



THE

BEGONIAN

July/August 2011

The Begonian

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.

B. grandis spp. *sinensis*
Photo by Dan Heim



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Begonia luxurians pg. 132



Begonia rubriflora pg. 137



White-flowered *Begonia griffithiana* pg. 137

Front cover: Dried pistillate flower of *Begonia rubriflora*. See Ludovic Kollmann's article on pg. 137

Back cover: *B. griffithiana*, with its eye-catching crimson capsules, in the hills of Arunachal, India. More on pg. 142

ABS Nominations - Ballot on Page 148

Mark your ballot and return today!

Completed ballots must be received by **July 30** to be counted. Dual memberships have an additional ballot included in the bag with this issue of *The Begonian* so both members may vote. Remember – ballots may not be photocopied or written on except to mark your choices for officers. Additional comments must be made on a separate page.

President's Message

The 2011 Convention in Oklahoma turned out to be a real treat! Old friends, new friends and lots of begonias—what more could you ask for?

I was particularly delighted to see so many new faces.

Remember those days? Your first meeting, your first convention, the first time you entered a begonia show.

We all like to encourage the new members to get involved and that's just what our Editor, Linda Tamblyn has been doing for months. She came with several members of the Kansas City Branch and they brought entries.

She told me about their conversations and how no one thought they had a

chance in the show.

Patty Daniels entered a lovely semi-tuberous begonia in the novice class and that begonia ended up taking home a Cultural Award, a Division Trophy and another one for Best of Show. Way to go, Patty!

It is always a joy to help someone to succeed and see their pride in their accomplishments. That's one of the things that makes me so proud to be a member of the ABS. There are so many groups and individuals who do so much to educate and encourage and I love to hear the success stories. Keep up the good work!

Be kind to one another, *Cheryl*



Begonias join with bromeliads, ferns, orchids and palms to create a lush tropical look at the newly renovated Crystal Bridge Conservatory at Myriad Gardens in Oklahoma City, OK. Photo by Jem Wiseman

Share Your Quick Tips

The best way to learn about begonias is from other people who also grow and study them. At the recent conference in Oklahoma City I picked up several bits of wisdom and experience that I'm going to try in my own garden. Those tidbits of information are what inspire me to look closer at these beautiful plants and to strive to grow them the very best that I'm able. And, often that little tip someone offers when we talk plants, catapults my growing abilities forward.

Quick Tips editor for The Begonian, Dianna Wilkerson, wants to help get all that good information out to everyone in the ABS. After all, the reason we are in this club is to grow excellent begonias and share with others how to do that.

Have you observed an interesting phenomenon about growing begonias? Got a recipe for a favorite soil mix? Any thoughts on pots? Insights on terrariums? Take a few minutes – ASAP - and write up your Quick Tip. Please keep them under 250 words and include your name, city, state and ABS Branch as you want it to appear with your tip in The Begonian. Although we will not print phone or email without your permission we would like to ask that you include it in case there is a question.

Send your Quick Tips to Dianna Wilkerson, at 15356 Pheasant Run, Choctaw, OK 730200 or email to b2writer@cox.net.



Begonia diadema, antique print courtesy of Julie Vandervilt

ABS Annual Business Meeting Set for Tampa

Come join us in August for the annual business meeting. We are planning a great time for all who can make it. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Express, Tampa at 4750 N. Dale Mabry Hwy, Tampa, FL 33614 just a short drive from the airport. The hotel has complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport as well as complimentary shuttle service within 3 miles of the hotel. Eating won't be a problem as there is a steakhouse on premises as well as quite a few restaurants in the area. In addition to the meeting, we are planning a plant sale for those who are interested and a few tours during the weekend. We're looking forward to seeing y'all again and, bring your Speedo's - it's going to be hot.

Questions: Merle DeLand, 863-738-8722 or e-mail mdeland@tampabay.rr.com.

Reports are due from all standing committees by August 13 at the annual meeting. You can send them to the president but please be sure to also send a copy to the secretary. Thanks!

Proceedings Of The Board Meeting

American Begonia Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

May 14, 2011

President Lenert called the meeting to order.

The proceedings of the prior board meeting in San Francisco were approved as published in the Begonian and were thus upgraded to minutes.

In the absence of the treasurer, President Lenert attempted to present the financial report. However, the only information available was income and expense data for 2010. Therefore, no report was given for 2011.

Editor Linda Tamblyn requested contributions of articles and pictures to include in the Begonian.

Holiday Greetings Chair Wanda Macnair congratulated donors for contributing over \$5300 last year. She then requested donations for 2011 according to the categories described elsewhere. The categories are the same as last year. A total of \$1200 has been received to date. The deadline for donations is September 1, 2011. Early donation checks will not be cashed until after July 31, 2011.

President Lenert announced that the Annual Business Meeting will be held in Tampa, Florida, on August 13, 2011.

The Awards Study Committee that was appointed after the last meeting to review all ABS awards for the purpose of reducing costs consisted of Awards Chair Ann Salisbury, Freda Holley and Mary Bucholtz. The committee recommended that the Tim O'Reilly and Marge Lee awards be discontinued. A vote will be held at the next meeting.

The Nominating Committee consisting of Margaret Fisher, Johanna Zinn and Paul Tsamtsis reported the following slate of officers for the next two years. The slate is President---Gene Salisbury, 1st Vice President---Howard

Berg, 2nd Vice President---Jim Estes, Secretary---Joan Estes, Treasurer---Carol Notaras. The ballot will be published and sent out before the next meeting along with instructions. No marks other than the vote should be on the ballot.

A discussion of the convention site approval process indicated that members would like a guidance plan to help encourage branches to hold conventions.

U-Numbers Co-Chair Charles Jaros reported that U-Number assignments are now up to U612.

Rekha Morris announced that she is planning to submit another proposal to ABS for collecting Begonia in India. She asked for everyone to help support her trip. Those who contribute should make the donation to the ABS and send it to the ABS treasurer with a notation for Rekha's collecting trip. This will help ABS conform to IRS regulations and assure a tax deduction for the donor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard Macnair, Secretary

Holiday Greetings Reminder

There is still time to get in your holiday greetings donations. In a way, this could be a thank-you to Linda for the job she is doing. We usually take in enough to more than pay for a single issue of The Begonian. Try to get your donations in to Wanda Macnair, 59 Walker St, Cambridge, MA 02138 by September 1. The list of donors will be in the November-December issue. Don't be left out. If there are further questions, contact Wanda by snail mail, or email, wmacnair@msn.com or by telephone at 617-876-1356.

Newsletter Editors' Project

By Linda Tamblin, *The Begonian Editor*

At the recent Oklahoma City conference, several of the editors of local Branch newsletters met to discuss our publications and how we can make them better. One thing we talked about was a way to share our knowledge, expertise and the first-rate articles we get from members.

While some of us have excellent and willing writers in our groups, others have a difficult time getting much more than the time and location for their next meeting. Plus, some of us have taken on the job of editor but have little experience with the computer program we use to create the document.

By working together, our newsletters can become a truly valued part of membership in our local groups. And, we can use our publications as a wonderful tool to promote our Branches as we strive to build our memberships and share our Aims and Purposes (see page 122).

One of the ideas we would like to implement is a Newsletter Editors' Article Archive. This would be a place where editors could submit - with the author or photographer's permission - articles and photos that could be used in other Branch newsletters. A quarterly email or, possibly CD, would be sent out with the available items to all interested editors. This would include the information needed to properly credit the contributor and original newsletter. Always publishing proper credit for these materials would be a must in using the Article Archive.

Another thought was the possibility of mentoring. People who have excellent skills using their preferred program - MS Word, Publisher, Corel, Indesign, or whatever - could agree to be called or emailed for questions from less experienced users. We would also like to provide those who

would like to publish digitally the knowledge to make that happen. Even if only a percentage of the members received their newsletter electronically it is a marked saving for the group over a year. Online newsletters also have the benefit of using lots of color photos without the hefty expense of color printing. Another very real advantage is the time saving for busy editors on deadline - the time spent printing address labels and stuffing envelopes could be spent on tending and enjoying our plants.

