



THE
BEGONIAN

May/June 2014

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. 'My Favorite Dancer' grown by Charles Jaros. Photo by Gary Hunt

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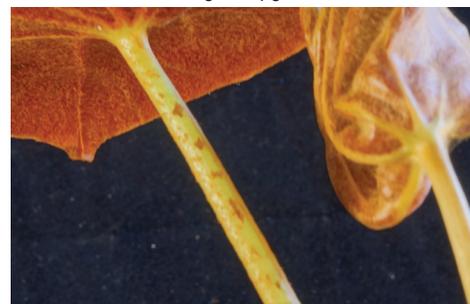
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Front cover: Growing this unusual begonia from Madagascar can be a rewarding challenge. See *B. bogneri* on page 108. Photo by Bob Stewart.

Back cover: The unusual male flowers of the potentially new species that's found where the Andes and Amazon meet. Read more on starting on page 92.

President's Message

We are approximately 6 months into my term of office. I think the primary theme of the past months has been change. We started with the loss of Gene Salisbury. Recently we found out that Carrie Karrigeanes passed at that time. Several committee vacancies have been filled. Many committees still need chairs and working members. Please see me if you have an interest in serving.

We also, in common with other volunteer, non-profit organizations, are losing membership. We need to examine many of the causes and solutions, no matter how painful some of them might be. The truth is that organizations such as ours were formed during a time when information was difficult to come by - no Internet or HGTV (in fact, no TV at all). With so much information now available

without leaving home, and so many demands on our time, we need to look at how to bring people out to our meetings and keeping them when they get there. What can we offer that the internet and television do not? I think it comes down to a quiet, friendly place in the midst of a chaotic world. Our aim to bring into friendly contact all who know begonias is paramount.

For the record, Tom Keepin (Branch Relations) announced that the Miami Branch has reorganized and is meeting again. Alfred D. Robinson Branch is now focused on studying hybrids, and the Whittier Branch has reorganized and, are on a good road to recovery. (Go, Bobbie!) The Knickerbocker Branch, which meets in New York City, has pulled back from

the brink of dissolving. Their next meeting will be in the Spring. However, the Greater Chicago Branch, Riverside (CA), and Theodosia Burr Shepherd Branch in Ventura have closed.

ABS has been reappointed by The International Society for Horticultural Science as registrars for begonia hybrids. Priscilla Purinton is assisting Dr Burt-Utley as registrar. This is an international register for begonia hybrids. ABS has a duty to our members to give correct nomenclature information in our publication. Those pioneers such as Rudy Zizenheine would expect no less. The Board is delighted with our publication and are grateful to have Linda Tamblyn as our Editor. As such, we will be developing additional editorial guidelines regarding nomenclature and the naming of species for *The Begonian*. These will be designed to continue Linda's efforts to make our publication the most accurate that we can. Some of our contributors might find these challenging, but they are necessary to continue our tradition of giving our members the best and most accurate information based on current scientific conventions.

We are also pleased to announce that *The Begonian* will be going digital. Our target date is the September 2014. Before you panic, - paper issues will also be sent out. You will have several issues to get used to the digital version, and decide if you want to continue receiving a paper version. One of the benefits of the digital version is that everyone will get it at the same time- here, in France, in Israel, in Australia, in England, etc. Watch the next issues for more news.

We will continue our support of scientific

field work. The board has voted a condition of ABS grants for field work will be publication of the results in *The Begonian*. In this way, all members will benefit from their donations to the Conservation Fund. We would like to remind professors and students that scholarships are available to support research on Begoniaceae. Please direct your inquiries to Martin Delgado, mdlibrarian@consultant.com.

I hope to see you at upcoming events- Southwest Regional Get Together in Shreveport May 22-24, 2014.

Contact Joan Estes, 7620 S Hwy 183, Lockhart, TX 78644, for a registration packet. The annual meeting will be in Ft Worth in September- more details to come. And the next national convention will be in Boston ("Begonia Revolution") July 28-Aug 3, 2015. Great trips and lots of begonias! Members-at-large, mark your calendars! We want to get to know you.

In friendly contact,
Virginia Jens, President



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Proceedings of the Board Meeting American Begonia Society

Tampa, Florida
March 21, 2014

President, Virginia Jens, called the meeting to order. The Aims and Purposes of the Society were read by Stephanie Rose from the San Gabriel Valley Branch. There were fifteen branch National Directors present.

The proceedings of the Annual Business Meeting held in Torrance, California on August 24, 2013 were approved as submitted and published in the *Begonian* and thus upgraded to minutes.

Treasurer, Carol Notaras submitted the following financial reports:

Annual financial statement report for the previous year from August 1, 2012 to July 31, 2013 with an opening balance of \$279,087.10 and an ending balance of \$285,927.10

Financial statement for August 1, 2013 to February 28, 2014 with a beginning balance of \$285,927.10 and an ending balance of \$271,230.84. During this period, income was \$41,811.29 and disbursements totaled \$47,031.15. The reports are filed for auditory review.

Report of Executive Board:

President, Virginia Jens announced the following appointments:

Awards Chairman: Cheryl Lenert was appointed to replace Ann Salisbury.

Holiday Greetings: Frances Drescher was appointed to replace Wanda Macnair. Frances reported that \$4,000.00 in donations were received in 2013.

Registrar of Hybrids: Priscilla Purinton

was appointed to replace Gene Salisbury. Priscilla announced that there are three new registrations currently in the registration process. She's also working with the international group.

Nomenclature: Kathleen Burt-Utley has agreed to be the Nomenclature Chair replacing John Boggan.

Historian: Jeanne Jones has decided to retire. The board is seeking a candidate to fill this position.

The General Manager and the Public Relations director positions are both vacant. Volunteers are welcome to apply for these positions.

Reports of Standing Committees:

Bookstore Chair Janet Brown provided a report on the Bookstore inventory. She recently received eighteen copies of "*Tuberous Begonias & How to Grow Them*" by Howard Siebold.

Branch Relations Director Tom Keepin reported that negotiations for two new ABS branches are still in progress. Miami is reorganizing their branch and Tom is working with the Knickerbocker branch to keep them active. Tom also reported that branches in Greater Chicago, Riverside and Theodosia Burr Shepherd in Ventura are all defunct.

Conservation Chair Johanna Zinn presented the conservation and research report. Only five ABS members submitted their species report. These reports provide information on what members are currently

growing and also provides information on species that are not in cultivation. Johanna has developed a program outlining conservation measures that will be available to branches. She has sent a species report to the ABS website.

Convention chair Mary Sakamoto reported that the Buxton Branch will host the 2015 ABS Convention on July 29–Aug 2, 2015. The convention will be held in Natick, Massachusetts, about 25 miles from Boston. Convention co-chairs are Linda Kammerer, Sharon Rosenzweig and Stuart Hammer.

Officer's Reports:

First Vice President, Mike Flaherty reported that Julie Vanderwilt continues to update the ABS website. She has agreed to stay on as webmaster for three additional months. Julie has recently updated Paul Tsamtsis' "Plant of the Month" articles that are featured on the website.

