

THE

September/October 2017

BEGONIAN

wide limestone cliff
Overhanging & v.
cliff rock
b. Herbs
leaves
Petals white,
yellow. 2 or



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.



Begonias in the garden at the Pont in Pont sur Yonne, France
Photo by William Goodridge

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The Begonian is published bimonthly by the **American Begonia Society, Inc.** at The Sheridan Press, 450 Fame Avenue, Hanover, PA 17331USA. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the society, its officers, or the editor. Contents, except where labeled otherwise, may be reprinted without limitation, provided credit is given to *The Begonian*, magazine of the American Begonia Society. Contact: American Begonia Society, P.O. Box 471651, San Francisco, CA 94147-1651.

Membership (subscription) \$25, US, Mexico, and Canada. \$45, Overseas airmail except Mexico and Canada. Added member, same household, no charge. Consult Membership Chairman for sustaining, benefactor, and life membership dues. U.S. currency only. Back issues (current volume) \$2.50. Paypal accepted. Membership dues may be paid online at: <http://www.begonias.org/membership/membershipBenefits.htm> or mail membership dues to:

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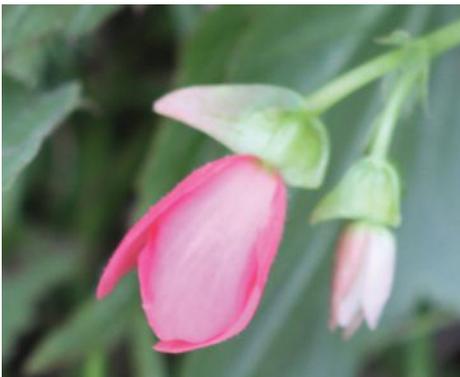
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Charles Jaros holding *B.* 'Sir Charles Jaros' at Harmony nursery. Memorium Pg 166



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Cover photo: Describing a fully grown and flowering plant of *Begonia elachista*, the World's Smallest Begonia. Pg 188

Back cover: The unusual *Begonia rossmanniae* only grows as an epiphyte in the most humid parts of western Amazonia.

Both photos by Peter Moonlight

President's Message

As I write this, I am ABS President-elect and will soon transition from 2nd Vice-president to a new role. All ABS members will soon see a transition to a new ABS Board. We have other transitions as well – the loss of ABS members close to our hearts, including Charles Jaros and Normand Dufresne. We are grateful for these individuals and their contributions to ABS.

Charles wore many ABS hats – twice serving as ABS President, Co-chairing Judging and Unidentified Species, and more. He had an extensive knowledge of begonias, whether hybrids, species, or U numbers. He was energetic, humorous, generous, and respectful to all. To the Buxton Branch, Normand was a regular at meetings sharing his knowledge of begonias and sharing species he had started from seed, and always with a genuine smile and happiness being with other members of ABS.

Before beginning to write this Message, I found Charles' President's Message from the beginning of his second term, and reread it. Charles wrote "...through branch meetings, get-togethers and conventions I have made wonderful, life-long friends. That, and the love of begonias, is what this organization is all about." I would like to borrow his text and say that for myself, yes, this is what ABS is about.

As we begin work to fill upcoming important roles in ABS, please be in touch with me to let me know of ways you can be further involved with ABS.

I want to thank in advance the Delaware Valley Branch for hosting the 2017 ABS Annual Meeting, and know that all will enjoy spending time with the wonderful members of this branch as well as the beautiful tour of

Longwood Gardens.

Please put on your calendar the 2018 National ABS/South West Region Convention, April 2–8, in New Orleans, Louisiana. 2018 is New Orleans' 300th anniversary, and it will be a perfect time for ABS to gather there.

Last (but not least), I look forward to carrying on the exceptional work of President Martin Delgado!

Sally Savelle, ABS President-elect

ABS 2018 Convention/ SWR Get-Together

"Begonias, Tres Bien!"

April 2–8, 2018

New Orleans, Louisiana

Hilton New Orleans Airport
901 Airline Drive, Kenner, Louisiana

800-872-5914 reservations

504-469-5000 direct

Important Updates!

Please note the Convention dates are **April 2–8, 2018** (date given in July/August issue had month wrong). Unfortunately the hotel also had a typo and the numbers are 800-872-5914 for reservations or direct 504-469-5000 and room choice is a king or two double beds (not queen).

We hope to have the Convention Registration materials posted by November 1 on the ABS website including tour and seminar schedules as well as more information on these in the November/December *The Begonian*.



Windrush Gardens at the LSU Rural Life Museum
Photo courtesy of the LSU Rural Life Museum

A Peek at the ABS 2018 Convention in New Orleans

By Cindy Moran, Baton Rouge, LA

For every Scarlett O'Hara and Brett Butler in the South of the 18th and 19th centuries, there were hundreds of "common folk", living a life of freedom or slavery on the working plantations of Louisiana. Lining the lower Mississippi River on both small farms and huge sugar and cotton kingdoms, people lived in primitive circumstances, most of which are no longer remembered in our modern day.

Enter the Burden Museum and Gardens, often cited as one of the best small museums

in the USA and one of the tours scheduled for the 2018 "Begonias, Tres Bien!" ABS Convention in April 2018. Four hundred and ten acres of woods and fields in the heart of Baton Rouge (Interstate 10 passes through the middle of the property) are home to the LSU Rural Life Museum and Windrush Gardens.