For those who already electronically publish, it would be helpful to have a list of the other editors to exchange newsletters with to provide new ideas. One great advantage of sharing newsletters is to see what kind of programs other groups offer. Making sure our programs are fresh and interesting helps keep our memberships strong and enthusiastic. Also, looking at other formats can help us create a more readable and efficient publication.

If you are interested in this project please email me at begoniaskc@yahoo.com. I will send a questionnaire to help get us started. You will be able to say if you are only interested in the Article Archive or if you would be willing to mentor also. When we work together we all benefit.

Thanks very much. I hope to hear from you soon.

Advertise in the Begonian!

Contact:

Linda Tamblin 913.231.1020

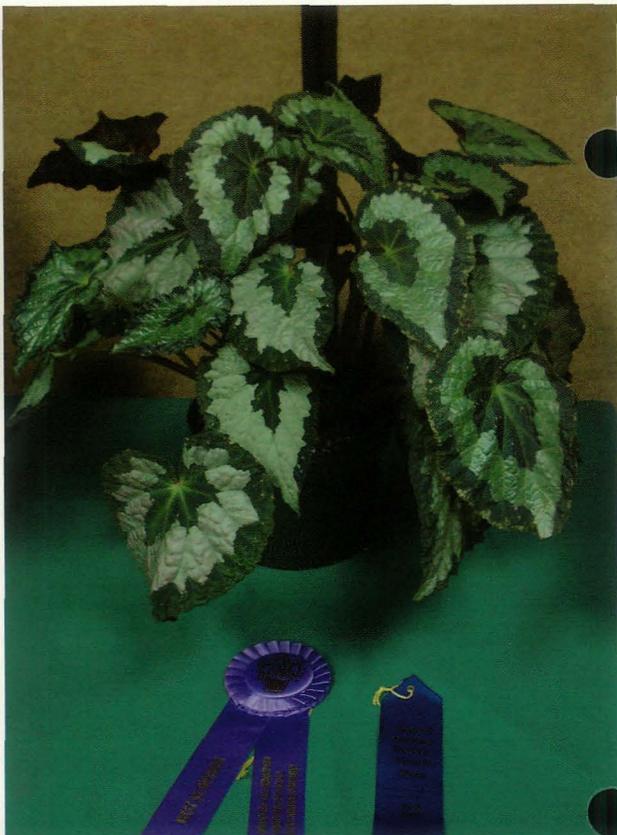
Email: begoniaskc@yahoo.com



A Glimpse from the OKC Show

Above: A lovely *B. 'Gryphon'* shown by Tom Keepin. **Right:** *B. rex*, also shown by Tom Keepin, which won a blue ribbon, Best in the Division and Best Species in the Show and received a Cultural Certificate.

Below: Cindy Dickens incredible terrarium - winner of the People's Choice award and Best in Division winner.
Photos by Johanna Zinn



Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund

The Margaret Lee Branch
San Diego County, CA

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

Please self-pollinate your species begonias, collect the seeds and send them to the seed fund. We depend on your contributions of seeds to make a wider variety of species available to the members.

► New seeds from Beatrice Huckriede:

B. dipetala
B. echinosepala
B. glabra
B. gehrtii
B. incarnata
B. malabarica
B. sericoneura
B. sericoneura x unknown
B. sikkimensis
B. 'Raintree Delight'

Limited seed \$3.00 per pkt: *B. imperialis*

► New seeds from Geoff Bishop:

B. masoniana

► New seeds from Gwynne Fowkes:

B. peltata var. *peltata*
B. thiemei

Limited seed \$3.00 per pkt: *B. limprichtii*

► New seeds from Joan Campbell:

Limited seed \$3.00 per pkt:
B. U607 (cf. *B. rockii*)

Thanks for your contributions.

Packets of seeds are \$2.00. Very rare seeds and newly collected seeds will be \$3.00 or more per packet when noted. California residents please add 8.75% sales tax. All orders must be accompanied by check or money order, payable in US funds ONLY to the Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund.

Please send your order with payment to:

American Begonia Society, Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund, Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street, Encinitas, CA 92024. E-address: dean @deansmail.us

Cost of mailing: US only: 1-12 packets \$1; 13-24, \$1.35; 25-36, \$1.71; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.30; 49-60, \$2.66. Canada only: 1-12 packets, \$1.10; 13-24, \$1.46; 25-36, \$1.82; 37-48 (2 cans) \$2.35; 49-60, \$2.71. Mexico only: 1-12 packets, \$1.15; 13-24, \$1.51; 25-36, \$1.87; 37-48 (2 cans), \$2.50; 49-60, \$2.81. All other international mail: 1-12 packets, \$1.85; 13-24, \$2.68; 25-36, \$3.68; 37-48, \$4.68; 49-60, \$5.68.

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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B. eminii

Bill Claybaugh

Conservation Chairman, ABS



The African begonia species *B. eminii* found its way into my collection about two years ago as either a gift at our Branch meeting, or from a local Houston nursery. Either way, mine is just one of many in active circulation in the Houston area today.

The species is described in detail by Dr. J.J.F.E. de Wilde of Wageningen University in his book "Studies in Begoniaceae VII, 2002", but for this article, I will describe my particular plants and my own experiences. First, this plant can be grown as either an epiphyte in sphagnum moss or in a normal peatmoss/perlite-potting medium. I prefer the latter because, for me, this is the easiest. The plant prefers significant shade and lots of moisture and humidity. I grow this plant in my shade house, which has frequent overhead spraying, or in 4-6 inch pots set into large plastic containers with wet perlite underneath. In its natural home in central Africa, the plant grows

"sprawling on fallen rotten trees or epiphytic on the lower part of the tree-trunks or sometimes on rocks: always in the lower stratum of the forest, usually in shade and often close to water or in otherwise humid habitats" (de Wilde). My plants develop long stems, frequent side shoots and sometimes roots at the nodes. It is easy, however, to contain and grow as trailing scandent or even something resembling a shrub if one frequently trims a few inches off the growing tips. These tips can easily be rooted and they quickly establish a new plant with little effort.

One obvious novelty of this species compared to other begonias is that its leaves are almost perfectly symmetrical. For a begonia, this is fairly unique because almost all begonias have asymmetric leaves. The leaves can be further described as dark green in color on the upper surface and light green on the lower, ovate in shape, having a rounded base, an acute/acuminate apex, about 3-4 inches in length and 1.5-2 inches in width. The underside of the leaf, especially the veins, are covered with very tiny hairs (indument), so fine that a 10 power magnifying glass is required to see them. The same can be said about the stems. Various literature sources say the basal lobes of this species are oblique, cordate, obtuse, or truncate but my plant is nearer rounded. (See photograph included with this article.) This gave me considerable concern, initially, but every other characteristic of the plant indicates

it is *B. eminii* so I must conclude it is.

The female (pistillate) flowers of this species have four very narrow, light pink colored tepals (see photograph). These flowers occur one or two to a node, have a very short to no pedicel, an ovary shaped much like a banana (fusiform), and with no wings. The ovary is very small, not much over 1/2 inch in length and less than 1/8 inch in diameter. I have not examined the seedpod in detail but literature information indicates it usually has three chambers for seeds and they will open to release seeds, unlike some African species such as *B. microsperma* or *B. staudtii*. Over the past two years, I have had numerous female blooms, but never a male flower. Again, literature information says the male (staminate) flowers occur in groups of 3 to 15, in a dichasial cyme (branched inflorescence) on peduncles 0.5 to 1.5 cm in length with pedicels less than 1.0 cm in length. The

female and male flowers always occur on different inflorescence.

Overall, *B. eminii* is easy-to-grow and easy to propagate from stem cuttings. The growth habit can be a problem if you try to contain its shape, but if left alone, it flows and makes a very attractive "trailing scandent". The very small colorful flowers with their fusiform seedpod are quite unique and add to the pleasure of growing this African beauty. Although sometimes classified as a "thick-stem" in our flower shows, my experience indicates this plant should be classified as a "trailing-scandent". Mark Tebbitt in his book *Begonias, Cultivation, Identification, and Natural History*, 2005, also lists this plant as a "trailing-scandent".