Second Vice President, Martin Delgado reported that an application was received from Haylee Kraushaar requesting \$1,000.00 from the Morris Mueller research fund. The candidate will work with Dr. Mark Tebbit to conduct scientific research on Andean begonias. The study will begin in September 2014.

Secretary, Connie Saenz reported that Fort Worth, TX will be the site of the Annual Business Meeting to be held September 11–14, 2014. Tentative plans include a visit to the species bank at the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens and Steve's Leaves. More information will be forthcoming.

Constitution: The title of "Department Head" is not defined in the ABS constitution and will be deleted from the bylaws at the annual meeting.

Kenney Wilkerson from Oklahoma sent a

status report on the begonia species bank collection at Ft. Worth, TX

The Executive Board recommends approval of the implementation of the *Begonian* in digital form as provided by Bright Copy (Allen Publishers). This will be in addition to the hard copy magazine that is received by mail. It is anticipated that this will be cost effective for overseas subscribers. Plans are to feature advertisers which will also help to offset the cost. The recommendation was approved.

Announcements:

Dr. Freda Holley announced that Southwest Region Get-together/ABS Board Meeting will be held on May 22–24, 2014 in Shreveport, Louisiana. The registration packets have been mailed to SWR members and ABS board members. Contact Freda Holley at 318-251-2296 or email her at gehrtii@icloud.com for further information.

Janet Brown reported that Samuel and Betty Kennedy, President and Treasurer of the Scottish Horticultural Society received a most prestigious award. To commemorate the ninetieth birthday of Queen Elizabeth, they were awarded the Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Medal in Horticulture and a citation for outstanding service to the Scottish Horticulture Society. (See photos on page.88.) The ABS Secretary will send a congratulatory letter.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the March 2014 Board Meeting of the American Begonia Society stands adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Saenz, ABS Secretary

Holiday Greetings Donation Request 2014



It is that time of year again, when we encourage our branches as well as individual members of ABS to make a donation to Holiday Greetings. This program allows our branches and members to offer their holiday greetings while also raising funds. These funds help keep the cost of dues down and also help pay for the expenses of printing *The Begonian*. The listing of all donors by category of donation on one page of the November/December issue is also very cost effective. Categories are: **Bronze, \$1-\$50; Silver, \$51-100; Gold, \$101-\$150; and Platinum, \$151, plus.** The contributions, which are tax-deductible, should be made out to ABS Holiday Greetings. Please send to Frances Drescher, 11529 Riverchase Run, West Palm Beach, FL 33412. The deadline for donations is September 12th. If you have any questions, you may contact Frances by email at fkdrescher1@comcast.net.

After many years of giving her time and effort to making this yearly program so successful (over \$4000 raised last year alone!), Wanda Macnair has decided to retire from overseeing Holiday Greetings. I appreciate Wanda's guidance with the transition and hope to continue her excellent work.

- Frances Drescher.



Samuel and Elizabeth Kennedy Awarded "The Caley"

In March Elizabeth and Samuel Kennedy, Scotland, (pictured center) received an award known as "The Caley," which has the official title, "Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mother, Memorial Medal." This is the highest award to given to horticultural non-professionals in Scotland. The award was presented by the Royal Caledonian Society, represented by Honorary President Bill McColl (far left) and Honorary President George Anderson (far right).

ABS By-Law Revisions

The following proposed by-law revisions will be voted upon at the Annual Meeting of the American Begonia Society in September 2014 in Ft Worth, TX.

1. Under Article III, Section 1a: That the term Department Heads be deleted from this article and all other references to this title within the Constitution of the American Begonia Society.
2. Under Article I of the bylaws: That the duties of the second vice president be redefined and voted on at the next Board of Directors meeting of the American Begonia Society.

The exact wording will be supplied in the July/August Begonian and to National Directors and Members-At-Large on the Yahoo group sites set up for these groups.

Linda Lawson, Parliamentarian

SWR Get-Together/ABS Board Meeting

May 22, 23, and 24, 2014 (Arrive on May 21 for Tour on Thursday)
Shreveport - Holiday Inn Airport West,
5555 Financial Plaza 71129, 318-688-3000

LAST CALL! Shreveport is just days away now and if you haven't registered and made that reservation at the Holiday Inn, do so quickly. If you haven't received a registration packet and want one, give Freda Holley an email at gehrtii@icloud.com or call her at 318-251-2296.

Our seminar speakers are getting prepared and I know you are going to enjoy them all. We have several new voices whose enthusiasm will be exciting. See you all in Shreveport.

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ABS 2014 Award Winners

By Cheryl Lenert, ABS Awards Chairperson

The Herbert P. Dyckman for Service is presented to a member who has rendered long-term or very outstanding service for the American Begonia Society above and beyond the normal duties of a member or an officer.



2014 Herbert P. Dyckman Award winner - Michael Ludwig

This person has been an ABS member for nearly 30 years. In these many years of membership the person has held multiple local and national positions. This individual has always been available to give programs, to judge a show or to chair several conventions for the ABS. The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund was one of the important projects undertaken for many years. In addition to holding current offices in two local branches, at the present time he is founder and Administrator of the KOLZ Center Repository and Library of significant letters and research gathered from respected ABS members.

As some of you already guessed – The 2014 Herbert P. Dyckman Award goes to Michael Ludwig.

The Eva Kenworthy Gray Award is given for contributing original material toward helping rank and file members further their study of begonias.

This individual has been a member for may

decades. These many years have been filled with much dedication to growing, sharing, and writing about rare and unusual begonias and seeds. Many of the subject begonias in these writings were produced, grown, and then shared with countless members over the years. This person's monthly contributions of articles to the local Branch newsletter have been reprinted in various newsletters and publications. He has been a great help to the editors of *The Begonian* for his ability to translate French from foreign members and French scientific journals.



2014 Eva Kenworthy Gray Award winner - Normand Dufresne.

The 2014 Eva Kenworthy Gray Award is presented to Normand Dufresne.

The Marge Lee Award is given to a person who contributes something of a spiritual value toward cementing goodwill and harmony among members.

This member has served, and is serving, in a number of offices on the local level, publishes a monthly newsletter, and has served as Chair and Co-Chair of two major conventions.

One of the comments from a nominating letter was that since the day of becom-

ing a charter member of the Branch this individual has “never said No to any task for the ABS.”

Another nomination letter stated: “She is one of the kindest persons I have ever

had the privilege to know. You never hear her complaining about anything or anyone. She is always ready to help in any situation. If someone fails to do their part, she is there, completing the task as if it was hers all along.”

Another nominee letter stated: “Everything she does is with love and graciousness and total commitment.”

The 2014 Marge Lee Award winner is Nelda Moore.