Every plant that will grow in South Louisiana has flourished at Windrush Gardens and April visitors will be overwhelmed roaming this sub-tropical showplace in what is mid-spring for Louisiana. There are both formal and wild areas to view, graced by a large lake. Statuary collected from western Europe is featured both in vistas and nooks tucked away in the flowers and foliage.

But the unique part of the property is the Rural Life Museum-containing buildings and artifacts moved there from a parish (county) called St. James, downriver toward New Orleans. (Many other sources have also contributed.) These antiquities of pre-civil war dwellings and lifestyle date from 1836 when they were part of a working plantation. You will visit slave cabins, but also the overseer's house, a church, commissary, blacksmith quarters, kitchen with cooking implements, a sugar extraction mill, and many others.

The property is also a site for LSU Agricultural Extension with a Children's Garden, Herb and Rose Gardens and AAS Test Garden. You will wind through all these sites on your way to the modern museum building, which houses thousands of artifacts, and outside, a Longhorn steer! Rural Life docents will guide our pre-convention tour and we will enjoy lunch under the oaks at mid-day. History and horticulture, you won't want to miss this trip. "Begonias, Tres Bien!"

Rural Life will be on the pre-convention tour, Tuesday, April 3. A bus tour to Baton Rouge will also include a rare plants greenhouse and a large retail nursery, as well as Rural Life

Let Me Introduce You to... Charles Jaros

By Sally Savelle, Concord, MA

Buxton's monthly newsletter carries a regular feature titled, *Allow me to introduce you to* This section of our newsletter highlights a Buxton member or other ABS member as a way of helping us feel connected, even from afar. Those featured simply answer a standard set of questions, or provide their own questions and answers. Charles was featured in Buxton's January 2014 newsletter. Please enjoy reading, in Charles' words, how positive he felt about ABS. Our hope is that this is one way we continue to feel connected with Charles, even from afar.



Where the Member Lives

I live in DeBary, Florida which is 30 miles north of Orlando, FL. I am a Florida Native originally from Miami.

How Found Out About/Became Interested in Joining ABS/Buxton

My first introduction to the Buxton Branch was when they hosted the Eastern Region Convention in 1975. This was my first National function outside of the local Miami Branch. My mother and I didn't know anyone on the National Level; neither of us had ever been to Boston and we decided this function would be a great way to obtain new begonias and see Boston. Well a request was made for those traveling to the convention to try to bring some plants for the plant sale. I obtained a pet carrier from the airlines prior to traveling and filled it with begonias for the plant sale (primarily Florida Hybrids and Paul Lowe Hybrids in particular). We took our plants to Horticulture Hall where the show was being held and were directly sent to the Plant Sale Chair: Wanda Macnair. Wanda welcomed us with open arms and promptly put us to work helping in the Plant Sale. This made us feel welcome and part of the convention. Well the rest is history and I have been going to conventions ever since. Of course, I attended the ABS Convention that the Buxton Branch hosted for their 50th anniversary and have honored to attend many branch shows.

How Became Interested in Begonias

I have always been involved in plants and started out in African Violets. I used to attend the African Violet meetings with my mother from grade school on up. Mother (Helene Jaros) always had some begonias too. When I learned to drive, we started attending the local Miami Branch, the rest is history with African Violets falling by the

wayside. I do enjoy growing Gesneriads though.

Top 5 Favorite Begonias

Top 5 begonias are; *B.* ‘Lana’, *B.* ‘Helene Jaros’, *B.* ‘Charles Jaros’, *B.* ‘Chuck Jaros’, *B.* masoniana (even though I have a hard time growing it). Actually, I love them all.

How Many Begonias You Own, What Type You Own, What You’re Most Successful With

I grow Cane-like, Shrub-Like, Thick-Stemmed and Rhizomatous and the most of my collection are Rhizomatous. Moving from Miami to the Central Florida area was quite different, in Miami I found that Canes did wonderfully, but in Central Florida I have found that Rhizomatous do much better.

Begonias You’d Like to Have, Wish You Could Grow, and/or What Do You Wish You Knew More of About Begonias

I do wish I could grow the Tuberous Begonias especially the × tuberhybrida their flowers are so spectacular; but am very satisfied with the begonias I can grow.

Favorite Thing About the Begonia World, Buxton, Etc.

My favorite thing about the begonia world, ABS and its Branches are the people. I have made lifelong friends by being part of this organization and participating. Our paths would not have crossed if it wasn’t for ABS and its branches. Everyone is so generous and is willing to share plants and/or experiences.

Any Growing Tips the Member Has to Share

When I give lectures on begonias I always tell people to put a newly acquired plant in the mix they grow in. This way plants will usually need watered at the same time and the care will be similar. Growers lose plants because of over-watering.

Other Interests, Hobbies, Etc., Outside of the Begonia World

I collect collectable items/ antiques that are begonia related. I have a large collection of Majolica with many of them highlighted with begonias. I have dining sets from Wedgwood, Johnson Brothers, Shelly, Crooksville and others with begonia patterns on them. I even have vintage buttons with begonias depicted on them. I dabble in selling antiques as well.

What Your Family Members Have to Say About the Phenomena Known as Begonia Obsession

My relatives think my Begonia Obsession is awesome and think I’m famous. LOL.

Our good friend and longtime ABS member, Charles Jaros, died on June 23 after struggling with congestive heart failure.

Wearing one of his many begonia print shirts and his ever friendly demeanor, Charles (above, left) poses with his beautifully grown *B.* ‘Whirlwind Dancer’ - Best of Show winner of the 2014 “Begonias by the Bay” convention and show that was held in Tampa, FL. Photo by Johanna Zinn.