Opposite page: Flowers of *B. eminii*
Below: Nearly symmetrical leaves make this begonia a bit of a novelty.





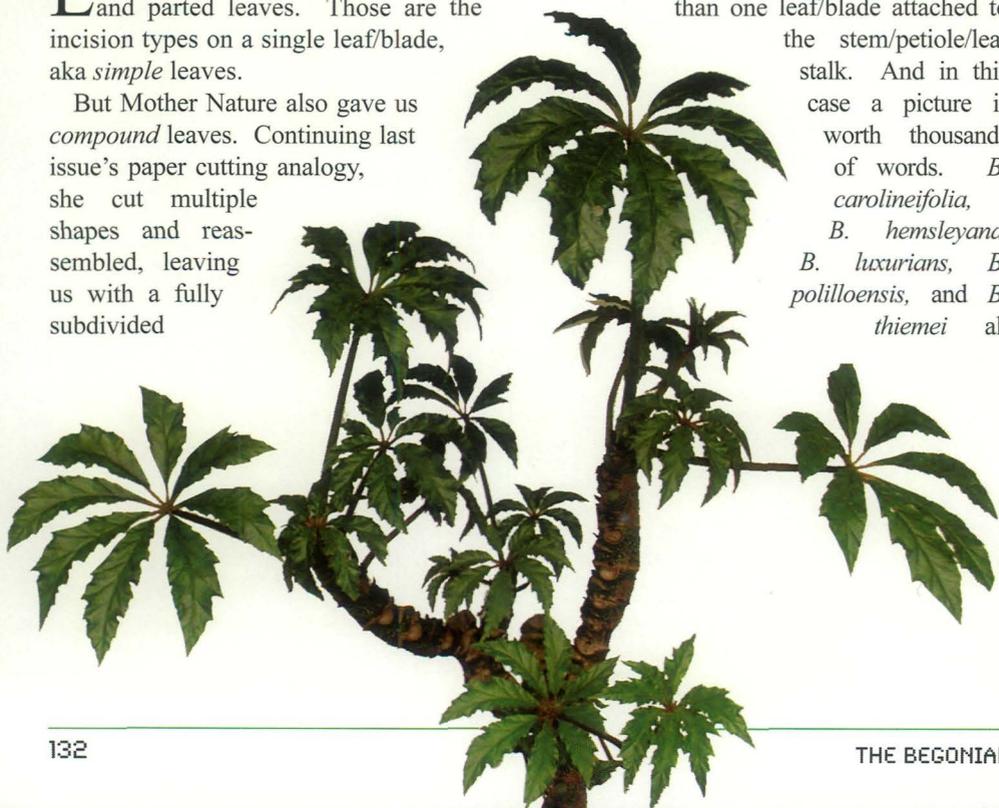
A Word with You: Cutouts Part II

By Claudia Goodridge, New Haven, CT

Last time we looked at lobed, cleft, and parted leaves. Those are the incision types on a single leaf/blade, aka *simple* leaves.

But Mother Nature also gave us *compound* leaves. Continuing last issue's paper cutting analogy, she cut multiple shapes and reassembled, leaving us with a fully subdivided

blade; compound leaves have more than one leaf/blade attached to the stem/petiole/leaf stalk. And in this case a picture is worth thousands of words. *B. carolineifolia*, *B. hemsleyana*, *B. luxurians*, *B. polilloensis*, and *B. thiemei* all





Above: *B. luxurians* Photo by Julie Vanderwilt

Opposite page, top: *B. hemsleyana* represents another example of compound leaves. Photo by Dan Heim

Opposite page, bottom: *B. carolineifolia* Photo by Julie Vanderwilt

are glorious examples.

Be aware that each leaflet of that compound leaf can be described with the incision or margin vocabulary we've looked at over the past year. For example, Mark Tebbitt describes the *B. luxurians* compound leaf in great detail, but the compound part thus; "...palmate-compound, usually with 11-20 large narrowly elliptic lobes and a few to many smaller under-developed lobes where petiole joins blade, larger lobes 6-25 x 1-2 cm, occasion-

ally themselves deeply split, margin with sharp forward-pointing teeth, apex acuminate, base wedge shaped." It does get complex.

Hopefully you haven't glazed over entirely with all this vocabulary. It was my own glazing over that pushed me to investigate botanispeak awhile ago.

Please note, there's a pop quiz coming soon on the vocabulary we've looked at so far.

Letter to the Editor

In a 2008 Begonian I saw an article on terrariums and saw one that looked exactly like ones I have at present. Mine is like a plastic bubble with holes in the top. Also the top half that lifts off is about 12 inches in diameter. I would like to purchase some for myself and possibly for the club, as mine are starting to fall apart after 20 years of use. They are no longer available here in Australia. Could someone please let me know the price of these and where to purchase them?

Many thanks, Joe Romeo, Prospect, South Australia

From the Editor:

After receiving Joe's letter to the editor I asked several people for ideas on finding suitable terrarium containers. Doug Byrom recommended a plastic bell jar called GARD'N Dome by Dalen that even has a vent. These can set over an existing pot. Charles Henthorne likes the plastic salad bowls or punch bowls that can be found at restaurant or party supply stores. The bottom is planted then a second bowl is inverted over it and the two are clipped together. Johanna Zinn uses the article below when she gives terrarium talks at clubs or other organizations. Hope this helps!

Terrarium Containers and Where to Find Them

By Johanna Zinn, Fairfax, VA

For those of us who grow plants in terrariums, finding appropriate containers is sometimes a challenge. Even with Internet shopping available to most of us, purchasing a terrarium that is just the right size, shape, height, appearance, or price can be difficult.

Fortunately, in addition to using containers designed as terrariums, begonias will grow in most clear containers that have a cover or can be covered. Some will grow well in the extra humidity provided by the sides of the container, and will not need a cover.

Glass containers that work well include bowls, brandy snifters, large hurricane lamps, cloches, fish bowls, pickle jars, aquariums, cake dish or cheese covers, trifle bowls, and display boxes or cases. Many of these can be purchased new at kitchen stores, craft stores, at discount stores such as Ross, Marshalls, or T. J. Maxx in the home section, Target, or

at pet stores. HomeGoods stores in our area have a very good selection of glass containers suitable for terrariums. Glass cloches or terrariums can be purchased at local nurseries or via the Internet or catalogues. Put a deep saucer under a cloche to hold your planting medium and you have created a contained atmosphere. Containers purchased without a cover can be sealed with glass circles cut at a glass shop to fit the opening, with plastic wrap, or with disposable plastic plates available at party or grocery stores. Many stores sell clear glass plates that work well as terrarium lids. Used containers can be purchased at antique/junk shops, Goodwill or Salvation Army, or garage sales.

Plastic containers such as disposable salad bowls, fish bowls or aquariums, soda bottles, display boxes or small display cases, cloches, sweater boxes, clear ice buckets, large pretzel jars, or

cookie containers are suitable for growing plants. Party stores sell multiple sizes of disposable salad/fruit/punch bowls and some sell large clear ice buckets. Put one bowl or ice bucket on top of the other to make a terrarium. If the bowl or ice bucket has a rolled edge, the top and bottom can be held together with hair clips called claws. These are similar to orchid clips and come in multiple sizes that fit most rolled edges. Hair clips are available in most grocery and chain stores.

Some local nurseries stock a few bowl terrariums, cloches, and Wardian cases, or may be willing to order one for you. Craft stores such as A C Moore, Michaels or Hobby Lobby sell small to large inexpensive glass bowls. Botanic gardens often have gift shops that sell terrariums. Trade plant catalogues with friends or look at catalogues at local horticultural parks or libraries for terrariums for sale. Type terrarium into Google or another search engine and you should have several options from which to choose. If you are determined and flexible, you should be able to find a container to suit most humidity-loving begonias.