2014 Marge Lee Award winner - Nelda Moore.

The Gene Salisbury Award is given to a grower who exemplifies the very best in cultural prac-



l-r., Nancy Miller, Kenneth Lauszus, Curtis Hopper, Richard Fox, Marvin Vipond, Joan Coulat, winner of the 2014 Gene Salisbury Award, Paul Tsamtsis, and Sally Berlant.

tice, but also brings to us by their careful work the new species and hybrids. These are growers who contribute to our society simply through their excellence in growing begonias.

This individual has been an ABS member for over 40 years and during this time has become well-known for growing practices that produce outstanding, prize-winning begonias. Our recipient always finds the time to share that knowledge with members old and new. This member has been instrumental in staging and judging local and national shows and has been in the chairmanship position on multiple occasions. She always adds her own special elegance to every occasion.

She is so esteemed by her local chapter that a petition was presented to the ABS to rename their Branch in her honor.

With great pleasure we present the 2014 Gene Salisbury Award to Joan Coulat.

The Rudolph Ziesenhenn Award is presented to an editor who collects and edits the works of others for a publication either US or international and: who encourages a broad array of writers both scientific and practical to write and contribute articles, and: who issues a publication on begonias that is both excellent in design and content which contributes to our knowledge and appreciation of begonias.

This individual has produced outstanding results in one of our most important publications by bringing us dazzling photography and excellent articles that range in topics for the beginners, to the collector, to those with a more

continued

Where the Andes and Amazon Meet

Article and photos by Dr. Mark C. Tebbitt,
California University of Pennsylvania, PA

In January 2014 I visited Ecuador to study and collect begonias on an expedition funded by the American Begonia Society. Joining me was graduate student Adolfo Jara Muñoz who is researching begonias at the University of the Andes in Bogotá. The two of us, along with our Ecuadorian colleagues, spent a total of three weeks collecting begonias in the field and a little extra time studying various herbarium collections in Ecuador's capital, Quito. During the first week of the expedition we explored the various volcanic

mountains along the eastern edge of the Andes, as well as the neighboring lowlands of the Amazon. This article will focus on some of the many begonias that we found in this particular area. In future articles I will share with you the different begonias that we found in Ecuador's southern and western mountains.

Ecuador and neighboring Colombia have the highest concentration of plant species on earth, so as you would expect, it was not difficult for us to find interesting begonias in this biodiversity hotspot. Indeed certain begonias, such as *B. parviflora* and *B. glabra*, were so abundant in Ecuador's eastern mountains that even we stopped paying them much attention after the first few days. During the first week we saw hundreds of individuals of each of these two species. In certain places the tree-like *B. parviflora* even hung over the trails, with stems as long as nine feet tall.

Certain other begonia species from this area were more difficult to locate, requiring us to hike for several miles along steep, and often very soggy, forested mountain trails.

Many of the species of *Begonia* section *Semibegoniella*, a group that Adolfo is studying for



his PhD thesis, have very small distributions and precise habitat requirements. They are often found growing in the splash zones of streams and waterfalls deep within the rainforest. As a result these species often posed a particular challenge to collect. This preference for very wet habitat, as well as consistently cool temperatures, also means that the majority of these species are almost impossible to cultivate. Past attempts to grow these plants in the United States have, as far as I know, all failed. Since they are among the most beautiful of all begonias, finding them in the wild is a rare treat. The Ecuadorian species of section *Semibegoniella* all have scarlet flowers and in the right location their brightly colored flowers are quite easy to spot along the forest streams. The first of several of these species that we found, *B. pectennervia*, is illustrated in Figure 1. This photograph shows the horned fruits that are characteristic of this group of begonia. Past authors (including myself) will tell you that the horns catch in the fur of passing animals, which causes the fruits to rattle and shake out the seeds. After seeing these plants in the wild I can now say that this is not the case. Instead, falling droplets of water hit the fruits and splash out the seeds in much the same way that the seeds of *B. rex* and other members of the Asian section *Platycentrum* are dispersed. This method of dispersal makes sense given the preference of these species for particularly wet habitats.

While Adolfo was looking for these fascinating plants I accompanied him but was mainly searching for the members of two other groups of *Begonia*, those of the sections *Gobenia* and *Knesebeckia*. Like the members of section *Semibegoniella* the species of section *Gobenia* are also largely

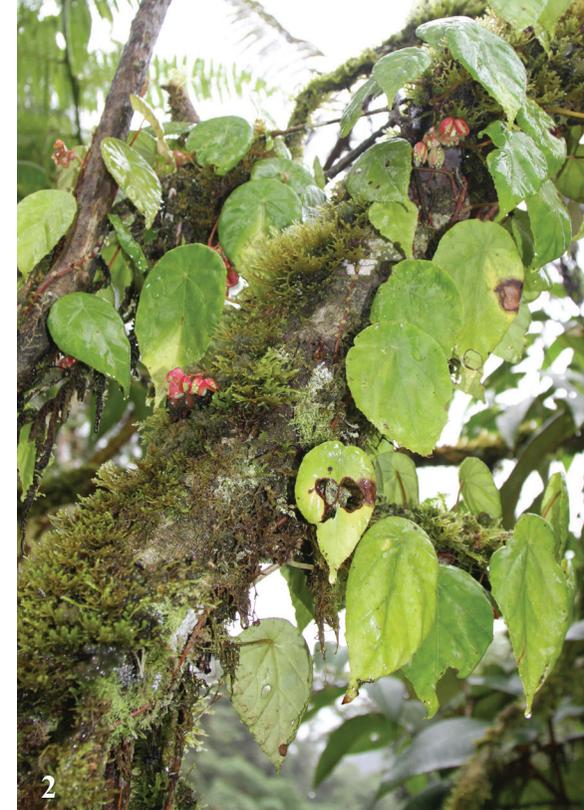


Figure 1. *Begonia pectennervia* with distinctly horned fruits characteristic of section *Semibegoniella*. Figure 2. A potentially new species from section *Gobenia*.

unknown in cultivation, with just a single species, *B. maurandiae*, being widely (though not commonly) cultivated. After being given a cutting of this species a few years ago at an ABS Convention I have grown it in my basement. It is very easy to cultivate in a terrarium but curiously it has never produced any flowers for me. Apparently I am not the only grower to experience this frustrating trait of the clone grown as U560. This reluctance to bloom is a shame since the flowers of the members of section *Gobenia* are very unusual. During this trip I was lucky enough to find four species from this group. One of them, may even be a new species (Figure 2), closely related to *B. geminiflora*. It was extremely common,

continued on p. 95

ABS Award Winners continued from p. 91

scientific edge. We have been introduced to a number of new photographers and writer's due to this editor's diligence.

Since becoming Editor she has worked hard to reduce the cost of production while increasing standards. Her talent, grace and diplomacy have earned Linda Tamblin the 2014 Rudolph Ziesenhenné Award.