Most recently Charles served the ABS as President, co-chaired both the Judging committee and the Unidentified Species (U Numbers) committee and he served as the Slide Library chairman. Charles will be greatly missed for his service, his kindness, his affable nature and so many other wonderful attributes, but he will be especially missed for his love and knowledge of all things Begonia.

Contributions to the ABS Conservation Fund have been requested for anyone wishing to donate in Charles’ memory.

Remembering Normand Dufresne

By Sally Savelle, Concord, MA



Normand Dufresne wearing his signature smile and holding his 2014 Eva Kenworthy Gray Award. Photo by Gloria Utzig

Beloved ABS and Buxton member, Normand Dufresne, passed away on June 5, exactly one month following his 88th birthday. Normand was a central part of Buxton, sharing his extensive knowledge of begonias, and also sharing those species which he often started by seed. Normand presented Plant of the Month, and included his experience growing that begonia. It was interesting and so very useful. I don't know that I ever saw Normand when he didn't carry a genuine smile and sense of happiness being with members of ABS near and far. I was told that Normand passed away peacefully and at home in his favorite chair, exactly where he wanted to be.

In 2014, Normand was awarded the Eva Kenworthy Gray Award, given for contributing original material toward helping the rank and file members further their study of begonias. The award statement included the following: "This individual has been a member for many decades... and

filled with much dedication to growing, sharing, and writing about rare and unusual seeds and begonias. Many of the subject begonias in these writings were produced and 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."

I talked with Normand last year as I prepared a program on hybrids named for ABS members who've made significant contributions to ABS; when I asked his favorite thing about ABS, he replied, "The people are so great. I see some one or two times a year, and when I do, they give you a big hug like you were a life-long friend." When asked what his favorite begonias were, *B. froebelii* was his very favorite. Others were *B. kingiana* (mottled form), *B. goegoensis*, *B. goudotii* from Madagascar, and all begonias from Malaysia!

I am grateful to have known this special person who made such significant contributions to ABS and to Buxton.



Creative Housing Solution

Article and photo by Randy Montes Kerr, West Hollywood, CA

With never enough room, I enjoy trying out creative housing solutions for species that need higher humidity conditions. I can just, barely, squeeze this *Begonia rex* Putzeys into a clam shell terrarium. But space under T5 lights in the terrarium room is limited. And two big rexes are already growing there. The plant (shown above) is intended to bring in some genetic diversity.

I decided to move a rex to the sunroom. Unlike many *Begonia* species evolved under low light conditions, and happy receiving ambient light well back from a sunny window, this *B. rex* needs bright light to thrive. Yet, a terrarium traps sunlight, and heat, like a locked car on a sunny day. And so, a hole was cut into the lid to allow heat to escape. I regularly have to replace water lost to evaporation. The amount and frequency depends upon the weather.

The “chimney” also serves a second purpose. *B. rex* flower stalks are usually too tall for the clam shell’s low ceiling. When flower stalks form away from the center of the enclosure, I lasso them and using kite string, tape, and steady pressure, I guide the inflorescence toward open air. Lining the edges of the opening with tape, while unsightly, offers some protection from the sharp plastic’s cutting edges.

As a fortunate side effect, the male flowers more readily release their pollen, and female flowers stay healthy as a result of their exposure to lower, household, humidity.

Happy growing!

New Registration: *Begonia grandis* ‘Fan Xing’

From Priscilla Purinton, Cultivar Registrar

Official International Registration #1022

Begonia grandis ‘Fan Xing’

Selection of *Begonia grandis* Dryander

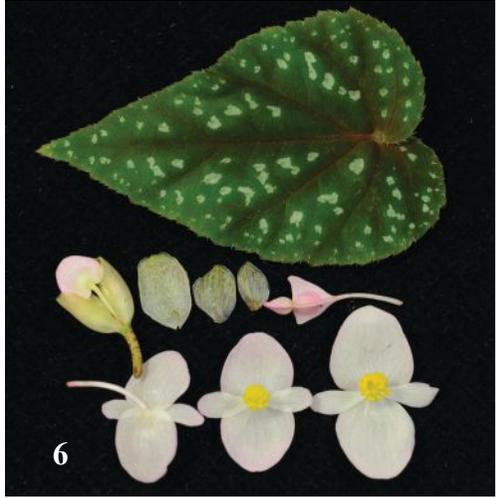
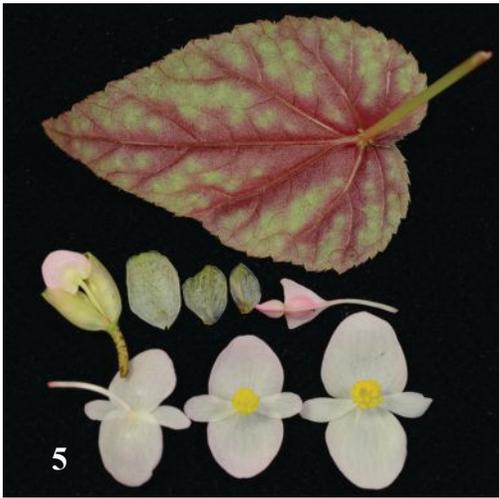
Originators: Daike Tian, Yan Xiao and Naifeng Fu of the Shanghai Chenshan Botanical Garden, 3888 Chenhua Rd., Songjiang, Shanghai 201602 China

Registration applied for December 27, 2016 and approved July 21, 2017.