Top left: A variety of glass terrarium containers. Top, right: Plastic containers can serve as lightweight terrarium containers and can often be found sold as salad or punch bowls. Photos by Johanna Zinn
Above: Charles and Leora Henthorne's terrarium garden.
Photo by Charles Henthorne



Adventitious Plantlets

By Virginia Jens, Lake Worth, FL

I was surprised to find three adventitious plantlets, in full bloom, growing on the inflorescence stem on *B. 'Priscilla Beck'* (below, left and right). There are no roots on the plantlets - they are apparently getting all their nourishment from the stem of the inflorescence. While I know that begonias have residual meristemic properties (which is how we propagate from leaf cuttings), this is unusual, although not unknown.

B. 'Priscilla Beck' (in full bloom) was given to me at the Officers Installation in December, and has not stopped blooming since then. Additional observations from Doris Happel and Dale Sena - if left to it's own, the plantlet will start developing a rhizome. As it gets heavier, the flower stem will bend over to the ground, and the rhizome will root.



Begonia rubriflora, L. Kollmann, a new species and a new identity for *Begonia* U014

by Ludovic Jean Charles Kollmann

Research Associate of the Mello Leitão Biological
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Abstract

Begonia rubriflora L.Kollmann (Begoniaceae), a new species of section *Begonia* from Argentina and a new identity for *Begonia* U014, is described and illustrated. This species resembles *Begonia descoleana* L.B.Sm. & B.G.Schub. with which it is compared.

Key words: *Begonia*, Begoniaceae, section *Begonia*, new species, Argentina.

Begonia U014 appeared in the early 80's as American Begonia Society (ABS) seed from Argentina. Fred Fuchs and Tom Mentelos, from Florida, imported this plant from an orchid collector who lived off the highway that divides Argentina and Paraguay (1).

Begonia U014 was a parent of various hybrids such as 'Christmas Candy', 'Firebird', 'BabyWing pink' and 'Dragon Wings'. The latter is a remarkable new garden flower, created in 1997 by Burpee and produced by PanAmerican Seed. It is a hybrid of *Begonia* U014 and a *semperflorens* type cultivar (2).

Begonia U014 has been considered the species *Begonia descoleana* L.B.Smith & B.G.Schubert (2) or a hybrid by the fact that some plants cultivated in USA are sterile. However, Brazilian cultivated *Begonia* U014 plants are fertile and all the seedlings have the same phenotype as the parents and they in turn are also fertile. which suggests that it is a real natural species. It is described herein as a new species.

DESCRIPTION

Begonia rubriflora L.Kollmann, *sp. nov.* **Typus:** BRAZIL. ESPÍRITO SANTO: Santa Teresa, L.Kollmann collection, cultivate, 29.VII.2009, fl. fr., L. Kollmann,

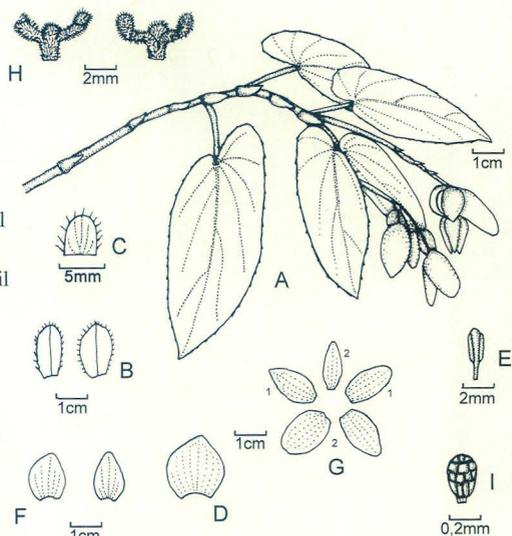


Figure 1: A. Habit; B. Stipule; C. Bract; D. Sepal of staminate flower; E. Stamen; F. Prophylls; G. Pistillate flower, sepals (1), petals (2); H. Styles, right front view, left back view; I. Seed.

continued on next page



11771 (Holotype: MBML; Isotype: RB, MO, NY, P). Fig. 1

Species haec *Begonia descoleanae affinis, sed plantae pilosus, stipulis persistentibus, floribus rubra, floribus masculinis 2-sepala et floribus feminis 3-prophyllum differt.*

Suffrutescent herbs, erect to reclining, 40-50 cm tall, trichomes simple. **Stems** 5-6 mm in diameter, green, brown when old, setose; internodes 0.8-6 cm long. **Stipules** 1.15-1.8 x 0.6-1 cm, green, persistent, translucent, apex obtuse, base obovate, margins ciliate. **Leaves** alternate; petioles 2-4 cm long, reddish, cylindrical, setose; leaf blade 6.5-11 x 2.7-3.7 cm, green, abaxial face green to reddish, shiny, simple, asymmetrical, lanceolate, apex acute, margins serrulate, ciliate, venation actinodromous, 7-8-veins at base, stomata clustered. **Inflorescence** 6-10.5 cm long, dichasium, cymes twice dichotomous, 5-staminate flowers, 2-pistillate flowers, red; bracts red, persistent, 3.5-4 x 3-4 mm, oblong, apex obtuse, margins lacinate to ciliate. **Staminate flower:** pedicel 2-2.8 cm long, red, glandulate when young; 2-sepals, red, 1.76-1.9 x 1.6-1.75 cm, orbicular, apex orbicular; stamens 22-36, yellow, the filaments 1.1-2 mm long, the anthers ca. 1.5 mm long, oblong to obovate, the connective very slightly projecting, apex rounded. **Pistillate flower:** pedicel 1.4-1.6 cm long, red; 3-prophylls 1.47-1.5 x 0.9-1.25 cm, red, persistent, ovate, apex obtuse, serrulate to ; 2-sepals, 1.5-1.7 x 0.65-1 cm, red, ovate, apex acute; 3(-4)-petals, (1.1-)1.65-1.8 x (0.4-)0.9-1 cm, red, ovate, apex acute; 3-styles, ca. 0.4

cm long, yellow, forked, united at base, spirally twisted, with stigmatic papillae on all the branches, persistent on fruit. **Ovary** 3-locular, placentation axial, one placenta per locule, bifid, ovules on both sides of placentae. **Capsules** 1-1.1 x 0.7 cm, white, basally dehiscent; 3-wings, red, larger wing 1.5-2 x 1.2-2 cm, ascendant, apex obtuse, smaller wings 1-1.25 x 0.7-1 cm, rounded. **Seeds** ca. 0.25 x 0.2 mm, cylindrical, obovate.

Begonia rubriflora L.Kollmann resembles *B. descoleana* (3) in the ovate leaves, pistillate flowers with prophylls, and bipartite ovary with ovules on both sides, but differs by having simple trichomes (vs. glabrous), persistent stipules (vs. dehiscent), red flowers (vs. white-pinkish), staminate flower without petals (vs. two), three prophylls (vs. two).

B. rubriflora is in section *Begonia* due to the oblong to linear anthers that are longer than the filament and bipartite placentae with ovules on both sides of placentae.

Begonia descoleana, section *Begonia*, is native to Brazil (Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Parana) and Argentina (Misiones), growing at the edge of forest and generally humid rocky outcrops in Atlantic Forest.

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2: www.arhomeandgarden.org/plantoftheweek/articles/Begonia_dragonwings.htm by Gerald Klingaman. Extension Horticulturist – Ornamentals Extension news – August 27, 2004, accessed in: 03/2011.

3. *Begonia descoleana* L.B. Smith & B.G. Schubert, Lilloa, 23:143, pl, 1950

[Nomenclature Editor's comment: The author prefers the term "prophyll" to the equivalent "bracteole" in reference to the leaf-like structures attached to the base of the ovary of *Begonia rubriflora*.]

Top, left: *Begonia rubriflora* cultivated in garden.

Bottom, left: Inflorescence

Pages 140-141 Flowers

Also see front cover: Dried pistillate flower.