2014 Rudolph Ziesenhenné Award winner - Linda Tamblin (right)





Figure 3. The unusual male flowers of the potentially new species. Figure 4. Crystal clear waters and habitat rich in begonias. Figure 5. *Begonia maynensis* a widespread Amazonian member of section *Knesebeckia*. Figure 6. *Begonia buddleiifolia* has unusual racemose inflorescences.



being found at almost every site we visited along the eastern edge of the Andes. Despite being so common I only once saw it in flower. This was not unsurprising given that *B. geminiflora* itself more typically blooms six months later than when I was visiting. Like all members of its section, this species is a liana (woody vine) that grows on the trunks and branches of trees. Figure 3 shows a close up of its unusual male flowers, which have rather short, drab petals and a large, prominent cluster of stamens arranged on a long column. One day I would dearly love to return to Ecuador and study how these odd flowers are pollinated.

An important goal of our expedition was to collect samples of some of the Amazonian members of *Begonia* section *Knesebeckia*. One of the most interesting places that we visited in the Amazonian region was the Santiago River. To access this areas' diverse but highly threatened rainforest I spent a particularly enjoyable day wading the crystal clear waters of the many small streams that feed into this river, searching for begonias on the moss covered banks (Figure 4). One of the first species that we found was *B. maynensis* (Figure 5), a common species of both Amazonian Ecuador and Peru. I had previously seen this species growing in Missouri Botanical Garden's tropical house but otherwise had not encountered it in cultivation. I can understand why because the species' flowers are not particularly showy. Even so, its unusually shaped leaves give it a certain charm and make it easy to recognize. Despite its rather drab appearance, for me this plant was an exciting find. Now that I have collected leaf samples I can study its DNA to attempt to discover why it grows in the Amazon while most other Ecuador-

ian begonias classified in the same botanical section are found at much higher elevations on the opposite side of the Andes.

Another interesting begonia that was common on the mossy stream banks along the eastern base of the Andes was *B. buddleiifolia* (Figure 6), a species that is so distinct it is currently classified in its own botanical section. The unusual structure of its inflorescence is the main feature that distinguishes this species from other Andean begonia. Again, I am curious to see what secrets its DNA will reveal. In this case I want to learn what this species' closest relatives are. When we found *B. buddleiifolia* it was often accompanied by a second begonia species, *B. consobrina* (Figure 7), with the two frequently growing just a few feet apart. In one relatively isolated and much drier location we found a single small population of a species that, while somewhat similar to *B. consobrina*, differed in many of its characteristics. Among the differences that this species showed were more deeply colored flowers and fruits, making for a much more attractive plant (Figure 8) and one that is new to science.

I was also interested to find in the Amazonian region of Ecuador two annual species of begonia, *B. semiovata* (Figure 9) and *B. humilis*. I had never previously given these plants much attention whenever I had encountered them in cultivation. They are small plants with rather drab greenish flowers and they tend to be weedy, often seeding themselves around a person's garden or greenhouse. However, I became fascinated with these wild plants once I realized that they inhabit both the Amazonian lowlands and the Andean mountains, and thus probably have a greater altitudinal range than almost any other



Figure 7. Close up of the female flowers of *Begonia consobrina*.



South American begonia. Now that I'm back at my university lab I'm keen to start unraveling the secrets that the DNA collected from these unconventional begonias will reveal.

In this article I was able to only present a brief introduction to the enormous diversity of begonia found in this particular part of Ecuador. This region of Ecuador, where the Andes meet the Amazon, is a begonia lover's dream destination. Not only are an unusually high number of species found here, several of them are relatively easy to find. Furthermore, the area has little crime, contains numerous nature reserves and national parks, and has good quality roads. I would certainly recommend it as a wonderful place for an adventurous begonia enthusiast to visit if they were interested in seeing a wide range of begonias in their natural habitats.

Acknowledgements:

This expedition would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the ABS and its members. I also wish to thank Mr. Álvaro J. Pérez Castañeda (QCA) for logistical support and Mr. Adolfo Jara Muñoz (ANDES) and Ms. Cristina Toapanta (QCA) for help in the field.

Figure 8. A *Begonia* species new to science. Figure 9. *Begonia semiovata* has an annual lifecycle rare amongst begonias.





Winner of Best in Show, *B.* 'Whirlwind Dancer', exhibited by Charles Jaros
Photo by Gary Hunt

2014 ABS Show Results

Tampa, FL

March 19–23

From Charles Jaros, DeBary, FL

144 Entries

30 Exhibitors

Showing is Sharing Award – Ed Whalen; 13 entries

Sweepstakes – Charles Jaros; 6 blue ribbons

Best in Show

B. 'Whirlwind Dancer'

Exhibited by Charles Jaros



B. 'Harmony's Firestorm' Photo by Deb Cox

Hybrid of Distinction – Commercial

B. 'Harmony's Firestorm'

Exhibited by Harmony Foliage

Hybrid of Distinction – Hobby Grower

B. 'Shy Dancer'

Exhibited by Johanna Kitson

Division Awards

Division AA – Cane-like, all others

B. 'Lomita Lady'

Exhibited by Marsha Fielland

Division B – Shrub-Like

B. *dietrichiana*

Exhibited by Susan Jewell

Division E – Rhizomatous

B. 'Whirlwind Dancer'

Exhibited by Charles Jaros

Division EE – Rhizomatous, Crested or Spiral

B. 'Shanicka'

Exhibited by Charles Jaros

Division EEE – Rhizomatous, Distinctive Foliage; Unusual Surface and/or Coloring; Unusual Habit of Growth