Begonia grandis ‘Fan Xing’ is a tuberous begonia with an erect stem reaching as tall as 80 cm at maturity. Bulbils are produced in the leaf axils and are green with a red tinge. The stipules are persistent and membranous. The petioles are 2-16 mm long and are green to red. The leaves are ovate with acuminate apex and overlapped basal lobes. Leaf margins are serrulate to denticulate. The upper surface of the leaf is deep green with numerous white spots and the undersurface is deep red.

The flowers are plentifully produced from June to November. The four light pink tepals of





the male flowers are 12-30 mm long, with the three tepals of the female flowers being slightly shorter than this. The outer male tepals are broadly ovate and the inner tepals are broadly ovate.

This lovely begonia was selected in 2013 from a wild population of *Begonia grandis* (which is native to Southern China). Most of these wild

plants displayed the light green leaf coloration with no spots, or spots that disappeared as the leaf matured, as is typical of the species. This selection, with the deep green leaf liberally dotted with white has been aptly named 'Fan Xing', which translates as numerous stars in the sky.

This plant cultivar has not yet been released commercially but is expected to be available in one to two years time.

The plant may keep growing throughout the year when cultivated in a warm greenhouse or indoors if temperatures are maintained at about 25C (77F).



Begonia grandis 'Fan Xing'

Aerial bulbils (Fig 1); Flowering plant in shade house (Fig 2); Flowering plant grown indoors (Fig 3); Leaf undersurface (Fig 4); Leaf undersurface and flowers (Fig 5); Leaf upper surface and flowers (Fig 6); Flowers (Fig 7); Wild plant (Fig 8)

Photos by Daike Tian (Ph.D.), Professor, PI, International Nelumbo Registrar

New Registration: *Begonia ningmingensis* 'Ningming Silver'

From Priscilla Purinton, Cultivar Registrar

Official International Registration #1023

Begonia ningmingensis
'Ningming Silver'

Selection of *B. ningmingensis*
D. Fang, Y.G. Wei & C-I. Peng.

Originators: Daike Tian,
Xiangpeng Li and Naifeng Fu of
the Shanghai Chenshan Botani-
cal Garden, 3888 Chenhua Rd.,
Songjiang, Shanghai 201602,
China

Registration applied for December
27, 2016 and approved July 21, 2017.

Begonia ningmingensis 'Ningming
Silver' is a rhizomatous begonia of
medium size. The stipules are per-
sistent and membranous. The peti-
oles are pink or green, up to 10 cm
long and covered with shaggy white
hairs. The upper surfaces of the leaf
blades are greenish white to almost
completely white and are hairy.
Young leaves have a pinkish tinge.

The leaf blades
are ovate with
an acuminate
apex, a nearly
cordate base
and a serrulate
to denticulate
margin.

The inflo-
rescences each
have up to
twenty-three





4



5



6

male and twelve female flowers, with the male flowers reaching a diameter of 23-30 mm while the female flowers are a little smaller. The male flowers have four tepals and the females have three. The outer tepals of the male flowers are broadly ovate and the inner tepals are elliptic to obovate. The outer

tepals of the female flowers are broadly elliptic and the inner tepal is obovate. The tepals are pale pink to white and the ovaries are light red to pink. Flowers are produced from August to December.

This cultivar was selected from a wild population of *Begonia ningmingensis* in 2012 and flowered for the first time in cultivation in 2013. It is easily distinguished by the dense small white spots on the upper leaf surface, which make the whole leaf look white around the green veins. This cultivar is not yet available commercially.

Begonia ningmingensis 'Ningming Silver'

- Flowering plant (Fig 1)
- Young leaves and undersurfaces of mature leaves (Fig 2)
- Flowers (Fig 3)
- Flowering plant (Fig 4)
- Inflorescence (Fig 5)
- Flowering plant in shade house (Fig 6)

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**The Begonian needs
YOU!**

Email us with ideas, photos, tips, suggestions, or letters to the editor!

begoniaskc@yahoo.com

The International Database of the Begoniaceae

By Ross Bolwell,
Annangrove, NSW, Australia

I've been uploading onto the begonia database (www.ibegonias.com) a lot of scans from herbarium specimens of begonia species these last few months. These are mostly the type specimens originally collected for the species and named by the author (usually a botanist). I don't think these are the best substitute for a good photo of the species, but something is better than nothing. Researchers can still get a good idea of how the plant should look which should assist them in their particular endeavors.

An example of a scan of an herbarium specimen (right).

Article and image courtesy of the
NSW Begonia Society Inc.
Autumn, 2017



Begonia molleri Fruit

Bob Stewart, Stow, MA

The African epiphytic species *Begonia molleri* is in section *Tetraphila*, one of whose characteristics is sausage-shaped wingless fruit. In this species, eventually the green sausage splits open revealing a yellow mass with seeds scattered in it. This is what in the Gesneriad family is called a “display fruit”; I don't know whether this terminology is used in the Begonia family.

A “display fruit” is one that becomes colorful and inviting when it is ripe, sometimes by changing color but often by opening a dull-colored enclosure to show a colorful fleshy mass. The colorful fruit is presumably attractive to birds (and perhaps to monkeys). The birds will pass the fruit through their digestive tract and eject the seeds somewhere away from the parent plant. Many of these fruits also attract ants as shorter-range seed dispersers, though attracting ants is perhaps done by smell rather than color.