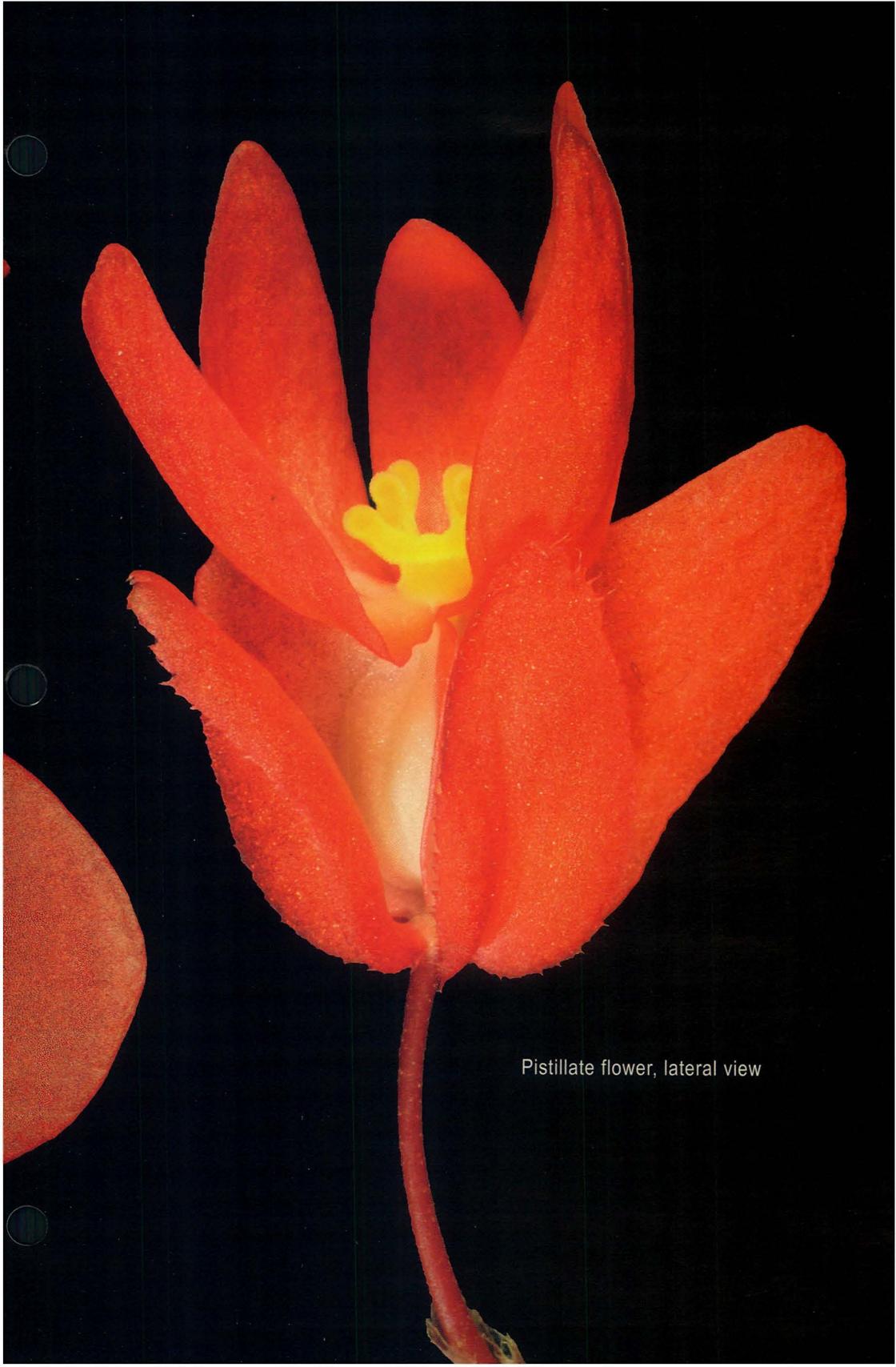
Pistillate flower



Begonia
rubriflora



Staminate flower



Pistillate flower, lateral view

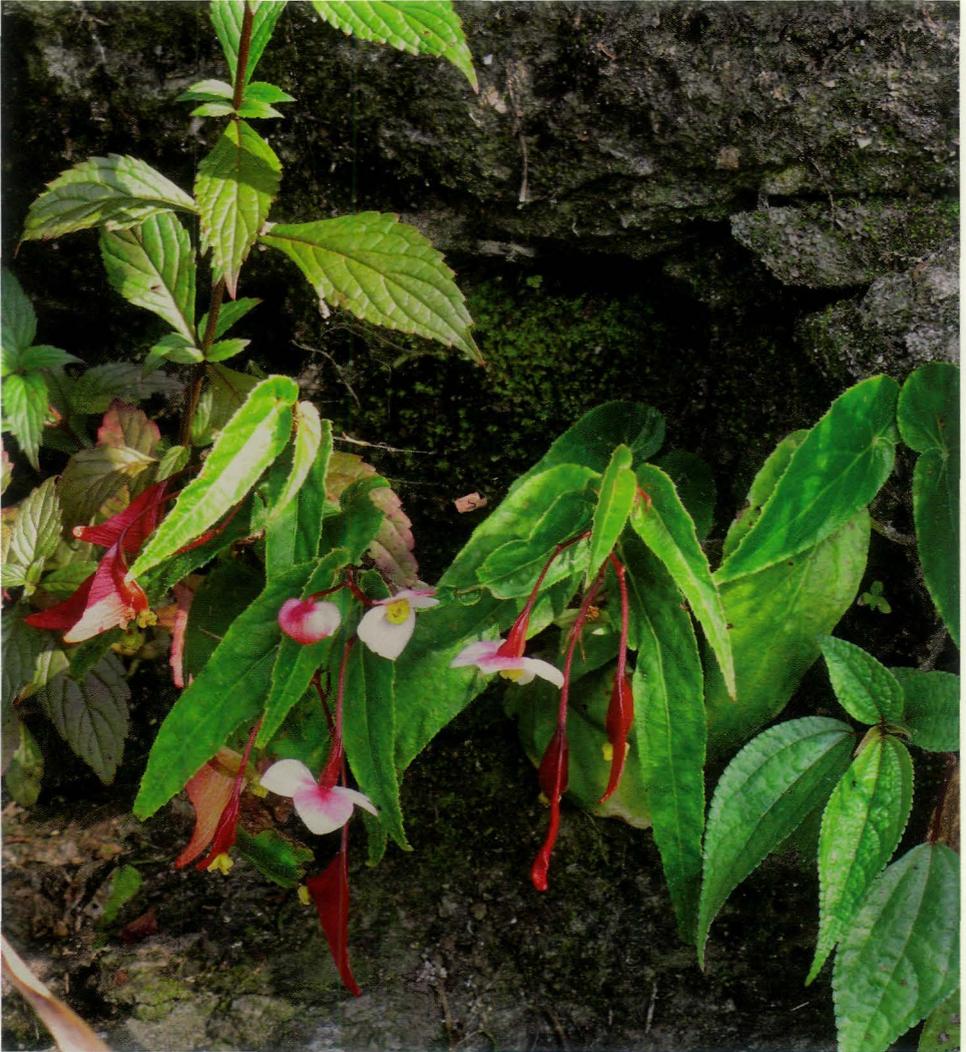
B. griffithiana A. de Candolle

Another 'New' Introduction from Arunachal Pradesh

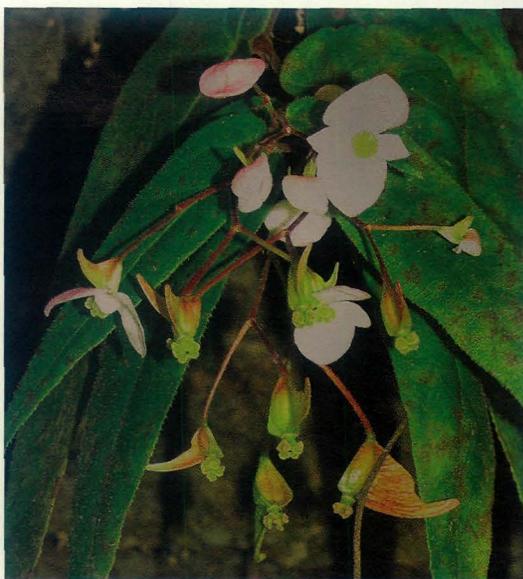
Article & photos by Rekha Morris, Pendleton, SC

