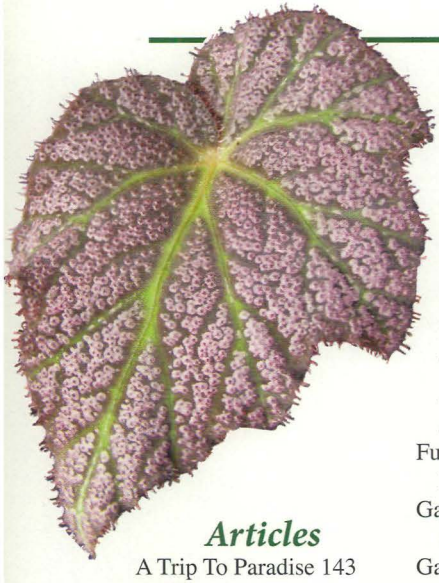

Articles

Regular Features

Artists & Photographers

Above: *Begonia* 'Thrush' photo by Jem Wiseman

Authors

Individuals

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Begonia 'Bartonea' This plant also has a synonym name of *B.* 'Winter Jewel'.
Photo by Jem Wiseman

PLANTS

Cultivars

Species

Opposite page - Top left: Unknown Rex hybrid. Bottom left: *B. variegata* formerly called *B. masoniana* var. *maculata*. Above: *B.* 'Pollux'. Photos by Tony Pinto of the Buxton Branch.

This beautiful species was collectedand photographed by Tony Pinto in "Mandor" (Kalimantan Barat, Borneo. He wonders if anyone can identify it.

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Begonia 'Mirage' photo by Mary Bucholtz