A Word with You: Cauline

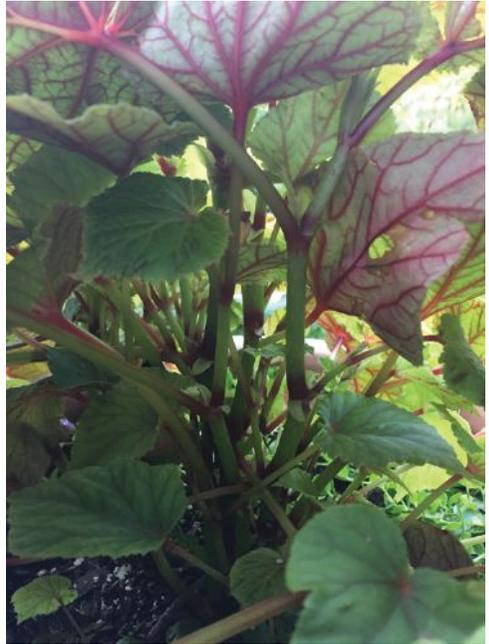
By Claudia Goodridge, New Haven, CT

Unpacking fresh vegetables at home usually means a cauliflower or two. Yes, I'm one who likes that veggie. So, when again reading through the scientific abstract <http://ejournal.sinica.edu.tw/bbas/content/2004/3/Bot53-10.html> after a grocery run, I found "cauline leaves smaller than basal leaves," referring to *B. coptidifolia*. Coincidence or raised consciousness? Mnemosyne may have been sitting on my shoulder as I went to consult my resources. She's a frequent companion with botanical vocabulary.

The Thompsons define caulescent in their glossary as "having an obvious stem above ground." Golding describes caulescent stems as having "stems above the ground," and acaulescent as "stem absent or inconspicuous." I didn't find anything caul related in Tebbitt. But cauline remained undefined.

It turns out that cauline comes from the Latin *caulis*, a stalk, stem. Cassell's says it's the "stalk of a plant, esp. the cabbage plant." In botany cauline leaves are those near the upper part of a stem as opposed to basal leaves, that are, you guessed it, located at the base of a plant or stem. Cauline leaves are usually smaller than basal leaves.

Cauliflower now makes sense too. It's a flower on a *caulis*, a flower on a stem. Cauline and cauliflower will forever be intertwined in my memory bank. Now I have to wonder about cauldron.



Begonia grandis 'Early Bird'
Leaves growing from the upper part of an aerial stem are the *cauline* leaves.



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A Visit to Keukenhof Gardens – It's More Than Bulbs

*By Betsy Szymczak,
President Buxton Branch ABS*

The Keukenhof website calls it “the most beautiful spring garden in the world” and that is no exaggeration. A recent visit to Keukenhof was the highlight of my recent trip to Amsterdam. This 87-acre garden, open to the public from the end of March to mid-May, features over 7 million blooming spring bulbs with a total of 800 tulip varieties. In addition to exquisite outdoor gardens six separate pavilions feature flower shows. These shows include old and new varieties of anthurium, orchids, amaryllis, bulbs-in-pots, potted plants, alstroemeria, chrysanthemum, calla, carnation, lilies and summer flowers. As many as 500 growers show an amazing variety of plants and designers create breath-taking arrangements.

A section devoted to begonias featured new tuberous and rex begonias and new cultivars of *Begonia x hiemalis*. If judged by ABS standards each plant on





Begonia x hiemalis (Fig 1)

Begonias! (Fig 2)

B. 'Forest Stream' (Fig 3)

Tulips at Keukenhof (Fig 4)

B. 'Nordic Frost' (Fig 5)

B. 'Lime Love' (Fig 6)



A drift of tulips at the Keukenhof gardens

display would have been awarded maximum points for quality and quantity of blooms. Several new rex varieties were stunning, *B.* ‘Nordic Frost’, *B.* ‘Forest Stream’ and *B.* ‘Lime Love’ were my favorites.

If you think of or are working on a bucket-list, a visit to Keukenhof for bulbs and begonias will not disappoint.



A New Hybrid Tuberos Begonia from Argentina

Dr. Mark C. Tebbitt, California University of Pennsylvania, PA and
Aldo Rubén Andrada, Fundación Miguel Lillo, Tucuman, Argentina

While artificial Begonia hybrids are common in cultivation far fewer natural hybrids are known. In South America, natural hybrids between *B. boliviensis* and two other tuberous species, *B. cinnabarina* and *B. germaineana*, have previously been documented from Bolivia (Tebbitt, 2013a). In addition, *Begonia micranthera* has been observed to hybridize in Bolivia with *B. krystoffii* (Tebbitt, 2013b), *B. germaineana* (Tebbitt, 2013c), and *B. cinnabarina*.

Here we report a new hybrid combination from the Andes of northwestern Argentina that involves two tuberous species, *B. boliviensis*, a hairless plant to 1m tall, with lanceolate leaves, and scarlet, lanceolate tepals, and *B. micranthera*, a hairless to densely hairy plant to 1 m tall, with ovate leaves, and white, pink, or yellow, broad rounded tepals. Despite the fact that *B. micranthera* grows in Bolivia as well as in Argentina the hybrid between *B. boliviensis* and *B. micranthera* has not previously been documented in either country. This

hybrid was observed in January 2017 at two separate locations in Argentina's Jujuy Province. The hybrids at these two locations must have originated separately since they involve different variants of *B. micranthera* and, as a result, differ in appearance.