B. griffithiana [*Monopteron*], a species from the eastern Himalayas of India, is an under appreciated species, quite possibly because it is rarely seen in cultivation. On my initial encounter with this species in April 2005 in Arunachal Pradesh, I was impressed by its ability to thrive on near

barren cliff sides, however, the juvenile plants without either flowers or capsules were far from creating a memorable impression. In December 2007 when I saw bare, near vertical cliffs layered in a breathtaking array of scarlet and green I hardly recognized these plants as being



B. griffithiana on the cliffs of Arunachal Pradesh



Left: *B. griffithiana* in habitat **Right:** Initial stage of capsules

B. griffithiana [syn. *episcopalis*].

Disbelievably I examined the narrow lanceolate, pubescent leaves deeply auricled at the base, and the long racemes of sickle shaped scarlet capsules dangling against the blue-gray surface of the jagged cliffs, and somewhat slowly began to realize that these were indeed plants of *B. griffithiana*. With continuing residual skepticism, it was difficult for me to admit that the undistinguished juvenile plants I had encountered several springs ago had matured to create this dazzling sight.

In order to arrive at a convincing identification I began searching for plants which might have retained their flowering scapes. Among a handful of plants in shady pockets along the lower edge of the cliff side I found both male and female flowers, enabling me to confirm the identification of *B. griffithiana*.

The pale pink flushed male flowers have four sepals, two large and widely ovoid and two alternating small narrow ones. The female perianth

consists of four ovate sepals and two tiny, narrow, oblong ones, which tend to drop off by the time the capsules begin to form. Although the numerous flowers of *B. griffithiana* emerge as dichotomous, branching racemes from the axils towards the upper third of each plant, the largest of these are at the tips. In the wild, the inflorescence of *B. griffithiana* is generally flushed a pale pink, however, some are almost entirely white as in plants in cultivation.

In the early stages of growth the pale salmon capsules are lightly brushed in shades of celadon, pink and carmine, but as they mature their pigmentation deepens into vibrant shades of ruby, flame, and cherry. The long wing of each capsule has a concave upper margin which curves slightly upwards at the tips to be reminiscent of the curvature of scimitars.

Erroneously classified as a rhizomatous species, *B. griffithiana*'s root stock consists of an irregular shaped tuber which enlarges with age to become almost as large as a tea platter



Above: *B. griffithiana* nestled among ferns and other foliage Opposite page, top: White flowered colony of *B. griffithiana* Bottom: Male flowers.

[see Morris & McMillan, *The Begonian*, Sep. / Oct. 2006, 174-178] The older sections of such tubers dry out while stems develop from the newer sections. On mature plants of *B. griffithiana*, tiny tubers form at the axils, which may be used to generate new plants.

Satisfied that the molten colors setting the cliffs ablaze in the late afternoon sun emanated from the myriads of racemes of *B. griffithiana*'s intensely colored capsules, I continued my documenta-

tion of species begonias in the hills of Arunachal. No matter how many cliffs I examined that afternoon and the next morning, it was the invariable prominence of *B. griffithiana*'s capsules which were irresistibly captivating. Whether highlighted against barren charcoal cliffs or interspersed among the dense mantle of ferns in shades of chartreuse and kiwi layering the moist sections of hill-sides, *B. griffithiana*'s capsules added a brilliant, silken shimmer to the largely



monochromatic palette and jagged rocky backdrop of their habitat.

These striking vignettes of fiery pointillism acquired subtle variations in the shifting angles of sunlight as the day progressed. The bright green of the narrow foliage acquired scintillating glints of silver, autumnal copper, and a suffused glaucous velvety sheen de-

continued on next page



pending on their exposure to sunlight. The blue-green foliage and contrasting paprika capsules were especially enticing against the lush apple green of the fern fronds.

The foliage of *B. griffithiana* is generally green on both sides with the lower side in a lighter shade, however, I have documented plants which are blue-green on the upper surface and maroon on their undersides. At one site I have documented a small and rare colony of *B. griffithiana* whose foliage is a bronze maroon-green on the upper surface and burgundy on the underside.

Although in cultivation it is difficult to simulate the crevices and ledges of steep escarpments to dramatize the tall branching plants of *B. griffithiana* cascading downwards in multiple layers, potted plants placed on stands or in hanging baskets will approximate the vertical accents which best displays *B. griffithiana*'s assets.

Tolerant of semi-shady conditions as well as near full exposure to sunlight as long as both the soil and ambient air is kept uniformly moist, *B. griffithiana* is a versatile plant which may be grown successfully in varied conditions indoors and out. The half a dozen or so plants which I have grown in my conservatory have presented no problems except for a susceptibility to mealy bugs. Regularly watered with water which has had dry powdered neem leaves steeped in it for at least 15 minutes will enable *B. griffithiana* as also other begonia species to withstand the onslaught of mealy bugs, spider mites, and other such pests.

Allow *B. griffithiana* to go partially dormant in the winter months by with-



holding whatever organic plant food is being used, as in the wild this is part of its growth cycle. In spring as new growth is visible, begin regular feeding. It is also essential to provide the beneficial micro-organisms which replenish the growing medium by adding

finely sieved compost. This does not require repotting as the compost may be sprinkled in half inch thick layer on the surface, enabling the micro-organisms to permeate the growing medium with each weekly watering.

Since *B. griffithiana* is seldom seen in cultivation, and hardly anyone has had the good fortune to see it sheathing entire cliff sides in layers of green, persimmon, scarlet and chili red, perhaps the accompanying illustrations will stimulate greater interest in a remarkable species, which has received little attention from begonia enthusiasts.

B. griffithiana, referred to by its synonymous name of *B. episcopalis*, was described by C. B. Clarke in 1879. According to Clarke's account this species was documented in Bhutan [spelled as Bhotan] and Khasia Mountains, which at that time were part of Assam but are now in Meghalaya. Since there appears to be no published record of this species in Arunachal Pradesh, I take great pleasure in introducing *B. griffithiana* as yet another 'new' species for Arunachal Pradesh.

Rekha Morris, Pendleton, SC. 5/1/2011

Above, Right, top and Right, bottom: Hardly anyone has had the good fortune to see *B. griffithiana* sheathing entire cliff sides in layers of green, persimmon, scarlet and chili red.



ABS Elections 2011 Nominees

FOR PRESIDENT

Charles Jaros

Charles Jaros has been an ABS member since 1972. Charles is an ABS Past President and currently is Co-Director of “U” numbers and Slide Program Chair. Charles is a member of both the Palm Beaches and Tampa Bay Branches. He served as Convention Chair of several Florida ABS Conventions. Charles is also unofficially the Entries & Classification Chair for ABS. He is a Senior ABS Judge and has had the privilege to judge various Branch Shows as well as the Philadelphia International Flower Show and the Southeastern Flower Show.

FOR 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

Virginia Jens

I’ve been a member of Begonia Society of the Palm Beaches for 19 years and currently completing my fourth term as President of BSPB (not consecutive). I served as Public Relations Chair for ABS, co-chair of the Hollywood (FL) convention, and chair of the Palm Beach Shores convention.

FOR 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

Mike Flaherty

Mike Flaherty a resident of Santa Barbara and one of the founding members of the very successful Rudy Ziesenhenné Branch in Santa Barbara. Mike is also the owner of The Gazebo where his clients are the rich and famous. Mike is probably best known as the charming and witty Master of Ceremonies at various ABS conventions.

continued on next page

OFFICIAL BALLOT ABS ELECTION 2011

► *President*

Charles Jaros

► *1st Vice-President*

Virginia Jens

► *2nd Vice-President*

Mike Flaherty

► *Secretary*

Richard Macnair

► *Treasurer*

Carol Notaras

Ballots must be received by July 30!