B. 'Janet Brown'

Exhibited by Janet Brown

Division G – Rex Cultorum

B. 'Marion Palmer'

Exhibited by Dale Sena



B. 'Marion Palmer' Photo by Butch McDole

Division J – Species

B. *rex*

Exhibited by Merle DeLand

Division K – Hanging Baskets

B. 'Fabulous Tom'

Exhibited by Susan Jewell

Division M – Novel Grown Begonias and/or Shade Plants

B. 'Green Eyes'

Exhibited by Jeanette Hall

Division O – Novice

B. 'Passing Storm'

Exhibited by Ed Whalen

continued on page 102



1

*More from
the 2014 ABS Show*



4



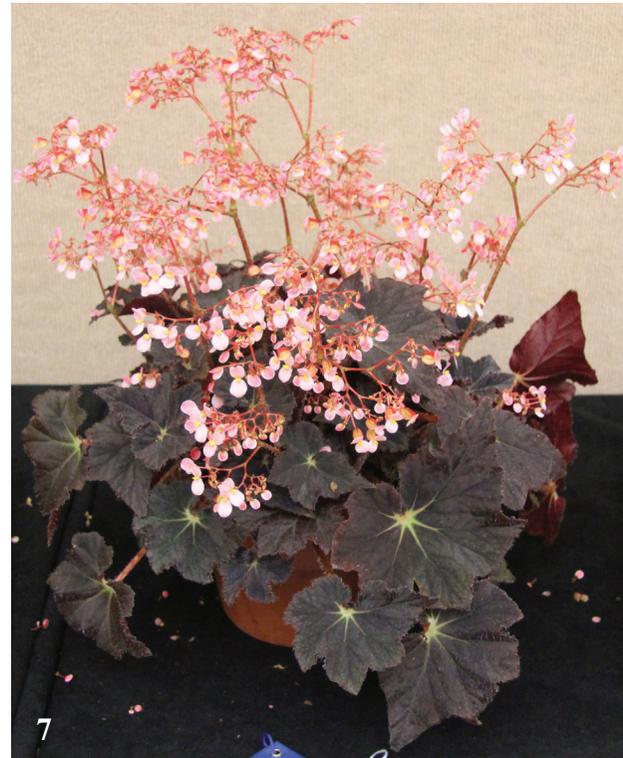
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- 1. *B.* 'Harmony's Red Robin' - exhibited by Julie Lessard. Photo by Gary Hunt
- 2. *B.* 'My Good Friend' - exhibited by Suellen Solodar.
- 3. *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako' - exhibited by Nancy Kast. Photos by Butch McDole
- 4. *B. rex* - exhibited by Merle DeLand. 5. *B.* 'Shanicka' - exhibited by Charles Jaros. 6. *B.* 'Silver Dollar' - exhibited by Suellen Solodar. 7. *B.* 'Red Road' - exhibited Johanna Kitson. Photos by Gary Hunt



B. 'Passing Storm' Photo by Gary Hunt

Division R – Commerical Grower
 B. 'Raspberry Crush'
 Exhibited by Harmony Foliage



B. 'Raspberry Crush' Photo by Butch McDole

Division U – Companion Plants
Primulina dryas 'Hisako'
 Exhibited by Nancy Kast

Division W – Artistic Photographs
B. chloroneura
 Exhibited by Johanna Zinn

Division X – Photographs Computer Enhanced
 Exhibited by Gail Benton & Peter Thomas

Division Y – Arts
B. luxurians
 Exhibited by Johanna Kitson

Cultural Awards

Charles Jaros

- B. 'Whirlwind Dancer' – 98 Points
- B. 'Shanicka' – 96 points
- B. 'Janet Brown' – 96 points
- B. 'Passing Storm' 95 points

Harmony Foliage

- B. 'Raspberry Crush' – 97.5 points
- B. 'Angel Glow' – 97 points

Johanna Kitson

- B. 'Red Road' – 96 points
- Tim Anderson hybrid – 95 points



Tim Anderson hybrid - exhibited by Johanna Kitson.
 Photo by Butch McDole

Marsha Fielland

- B. 'Lomita Lady' – 95.5 points
- B. 'Chumash' – 95 points

Susan Jewell

- B. 'Dietrichiana' – 95 points
- B. 'Fabulous Tom' – 95 points

Ed Whalen

- B. 'Passing Storm' – 96 points

Dale Sena

- B. 'Marion Palmer' – 95 points

Merle DeLand

- B. *rex* – 95 points

D.R. Miller

- B. 'Laurie's Love' – 95 points



B. 'Lynda Evans' - exhibited by Frances Drescher. Photo by Butch McDole
 B. 'Betsy' - exhibited by Ed Whalen. Photo by Gary Hunt





B. 'Robinson's Peach' planted about 8 years ago with 3 five-gallon plants in this 36-inch pot. The plant is cut back each year to 1/3 height. The fertilizer used in the spring is Gro Power. The plant in the background is B. 'Lotusland'. Grown and photographed by Michael Flaherty



This *Begonia hispida* var *cucullifera*, growing at the Montreal Botanical Garden, shows the characteristic adventitious plantlets emerging from the leaf veins. Photo by Craig Boyajian

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Dealing With Cultural Issues

In the Mailbox

by Greg Sytch, Horticultural Correspondent

Time and again, we often have a few begonias that just seem to lag. They do not thrive, perhaps they grow some and then sit. You try to give this plant the proper soil mix, fertilizer, environment. It will still not budge, perhaps even go downhill, then grow a little - just to tease. Sound familiar?

Well, cultural issues may be the reason. Some begonias come from areas where the climate is rather specific. If they come from a high elevation, they detest high heat and humidity. If they are native to the equator in lowland forests, they prefer moderate light with high humidity. If they are a hybrid that has any of these plants in their background, it is possible that no matter what you do, until you mimic their home environment, they will not be happy. Rexes come to mind.

Living and growing in Tampa Bay, Rexes hate our summers. They are riddled with hot, humid days and warm, humid nights. It rains a lot and 75°F is considered a cooler night in July. However, they love our winters. Rexes come from areas of some elevation. Winters are cooler, less humid, and have a less intense sun. For years I struggled to get them through the summer, only to watch them thrive come winter, and then get battered once summer began again. I've given up. There are so many more begonias that enjoy my mild, subtropical climate why frustrate myself?

If you are struggling to grow a certain variety, and are unable to meet its needs, think about other varieties that would suit your growing areas better. I know of one grower who "sticks" it out in winter with a greenhouse where his canes look like bamboo shoots - leaves dropped and sticks abound. Once spring arrives, growth resumes. But, he really puts effort into redeeming those canes come spring.

If you like Rexes, look into the new rex x rhizomatous hybrids being released now. A good example is *B.* 'Betty Firstburg', developed by Tim Anderson. It thrives for me in summer! The leaves are very rex-like, and in winter it blooms heavily while foliage growth rests some. This is matching cultural issues with varieties more suited to what you provide. My hybrid, *B.* 'Island Magic' (pictured below), also a rex x rhizomatous hybrid, and also thrives come summer. While growth slows in winter, it is far from dormant. In fact, it blooms heavily from January through April.

Think about this the next time you have some struggling varieties. Look into their backgrounds to see if culture is a prime issue. If you have any questions about their backgrounds, and you have not been successful in finding more information about them, feel free to shoot me an email. I have years of experience to assist, and some great websites to search. I can be reached at gsytch@cs.com. Have a wonderful spring!



B. conchifolia hybrid called *B.* 'Debbie'. The leaves look exactly the same as the species but the growth is upright. Grown and photographed by Tony Pinto

Begonia bogneri

Bob and Dee Stewart, Stow, MA

I have had this plant several times, and we are now either learning how to take care of it, or we are getting luckier.

My earlier attempts involved placing the plant in a terrarium, with a base of long-fiber sphagnum, under lights. The plant would sometimes grow exuberantly, and sometimes decline precipitously. At the time I did not realize that this species is tuberous, so I probably over-watered the closed container sometimes, and rotted the tuber, and sometimes under-watered the container and the disposed of the remains, not realizing that the plant might come back.

Recently I actually did have a *B. bogneri* come back from the “dead.” It was in a large terrarium with other plants, so I didn’t throw everything away after an under-watering episode that caused the begonia to disappear. After about a year the plant sprouted again. At first I didn’t recognize it, because the first leaves are not the linear grass-like adult leaves. Instead the first leaves look like small wing-shaped begonia leaves with a more normal length-to-width ratio, and with serrated edges.