One of the new hybrid populations of *B. boliviensis* × *B. micranthera* was located at Calilegua National Park in Argentina's Jujuy Province. This hybrid involved *B. boliviensis* and a distinct pale yellow-flowered variant of *B. micranthera*, with 3-locular ovaries. It occurred alongside a portion of the road that runs from the park's main entrance to the village of San Francisco. *Begonia boliviensis* is very common in this park at elevations between 1200 and 2000 m. In the upper half of this elevation range it consistently has the narrow, scarlet, forward projecting tepals; elongated reproductive parts; and hairless, lanceolate leaves (Figure 1) that also characterize this species in Bolivia and the far north

Figure 1. *Begonia boliviensis* from Calilegua National Park.



of Argentina. In the lower part of this elevation range *B. boliviensis* co-occurs with a unique yellow-flowered variant of *B. micranthera* (Figure 2). The hybrid (Figure 3) between these two distinct species is common wherever the two parent species grow together and is intermediate between them in its vegetative and floral features. It has pale orange to scarlet tepals that are shorter and broader than those of *B. boliviensis* yet narrower than those of *B. micranthera*. The reproductive organs are intermediate in length between the extended stamen column and styles of *B. boliviensis* and the more typically sized stamen clusters and styles of *B. micranthera*. The



Figure 2. Yellow-flowered *B. micranthera* from Calilegua National Park.
 Figure 3. Natural hybrid between *B. boliviensis* and yellow-flowered *B. micranthera*, Calilegua National Park.

Figure 4. Dry hillside near Volcán.
 Figure 5. White-flowered *B. micranthera* from Volcán.



narrowly ovate leaves are similarly intermediate in shape between the lanceolate leaves of *B. boliviensis* and the ovate leaves of the local variant of *B. micranthera*. The hybrid and *B. micranthera* share the presence of short, soft hairs on their leaves, while *B. boliviensis* has hairless leaves.

A second hybrid population involving *B. boliviensis* and *B. micranthera* was observed near Volcán (Figure 4), which is also in Argentina's Jujuy province and is located about 40 miles east of Calilegua National Park. Here the parent plants of *B. micranthera* have white flowers and 4-locular ovaries (Figure 5). Approximately ten individuals from this location





were clearly identifiable as hybrids. These plants are intermediate between the distinct parent species and occur in close proximity to them. The hybrids have pink flowers, with tepals that are shorter and broader than those of *B. boliviensis* yet narrower than those of *B. micranthera*, and hairy leaves of intermediate shape between the two parent species (Figure 6).

At Volcán as well as in several locations further south in Argentina's Salta and Tucuman Provinces we also observed, in addition to these obvious hybrids that were intermediate between *B. boliviensis* and *B. micranthera*, probable hybrids that closely resemble *B. boliviensis* but differ from typical individuals of that species in minor ways. Smith and Schubert (1941) described such plants from Volcán as *B. boliviensis* var. *volcanensis*, while Imscher (1949) described them as *B. boliviensis* var. *latitepala*. *Begonia boliviensis* in the vicinity of Volcán grows in unusually dry locations for this species (Figure 7), is more variable than usual, and the plants are more erect that is typical for this species, they also sometimes have shorter leaves, and broader tepals (Figure 8), and occasionally green, glaucous stems, and/ or almost equal fruit wings (Figure 9). What is most notable about many of these plants, however, is their often more deeply toothed or even lobed leaves. This latter character is particularly pronounced in plants from the Parque Provincial de Yala (Figure 10) located about 15 miles south of

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Figure 6. Natural hybrid between *B. boliviensis* and white-flowered *B. micranthera*, Volcán.

Figure 7. Type locality of *B. boliviensis* var. *volcanensis*.

Figure 8. *Begonia boliviensis* var. *volcanensis* from hills above Volcán.

Figure 9. *Begonia boliviensis* var. *volcanensis* from riverside cliffs below Volcán.

Figure 10. Variation in leaf shape of *B. boliviensis*, Parque Provincial de Yala.





Begonia bipinnatifida Photo: Craig Boyajian

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The Save Our Species program of the American Begonia Society was created to encourage its members to

New Hybrid Tuberous Begonia continued from page 183

Volcán. In extreme cases the leaf blades of these plants are L-shaped because the basal lobe is so pronounced.

We suggest that the unusual features seen in *B. boliviensis* throughout much of its southern range in Argentina were acquired after the ancestors of these plants dispersed south and hybridized with *B. micranthera*. Given that almost all of the *B. boliviensis* plants south of Volcán exhibit unusually broad tepals and relatively large teeth on their leaf margins but otherwise look like *B. boliviensis* it is likely that all of these southern plants contain a few genes from *B. micranthera*. These genes would have been acquired when the ancestors of these plants hybridized with *B. micranthera*. This would have given rise to populations of hybrids with characteristics intermediate between the two parents; a situation similar to what we see today at Calilegua National Park and Volcán. After these intermediate hybrids had formed, those plants must then have predominantly interbred with *B. boliviensis* or *B. boliviensis*-like hybrids leading to most of the *B. micranthera* genes gradually being replaced by *B. boliviensis* genes (with a few prominent exceptions, such the genes responsible for broad tepals). This would have resulted in the plants with an almost pure *B. boliviensis*-like appearance that we see today south of Volcán.

Acknowledgement:

This expedition was made possible by the financial support of the American Begonia Society and its members and the Fundación Miguel Lillo (LIL). We are also grateful to Hugo Ayarde and Eva Bulacio (LIL) for helping us in the field and to Jorge Salas (LIL) for driving us safely around northern Argentina.

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Begonia mildbraedii

Article and photo by Randy Montes Kerr, West Hollywood, CA

Begonia mildbraedii, Section *Scutobegonia*, is blooming.