Votes will be counted on July 31. The ABS Bylaws Article VII – Elections Section 5 state: “The Committee shall invalidate any ballot containing any writing other than the marks necessary to register votes for candidates nominated under the procedures provided for under these Bylaws...”

The Ballot Counting Committee reminds members that the ballot is voided if personal remarks or additions are made on the ballot. Comments may be made on a separate sheet of paper. This ballot may **not** be copied or reproduced. Dual memberships receive an additional ballot in their mailing bag of this issue of *The Begonian*.

FOR SECRETARY

Richard Macnair

Richard Macnair is currently serving as ABS Secretary. When you read his notes, you feel that you must have attended the board meeting – he’s very thorough. Richard stays very active in the Buxton Branch of the ABS, and he has served as its President and is currently Treasurer. Along with his wife, Wanda, Richard works hard with all the ABS conventions and plant sales as well as supporting the ABS in any way he can.

FOR TREASURER

Carol Notaras

I have been President of the San Francisco Branch twice. In 1989 I was co-chairman of the San Francisco convention with my husband Peter. In 1992-1993 I was President of the A.B.S, and have served as treasurer for the last 16 years. Last year I was chairman of the San Francisco convention again.

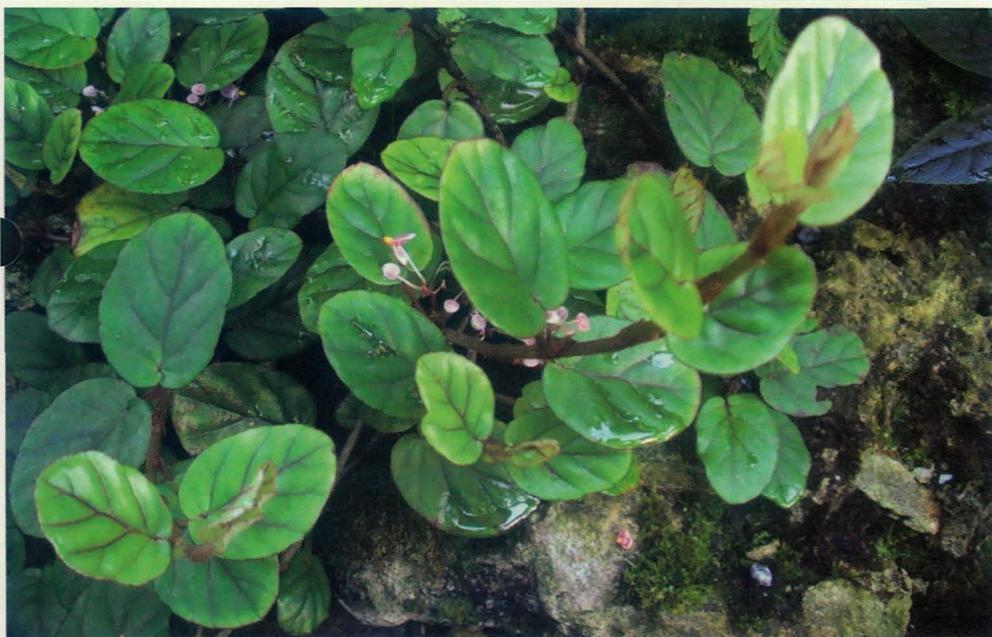
I have also served on several committees over the whole 18 years since becoming President.

Mail to:
Ballot Counting Chair
Ingeborg Foo
1050 Melrose Way
Vista, CA 92083-6504
USA





B. soli-mutata Photo by Jem Wiseman



Begonia mannii

Named after Gustav Mann, who collected this begonia around 1862 on the West African island of Bioko, *Begonia mannii* likes high humidity and good light. *B. mannii*, classified as a trailing/scandent, generally scrambles over fallen trees and on blambers up low branches in habitat. It has a berry-like fruit with large seeds that are dispersed by both ants and birds, which is slightly unusual, according to Mark C. Tebbitts in his book, *Begonias: Cultivation, Identification and Natural History*. The thick, shiny and leathery leaves coupled with its crawling growth habit make this a particularly handsome plant.

This beautiful specimen grows at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Photo by Susan Grose.

How to Write U-numbers

By Kingsley Langenberg, Nomenclature Editor

A member has questioned the use of a capital "U" in U-numbers. Since they are applied to species plants, should they not be written with a lowercase "u", he asks.

The expedient answer is "No, because they have always been written that way." See page 33 of the February 1981 issue of *The Begonian* where the system is introduced. The first seed to be offered under a U-number was 1981-MR1, "Unidentified species No. U040."

Another line of reasoning comes from the way in which U-numbered plants are distributed. Most are vegetatively propagated and then distributed at branch meetings or ABS conventions. Such plants

might be considered cultivars, properly labeled with a name beginning with a capital letter in the form *B.* 'Uxxx' following international rules of botanical nomenclature. However, for our purposes, the single quotes are not necessary.

These are species, are they not? Yes, but there are species cultivars such as the currently popular *Begonia boliviensis* 'Bonfire'. The term cultivar applies to a plant that has been selected for certain characteristics and subsequently propagated by vegetative methods only. Plants grown from seeds from a cultivar are not eligible for the parent cultivar name.

Actually, however, many (if not most)



Above: *B.* U513 Opposite page: *B.* U475 Photos by Johanna Zinn

U-numbered plants were never “selected for certain characteristics” and therefore they are not cultivars but rather species with interim labels applied prior to identification.

These temporary labels are to a degree more significant than most plant names in that they are associated with some

amount of descriptive information, recorded and published by ABS officers. The Unidentified Species program is currently co-chaired by Charles Jaros and Mary Bucholtz.

To summarize: I think we should continue to use a capital “U”.





Dedicated to “Study Our Species”

Thelma O'Reilly, La Mesa, CA

The Margaret Lee Branch of the American Begonia Society, located in San Diego County, is dedicated to an educational project, Study Our Species.

Several branch members participated in the Save Our Species (SOS) project originated by Bruce Boardman and now directed by Dr. Rekha Morris.



This served as the inspiration for the Margaret Lee Branch to venture into a meticulous study of *The Sections of Begonia*, published by Doorenbos, Sosef and de Wilde. This was followed by an intense study of individual begonias in each section. We then began studying the begonia species grown by individual members. President Michael Ludwig, Vice President Thelma O'Reilly and Editor Edgar Bates were involved in the preparation and presentation of



Above: Thelma O'Reilly's study plant for 2011 - *Begonia hispida* var. *cucullifera*. Note the growths on the leaves. **Left:** Two views of a meeting in progress at KOLZ Begonia Research Center.

Opposite page: Some of the Margaret Lee Branch members.

Photos by Thelma O'Reilly

the educational study of begonia species during these years.

Monthly meetings of the branch are on Saturdays in the homes and gardens of members or at KOLZ Begonia Research Center. As a consequence the branch maintains a limited membership.

In 2007 a new schedule was implemented for our monthly meetings. Each member “adopts” a begonia species which they will study and grow throughout the following year. At the November meeting, members announce their adopted species for the upcoming year as well as which month they will host the group.

This schedule has been extremely popular. Michael Ludwig conducts the business meeting and Thelma O'Reilly conducts the program. The member hosting the meeting describes and discusses their adopted species in depth. The meetings usually end with a garden tour.

Members bring their lunch to the meetings. The host provides champagne and dessert. Occasionally lunch is also provided by the host. Four members drive over two hours from Los Angeles to participate in our Study Our Species program. One member who lives in northern California attends a few meetings annually.

Our December meeting is party time. Michael Ludwig and Dean Turney, assisted by their lovely wives, Sharon and Susan, make sure our year always ends with fabulous Begonia Blow-outs.