A couple years ago Buxton member Gloria Utzig gave me a new plant in a four-inch glass bubble with a glass top (Thank you!) (See photo on front cover). The soil mix was

ordinary soil-less mix. (That makes a rather strange-sounding sentence, but I trust that the meaning is clear.) This plant has been fabulously successful so far.

Rather than putting the bubble under lights I put it on our dining table. Our dining area has large windows on two sides, so the plant gets a reasonable amount of light. It even gets a certain amount of direct sun when the angle is low, and this

has not hurt the plant. This placement has the advantage that I can keep an eye on it, so the container is in less danger of drying out without being noticed. I am careful about watering, so the soil does not become soggy.

So far this system has also worked well for another plant from Madagascar, *Begonia sambiranensis*, generously provided by Normand Dufresne.



Adventitious plantlet on *B. bogneri*
Photo by Bob and Dee Stewart

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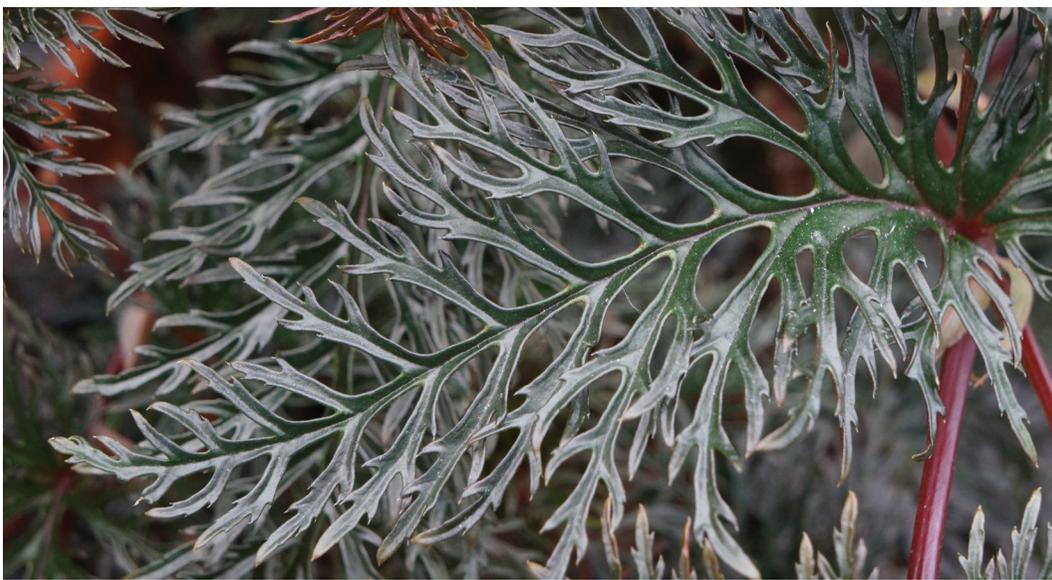
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B. bipinnatifida sports bright, red petioles, or leafstalks. Photo by Craig Boyajian

A Word with You: Petiole

Petiole. Something on a New Orleans dessert menu? An artisanal or retro cocktail? No; it's more botanispeak...

Located just beyond the *stipule* but before the leaf/blade is the *petiole*. Ubiquitous in the begonia world, who even knew it had a special name. It's the support structure between the main stem and the blade, a special stem. It's usually wider where it joins the stem to provide strength at that point and it has additional strengthening structures along its length to help support that blade. Some of my blades could use some extra support with all the new growth spring has brought. (In some plants the *petiole* has air pockets to help flotation (water hyacinth) or moves when touched.) I don't think there's a begonia without petioles, so they won't help distinguish one species from another, but vein patterns can help taxonomists in their sorting and organizing.

Petiole – pronounced pe'-ti-ole. That

By *Claudia Goodridge, New Haven, CT*
 first syllable is accented, and that's a short 'e.' The 'o' is a long 'o,' as in 'oh my.' (My computer doesn't have, or I can't find, the correct pronunciation symbols.) *Petiole* comes from the Latin *petiolus*, which is the diminutive form of *pes, pedis*, meaning foot. Cassell's says *pes, pedis* is "used of both men and animals." A curious lack of distinction. Webster says "in botany, a leafstalk; the footstalk of a leaf, connecting the blade with the stem." Tebbitt and Thompson both say leafstalk as well.

In the old days, before writing this column, I would have called the *petiole* a stem. And in most circumstances I still would. But using the precise word with fellow begonia lovers makes communication so much clearer. We are usually detailed in the rest of our pursuits, why not with our begonias? Is that cinnamon or allspice in your dessert? A cocktail? How about a caipirinha or a negroni? It helps to be precise, but I do ramble on.

Caudex or corm?



B. homonyma Painting by Tracy Mclelland

PLATE 2251 *Begonia homonyma*

Watch for the answer in your next *The Begonian* brought to you by A Word With You!

Last month's answer to Picture Quiz

March 2014 issue, page 48 – *B. goeensis*

Stem attachment: Peltate or basifixed?

And the answer is... PELTATE.

The stem attaches toward or on the middle of the leaf (blade) rather than at the edge, basifixed. See *The Begonian* January/February 2010, p. 12.

Begonia rex (Putzeys)

Samuel Kennedy, President of the Scottish Begonia Society

Begonia rex (Putzeys) was the first and original Rex. When first viewed the opinion was that this plant was so spectacular it was fit for a king, or 'Royal Begonia', hence the name "Rex". Famously introduced by accident into England, it was found growing from the sheath of an orchid plant. On arrival it created quite a stir, as no other plant had ever been seen with a leaf pattern with its metallic sheen such as this. Well, that's how it is romantically remembered. But why Putzeys? Who was he? Did he

find it? Send it? Or, purchase it? These questions sent me on a quest to find out.

I started by enquiring at Glasgow Botanics who have a full library of the Curtis Botanical Magazine. On 1st February 1859 Tab. 5101, under the heading of *Begonia rex*, "Royal Begonia", it quoted from articles already printed within the gardening botanical magazine 'Flore des Serres' 1858 Belgium, which was a horticultural periodical. As I searched for this through the internet, it opened up another world.

The story really starts with Charles Simons (1820–1858) who was appointed as Her Majesty's Apothecary, by warrant from H.M. government. He was sent to India where he visited N.E. Assam in an area called Khasia and the Mikir Hills (if you look this up on Google maps you will see both are about 250–300 km from the sea



Begonia rex (Putzeys)
Photo by Butch McDole

the only Khasia is north of Bengal which makes these two locations 700 km apart as the crow flies, the area looks forested and mountainous). His task was to locate plant material of all types, no doubt for medical purposes upon reading letters he wrote. It would appear he had a reasonably sized workforce, who received pay and holidays including religious days which were respected. The workforce searched field, hill and jungle places returning to base camp with their plants for onward shipping to England. As demand in London outstripped supply he was encouraged to send shipments of 1000 pieces/lots, each within a glass topped crate. He now had a cottage industry making wooden crates, which had to be carried or transported to the docks for onward shipping to Mr J. Hooker, curator Kew Gardens London.