Species of the African Section *Scutobegonia* have evolved a defense against inbreeding, and inbreeding depression. They are not self-fertile. The typical form of this genetic incompatibility is the female flower's inhibition of pollen tube formation.

It typically takes about 24 hours from pollen germination to successful completion of the pollen tube - and blissful union. The female flower, upon detection of self-pollen, or that of close kin, produces an inhibitory factor such that the pollen tube never reaches its objective. Fortunately, a *B. mildbraedii* leaf cutting reliably engenders a new plant in 6 or 8 weeks, not too long.

B. mildbraedii, a somewhat variable species, is native to "South-western Ivory Coast, south-western Ghana, southern Cameroon, Gabon, Angola (Cabinda), southern Congo and

Zaire. Ecology: Terrestrial or on wet mossy rocks or rock faces; often near streams, rivers, waterfalls or sources; often on slopes, stream beds or steep road banks, in shade or deep shade of primary forest."*

I grow *B. mildbraedii* off to the side of my propagation space, beneath a bench holding more light tolerant species. When grown in a location with brighter light, I found that the leaves look somewhat washed out. When placed in a rather dark space, the leaves took on their best appearance with a velvety sheen. The light levels seen in the [above] photo are much higher than normal illumination for *B. mildbraedii*.

Happy growing,

* S. M. S. Sosef, "Refuge Begonias: Taxonomy, phylogeny and historical biogeography of *Begonia* sect. *Loasibegonia* and sect. *Scutobegonia* in relation to glacial rain forest refuges in Africa" *Wageningen Agric. Univ. Papers* 94-1 (1994), p. 259.



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Pink pots and pink metal work make the perfect backdrop for begonias on the bridge over the Yonne in Pont sur Yonne, France (Fig 1).

Begonias surrounding a classic statue from 1853 in Alée de L'Arbe Sec, Auxerre, France (Fig 2). The French often use begonias to great effect in their public and private gardens; silent, but consistent testimony to their beauty, endurance, and popularity.

Photos by William Goodridge



Discovering the World's Smallest Begonia

Article and photos by Dr. Peter Moonlight, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, Scotland

In 1787, *Begonia minor* was the first species of Begonia to be named for its relatively small stature. When it was described, *Begonia minor* had very little competition for the title of the world's smallest known Begonia. However, the epithet "minor" only indicated the species – which grows to almost 2m high – was smaller than the 20 or so other Begonia species known in the late eighteenth century.

Fast forward to 2017, and the over 1850 described species of Begonia provide ample competition to any would be world's smallest Begonia. Names such as *Begonia miniscula*, *Begonia nana*, and *Begonia perpusilla* all derive from Latin words for small. *Begonia lilliputana* was described

in 2015 and was named for the fictional race of tiny humans in Jonathan Swift's classic novel Gulliver's Travels. None of these species exceed 10cm in size but all exceed the Begonia I first encountered as an herbarium specimen in August 2014.

The specimen was collected in 2008 in central Peru by botanists from Missouri Botanic Gardens. Around five plants were mounted on the the standard herbarium sheet (around 30×42cm) with less than a tenth of the sheet covered. Over the next year, I saw duplicates of this specimen in three further herbaria, and not one exceeded 3cm in height while flowering.

While a herbarium specimen is sufficient for describing a new species, I wanted to

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Begonia elachista with the author's thumb for scale (Fig 1).

Travelling to the type locality on a tributary of the Amazon with
Peruvian botanist Aniceto Daza (Fig 2).

A poison dart frog encountered on the walk to *Begonia elachista* (Fig 3).



visit the new species in the wild before describing it. As well as its small size, it differed from all other Andean species in a number of key characters and I could not decide which *Begonia* species it was related to. I also wanted to check the species really was as small as I thought and that I had not simply seen small plants in the herbarium.

So, at the start of 2016, and after securing all the relevant permissions, I visited where the herbarium specimen was collected. It is a very remote site, two days' drive from Lima over the Andes and a slightly hair-raising boat ride through the rapid of a tributary of the Amazon, followed by a day-long hike through virgin rain forest. To the best of my knowledge, the species lives on a single limestone cave mouth and the surrounding rocks, and when I reached the site it was a huge relief to see that the species was there, it was relatively common, and it did not reach more than 3cm in height.

Having made my collections, taken all the necessary measurements, and assessed the species' conservation status (Critically Endangered, hence why there is no locality information in this article!), I returned to Edinburgh to describe the species in collaboration with colleagues in the United States and Peru. So, what did I call it? All the Latin words for small were already taken and I am not as poetic as the author of *Begonia lilliputana* so I turned to Greek. The species was described in the European Journal of Taxonomy as *Begonia elachista* Moonlight & Tebbitt, derived from the Greek for the smallest *Begonia*.



Amazonian rainforest on the eastern foothills of the Andes mountains (Fig 4).

Begonia elachista growing on limestone among mosses (Fig 5).

Begonia elachista growing on stalactites at the cave mouth that is its only known locality (Fig 6).



Family Ties

By Laura Leaphart, Folsom, CA

Several years ago I told myself that I would get “only one” terrarium begonia as a token plant because I didn’t want to have a lot of terrariums in the house. All my other begonias are either outside or in the greenhouse. You know what happens - now I have so many terrariums in my home office that I was thinking of a way to reduce the number without letting go of any plants. I started looking at what I could put together in a single terrarium that made some sort of sense, and realized that I had *B. microsperma*, *B. prismatocarpa*, and their offspring – *B. ‘Buttercup’*, by Michael Kartuz. Instead of now having three terrariums I have only the one, but now I have to make myself keep them pruned enough for all three to stay within the confines!