In 2011 members are adopting species as follows: *Begonia* ? (Rudy Z's shrub), Michael Ludwig; *Begonia rex*, Ingeborg Foo; *Begonia ravenii*, Dean Turney; *Begonia scapigera*, Edgar Bates; *Begonia burkillii*, Phyllis Bates; *Begonia hispida* var. *cucullifera*, Thelma O'Reilly; *Begonia amphioxus*, Maureen O'Reilly; *Begonia coccinea*, Tom Cootz; *Begonia vaginans*, Stephanie Rose; *Begonia serratifetala*, Eleanor Calkins; *Begonia cavallyensis*, Janet Brown; *Begonia dregei*, Melissa Worton; *Begonia egregia*, Marla Keith; *Begonia wollnyi*, Jim Jaeger.

The inspirational leadership of Michael Ludwig has made the Study Our Species project an enriching experience for members of the Margaret Lee Branch.



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Growing Begonias in Barnes Arboretum

By Bernie Wiener, Havertown, PA

The Barnes Foundation, known for their art gallery located in Merion, Pa, also has an arboretum and allied school. Students there take courses in practical, scientific, and esthetic phases of Botany, Horticulture and Landscape Architecture. I am proud to be a past graduate and a present volunteer for many years.

The Arboretum garners a significant part of the Foundation's programming and has since the 1920s. Laura Barnes, one of the founders, collected plants from many different sources, such as the Arnold Arboretum. Due to her interest in unusual plant material there are many specimen trees, including *Davidia involucrata* (Dove Tree), *Stewartias* and the unique Monkey-puzzle tree, growing on the grounds.

It was during Dr. Fogg's tenure as director, in 1968, that the Arboretum established its herbarium. Like the living collections, the herbarium's growth was due

in part to an energetic exchange program with other institutions. Dr. Fogg also actively expanded the collections at the arboretum, including the collections of vines, salix (willows) and lilacs.

Visitors, besides coming to Albert Barnes' famous art gallery, were interested in touring the grounds to see the different trees and gardens. Years ago Laura Barnes' Victorian greenhouse was replaced with a high tech greenhouse with three large rooms so it is now possible to grow assorted plant material from tropicals, orchids and, now even a collection of begonias. The complete begonia family is represented in the collection and is courtesy of various donors. As the founder of the Delaware Valley Branch I make sure the propagating facilities are always in



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Above: A large display of assorted begonias where visitors often stop to admire.

Right: Doris Happel's cuttings on the mist table. Photos by Josh Schnapf, The Barnes Foundation

use starting new begonias. With mist and bottom heating systems it is possible to root all types of begonias in a short period of time.

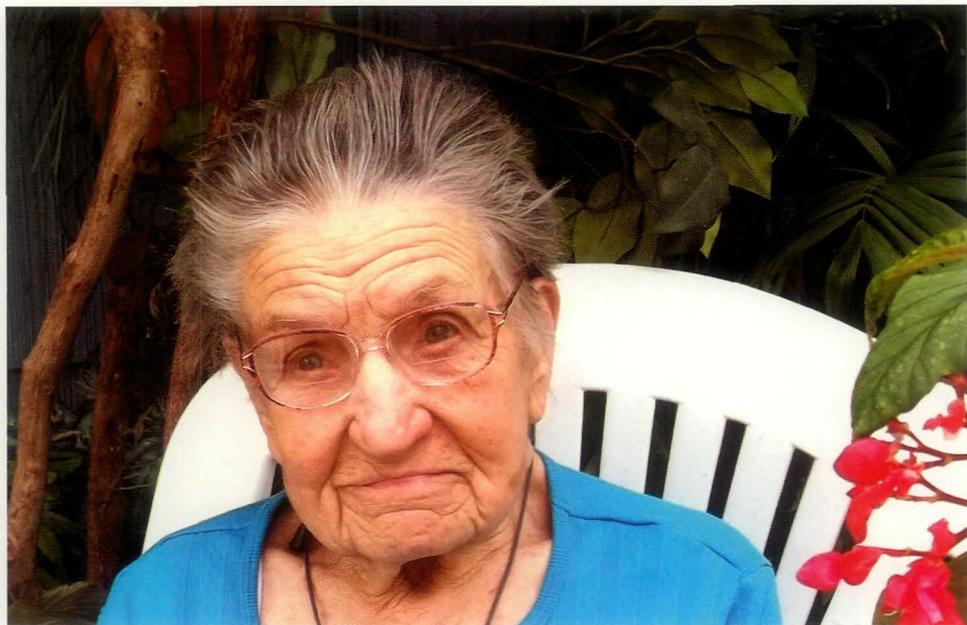
The propagated begonias are invaluable visuals in my presentations to the Barnes' students. And, many begonias are available at their annual plant sale. At the recent sale the begonias were potted in large containers. Then we gave the buyers an invitation to return and learn how to start new plants from their cuttings. It's good for our Branch and the Arboretum.

Barnes Art Gallery, is located at 300 N. Latche's Lane in Merion, PA or find out more on their website www.barnesfoundation.org. And, should you find yourself close to Philadelphia, be sure to visit the begonia collection beside the art gallery!



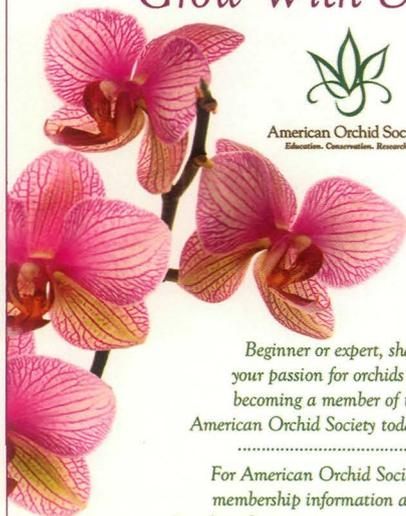
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Theresa C. Olmsted, a National Past President

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Theresa Olmsted: 92 and Still Growing

By Sheryl Olmsted, Chebanse, IL

People say having a stimulating hobby and staying busy can keep you young. **Theresa C. Olmsted**, (pictured, opposite page) a National Past President in the 1950s, is 92 years old and still raises begonias at her home in Illinois.

Besides growing begonias Theresa also tends a 2-acre hobby farm where she plants a vegetable garden every year. She harvests and cans all the produce from her big garden as well as from her 15 fruit trees. In 2009 she put up 1,500 jars!

At this time she is raising 25 chicks

and 10 game hens for the freezer. In addition there are 14 exotic chickens Theresa keeps for egg production. These hens lay all colors of eggs including green, olive, mint, mauve, blue and tan.

Theresa co-owns apartments with her daughter, Sheryl, and is still involved in the cleaning, lawn care and management. They also own Boer goats that are raised and bred for meat and milk, butter and cheese.

Maybe growing begonias has helped keep Theresa young!

My Begonia Buddies

By Bobbie West, Stanton, CA

Did you ever buy your children any figurines of cartoon characters or action figures? What did you do with them when they got tired of them, or outgrew them? Threw them in the trash? Gave them to the thrift store? I don't have any children at home any more, but I live in a mobile home park where there are lots of them. Every so often a parent (probably Mom) cleans out the toy box and throws everything in the community dumpster.

I am a recycler and a collector, so I couldn't just leave the figurines there when I saw them. I picked them out, cleaned them and gave them to the local thrift store. Then I found a couple of cute ones I just couldn't give away. I was outside working with my begonias when I had to find a place to temporarily keep them. There were several hanging pots, so I just put one in each pot. They looked so cute I just left them there. As time went by my collection continued to grow. Betty Boop greets me when I enter my propagating area. Bugs and his buddies are just hanging around, trying to get into trouble. I have everyone from Spiderman to Lion King, Mickey and all of the different Disney characters, plus many others, too numerous to mention.

As I walk thru my plants I have many smiling faces to greet me and make me smile. It just goes to show that toys aren't always just for kids.



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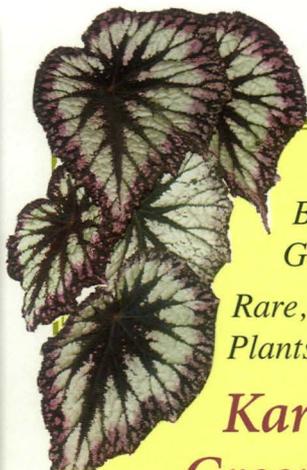
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