London 1856, the plant materials were taken to Stevens Auction House, where they were to be auctioned, raising funds perhaps to finance the commercial venture. As such, the auction sales would have been advertised well in advance, all interested parties would find out the content of the sale only by attending. On this particular day, Mr. Jules Linden, (1817–1898) Belgian botanist, and explorer, having a particular interest in orchids spied one lot with an interesting plant leaf protruding from the sheath of an orchid plant. Being a respected horticulturalist and author of many books on orchids, which were sold throughout Europe, he knew he had never seen anything like it before... So the bidding started...

Anyone who has attended an auction will know there are two types of people in the room, bidders and ghost bidders. Mr. Linden won the bidding, which stopped, at 10,000 Francs. (Belgian or French, I am unsure).

Returning to his nursery in Belgium the plant was grown and propagated, resulting cuttings were sold for 50F each. To promote his new find he needed to contact a friend to give it media coverage. Who better than, Mr. Louis Van Houte, a European horticulturist in his own right? He acquired new plant material, propagated it, and then mentioned it in the horticultural magazine, 'Flore des Serres', where he was the editor. In 1850 there were 5 writers but by 1856 this number had doubled - no doubt due to the amount of plant material being catalogued. Published in Belgium, and I suspect this was posted throughout Europe, to bring the new and unusual to his patrons. Illustrations are by lithograph

printing in color by Messers A. Goosens, P. De Pannemaeker and J. Goffart. In their day these artists were the cream of the crop, floral prints by these artists are still sought after today. (Prints are available from the internet).

'Flores des Serres' vol. 12 (1857 page 141–143) carried a glowing description by Mr. Jules Putzeys (1809–1882) who was a renowned entomologist at Leige University, Belgium. As an entomologist, Putzeys was well accustomed to describing and drawing detailed anatomic drawings depicting the insect subjects of his interest and publishing the results. He aspired to be the Secretary General at the Ministry of Justice. At some point in his life he was elected Vice President of the Royal Society of Flowers, Brussels. Perhaps this is where he comes to the attention of Mr. Louis Van Houte who invited him to join his magazine writing team. Putzeys was entrusted with drawing and detailing the description of the plant, which is now in history (the magazine then doubled as a plant catalogue). Nowadays we call this merchandising.

In Great Britain the Curtis Botanical magazine carried the story in French, reprinted from 'Flores des Serres'. In the description, this time in English, the author used the following phrase, "it has flowered with us in the autumn and probably by a little management the blossoms may be produced at most seasons of the year," which tells me he owned and had grown a plant for some time. The lithograph drawing, in color, is accredited to W. Fitch, del. et hth. with a seed capsule drawing by Vincent Brooks, Imp.

Janet Brown writes: Last summer (2013) I got a lovely leaf of *B. rex* Putzeys from

Mr. Al Palacio, it was in a plastic bag and I let it sit there for about a week before putting it in a fairly large terrarium bowl. Several weeks later I was having dinner, looked at the plant “light deck” and gasped. New leaves were springing up from the old leaf center! Putzeys continued to thrive and by the time I went to Scotland in late October



Begonia rex (Putzeys) Photo by Laurie Bounsall

it was well enough along that I could take a leaf (only one) and bring it to my dear friends Scottish Begonia Society President and Treasurer Samuel and Betty Kennedy. I put it in my carry on bag. I'll let Samuel take over now for the rest of the story.

Putzey goes on holiday

Leaving home in California one sunny Monday in October, Putzey arrived in cool London, England the next day.

Putzey had a reasonable but somewhat cramped journey - no Club Class here - he was held securely within the walls of a plastic envelope of a Zippo bag. The change over from international flight terminal at London, Heathrow to Internal Domestic flight terminal was a hassle, jostling for position on the cramped transfer bus, then the security checks once again emptied out onto an awaiting charcoal-colored tray, irradiated (yet again), through a machine then tossed and stuffed back into his per-

sonal transport vehicle beside lipstick, hairbrush, mobile phone - yes, (I would believe) there was even a miniature kitchen sink, after all this was a ladies handbag - then, onto another flight bound for Scotland.

On arrival at Glasgow Abbotsinch Airport, Putzeys personal courier gathered her coat about her and gripped the handbag tighter under her arm.

The chill wind tugged at her coat driving the cold, wet rain onto her warm sun kissed cheeks.

To all this Putzey was totally oblivious, except when lipstick and mobile phone became too close and personal, they were so invasive with little regard for one's personal space. The handbag was picked up and laid down numerous times throughout the next three days until at last, on Friday night, he was brought out of the dark and handed over. Poor thing! I hope he survives! The bruised stem and leaf oozed water.

The next fifty miles were less troublesome lying on the back seat of the automobile. On arrival at the new address the bruised and battered Putzey was dropped out of the Zippo bag onto a seed pan. The bruised plant was to see the application of a little rooting hormone, which seemed futile as the phloem tubes of the vascular system had collapsed and were severely damaged. Two pieces of the leaf, one was a half inch

and another one inch in diameter had fallen out of the bag, not giving much for the survival of the main leaf, these two pieces could not be discarded. They were carefully set on the surface of the soil to offer as much leaf area to receive light.

Resurrection Day was about 12 days later when defying all the odds each piece of the leaf had rooted and, from the underside of each, a small new leaf had appeared.

Thank you dear friend for bringing Putzey to me!

Then Putzey went to Ayr Flower Show 2014 – but that's another story!

‘Putzeys goes on Holiday’ was written for Mrs. Janet Brown of the Westchester branch of the American Begonia Society. On receipt of the article she was amused and decided to print it in the local branch newsletter. But the story does not end here.

Having spoken to Janet by telephone I told her of my project tracing the story of Putzeys, whereupon she set out to ask where her leaf came from. On speaking to Al Palacio he told her he received his leaf cutting from Mike Flaherty of Santa Barbara a year earlier. A few weeks later Janet spoke to, and asked Mike, where he got his cutting from, he told her from Rudy Ziesenhenne many years before, but where did Rudy get his? Well, Janet remembered an article she had researched on Rudy in 1998 which was published in the ABS publication, *The Begonian*. Janet accredited Rudy with the title “Mr. Begonia,” as he was there at the inception of the ABS in 1935. (There was a local group in California of begonia growers that formed in 1932). At that time, Rudy told the story at the beginning of this article, but added

that from the day the first ‘Rex’ was discovered in Assam it has never been found again in the wild, which then raised the question, was it a species, or a hybrid? Rudy Ziesenhenne gave many talks and wrote numerous articles for *The Begonian* (on many Begonia types). Throughout his life he specialized in technical drawings of the plants and their detailed descriptions making him an authority on begonia nomenclature. He also worked with botanists and American botanical gardens alike. At one particular talk he quoted the fact that the *Begonia rex* (Putzeys), as first found, had never been seen nor collected again in the wild. However, at that particular talk there were two Japanese gentlemen in the audience, Whereupon their return home they had the ear of Emperor Hirohito (a scientist of some note himself) and encouraged him to finance an expedition to Assam, India to try and locate or rediscover the first *Begonia rex*.

Some time later, Rudy did not recount the exact date, there was a knock on his door in Santa Barbara. On opening the door, there on his step, he was confronted by two Japanese gentlemen who proudly said “Mr. Ziesenhenne, we brought you the *Begonia rex* Putzeys”. One, they had “rediscovered” in India. The Japanese Emperor flew them to California to give it to Ziesenhenne, who asked them politely, “What are you going to do now?”, to which they replied “Oh, we are flying back to Japan”!

Which proved it was a true species.

Samuel wishes to convey thanks to Glasgow Botanical Gardens, Mrs. Janet Brown, and Missouri Botanic Gardens for publishing ‘Flores des Serres’.

NEW: *Begonia Hybridizing: By The Hybridizers*, Edited by Freda Holley, published through the Millie Thompson Publication Fund, March 2013.

This great new book by Freda Holley is filled with articles written by some of our most famous, prolific and successful hybridizers. It is a philosophy of hybridizing divided into three parts and includes articles by Ross Bolwell, Walter Dworkin, Freda Holley, Gregory Sytch, Chuck Ades, Brad Thompson, Patrick Worley and Rudolf Ziesenhenné. The pictures are many and stunning.

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Jack Golding & Dieter C. Wasshausen, 2002, Smithsonian Institution, Volume 43: 1-289

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by Mildred L. Thompson

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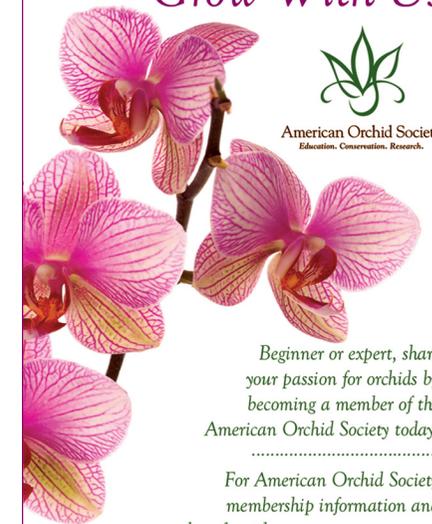
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B. lacunosa (form with white flowers). The very textured leaves signal this plant prefers low light levels. Mark Tebbitt explains in his book "*Begonias*", that these plants "grow in very deep shade in the wild and have evolved conical-shaped projections (bullae) on their leaf surface that serve to capture more efficiently light scattered by the forest canopy." Photo by Jacky Duruisseau

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Past President... Charles Jaros, 106 Pine Valley Ct., DeBary, FL 32713; 407-687-5621; cjbegonia@yahoo.com

1st Vice-President... Mike Flaherty, 1505 East Valley Rd, Santa Barbara, CA 93108; mikeflaherty@cox.net

2nd Vice-President... Martin E. Delgado, P.O. Box 39685, Downey, CA 90239; 562-310-8380; mdlbrarian@consultant.com

Secretary... Connie Saenz, 13627 Stoney Hill, San Antonio, Texas, 78231; csaenz56@yahoo.com

Treasurer... Carol Notaras, 2567 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94123; 415-931-4912; cnotaras@sbcglobal.net

Appointed Chairmen & Directors

Audit... Paul Tsamtsis, 1630 F St., Sacramento, CA 95814-1611

Awards... Cheryl Lenert, 21744 FM 2920, Hockley, TX 77447; 281-255-9004; lenert@flash.net

Ballot Counting... Ingeborg Foo, 1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92083; 760-724-4871

Book Store... Jan Brown, 310-670-4471, begoniabrown@yahoo.com.

Branch Relations... Tom Keepin, 4513 Randwick Drive Houston, TX 77092-8343; 713-686-8539; thomas.keepin@gmail.com

Business Manager... vacant

Conservation... Johanna Zinn, 4407 Jensen Place, Fairfax, VA 22032, 703-323-7513, jazinn@cox.net

Convention Advisor... Mary Sakamoto, 13362 Mount Hood Dr., Santa Ana, CA 92705; 714-852-3695; m.sakamoto@sbcglobal.net

Convention Chairs... Margaret Sporer, 10049 Glenmore Ave. Bradenton, FL 34202, 941-351-8486, pspor2@verizon.net; Dale Sena, 816 W. Braddock St, Tampa, FL 33603, 813-221-0567. Convention email begoniaconvention2014@aol.com

Entries/Classification... Vacant

Facebook Manager... John Boggan, dcbegonias@gmail.com

Grants Committee... Martin E. Delgado, P.O. Box 39685, Downey, CA 90239; 562-310-8380; mdlbrarian@consultant.com

Historian... Millie Santandreu, milliestop10@gmail.com

Horticultural Correspondent... Gregory Sytch, 6329 Alaska Avenue, New Port Richey, FL 34653-4301; 727-841-9618; gsytch@cs.com

Note: The Seed Fund has a new director.

Send all seed requests to:
Michael Ludwig
6040 Upland Street
San Diego, CA.
92114-1933

New Seed Fund e-mail address:
claytonmkellyseedfund@yahoo.com

Internet Editor... Julie Vanderwilt, 720 Mission Park Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93105; Phone 805-687-8033 vanderwilt@cox.net

Judging... Maxine Zinman, 2770 Kimble Rd., Berryville, VA 22611; 540-955-4555; begonia@visuallink.com

Members-at-Large... Sandy Boyd, 5 Walnut Circle, Chico, CA 95973; 530-891-5760; smacboyd@gmail.com

Membership... Paul Rothstein, 2 Flock Lane, Bella Vista, AR 72714; 479-855-1665; paroan2001@yahoo.com

Nomenclature... Dr. Kathleen Burt-Urley; 6150 36th Ter N, Saint Petersburg, FL 33710-1716; kburtutl@uno.edu

Registrar of Hybrids... Priscilla Purinton, 129 Queens River Drive, West Kingston, RI 02892; 401-782-8154 or 401-688-0678, ppurinton@gmail.com.

Parliamentarian... Linda Lawson, 525 Terrace Place, Norman, OK 73069-5034; 405-364-2425

Public Relations... vacant

Save Our Species Coordinator... Johanna Zinn, 4407 Jensen Place, Fairfax, VA 22032, 703-323-7513, jazinn@cox.net

Seed Fund... Dean Turney, 467 Fulvia Street, Encinitas, CA 92024; dean@deansmail.us

Slide Library... Charles Jaros, 106 Pine Valley Ct. DeBary, FL 32713; 407-687-5621; cjbegonia@yahoo.com

Unidentified Species (U Numbers)... Co-Chairs: Charles Jaros, 106 Pine Valley Ct., DeBary, FL 32713 407-687-5621; cjbegonia@yahoo.com

Mary Bucholtz, 1560 Lancaster Terr., #1008, Jacksonville, FL 32204; 904-353-9111