Three plants that belong together under one roof.
Front: *B. prismatocarpa*, upper left *B. ‘Buttercup’*, upper right *B. microsperma*.
Photo by Gary Hunt

Buxton Branch Annual Show and Sale

September 15-17, 2017

Tower Hill Botanical Garden, Boylston, MA

The Buxton Branch of the American Begonia Society will once again join The Gesneriad Society, New England Chapter in a weekend-long show and sale at one of New England's premier garden destinations. This judged begonia show attracts growers from throughout the region and features many expertly grown terrarium entries. Member and commercially grown plants will be for sale, making this an excellent opportunity to add unique specimens to your collection. Entries are accepted on Friday afternoon, with judging on Saturday. A begonia lecture/demonstration is scheduled for Saturday and a workshop for kids on Sunday. The show, open to the public, is part of a Tower Hill fall festival weekend; last year attendance was close to 1,000 each day. For more information and to download entry form, show rules and classification schedule go to <http://www.buxtonbegonia.org> or contact Betsy Szymczak, Show Chair szymczakb@gmail.com



A peek at a few plants from last year's Buxton show.

Division Award (Division G Class 82): *B. sutherlandii* (Fig 1)
Best In Show: *B. handelii* × *B. Rex-cultorum* group (Fig 2)
Both grown by Bob Stewart

Best Cane-like Begonia Award: *B. acotifolia* (Fig 3)
Grown by Priscilla Purinton

B. 'Dewdrop' (Fig 4) grown by Gloria Utzig

Photos by Gloria Utzig



Cuneate v. Muriccate?



B. hongkongensis. Are the leaves cuneate or muriccate?
Photo by Shui Yu-Min, Ph. D.

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

Last month's answer to Picture Quiz Pubescent v. Rugose?

ANSWER: PUBESCENT – indumentum or vestiture of short, soft, erect hairs. See
The Begonian Nov. Dec. 2010.

Rugose describes a wrinkled, corrugated leaf surface.

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Champagne for the holidays? Of course, and who better to suggest it than the Margaret Lee Branch? However, this time the members are not busy reaching for their favorite brand of bubbly, but instead are issuing a challenge to donate to this year’s Holiday Greetings at a brand new level — Champagne, for donations over \$300!

Donors to this fund are able to offer their holiday greetings while also supporting ABS. Thanks to your generosity, \$4,312 was donated last year! The money raised helps with the expense of printing *The Begonian* and in turn helps to keep the cost of dues down. Please help spread the word about this annual program and request that it be added to the agenda of your next meeting. It was good to see many branches increase their level of donation last year; maybe this year your branch could consider that, too. Champagne, anyone?

All donors will be listed by category of donation on a single page of the November/December issue. The donation categories are: **Bronze, 1-\$50; Silver, \$51-100; Gold, \$101-150; Platinum, \$151-300; and NEW for 2017: Champagne, \$301, plus!**

The contributions, which are tax-deductible, should be made out to ABS Holiday Greetings and sent to Frances Drescher, 11529 Riverchase Run, West Palm Beach, FL 33412. The deadline for donations is September 15th. If you have any questions, please contact Frances at fkdrescher1@comcast.net. Thank you.

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Newest Freda Holley:

Those Majestic Begonias, Growing and Hybridizing the Upright Rhizomatous Begonias, by Freda Holley,

2017. This lovely book premiered at the Convention in San Antonio and sold out. But the next printing is ready for you. The front cover is a picture of magnificent *B. 'Rudy'*, one of the most beautiful of these stately begonias. Picture by Julie Vanderwilt of her plant. The book is 54 pages with many pictures. A must-have for anyone who "loves and grows begonias".

Domestic: \$15.00; International: \$25.00

Species Begonias Of The Eastern Himalayas Of Arunachal, India

by Dr. Rekha Morris, Feb. 2017, Published by The Dr. Cecilia Koo Botanic Conservation & Environmental Protection Foundation, Taiwan. Rekha spoke at the September Convention in Los Angeles about this book. It is a description of species collected by Rekha on her many trips to India and Arunachal. Beautiful pictures and descriptions of begonia species.

Domestic: \$25.00; International: \$35.00

The Invisible Begonia: An Introduction to Begonia Genetics with My Experiences in their Use in Hobby Hybridizing

by Freda Holley, August, 2016. Freda introduced this amazing book at her seminar at the convention, Sept. 8. You will learn how she creates her stunning hybrids, scientifically, and see the beautiful results in many full color photos. This is the third book in her hybridizing series and a 'must have' for beginning & established hybridizers as well as collectors. Proceeds go to the ABS Millie Thompson Publication Fund.

Domestic: \$25.00; International: \$35.00

The first new ABS pin in many years is now available just in time for your holiday giving. It was designed and produced by Cheryl Lenert. Surprise and delight begonia lovers on your list with this beautiful pin .

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Begonias Of The Month

Written by ABS members. Compiled by Wendy Corby, 2015, 116 color pages sponsored by the Sacramento Branch and published through the ABS's Thelma O'Reilly Reprint Fund.

This booklet is a compilation of monthly write-ups by ABS members from 2000 through 2010. *Begonias Of The Month* includes a variety of begonias with information on the plant's origin and growing tips from that grower's experiences and locale.

Domestic: \$20.00 International: \$30.00

Brad's Begonia World

by Brad Thompson. Edited & Compiled by Wendy Corby, 2015.

A compendium of Brad Thompson's web page with 189 color pages of photographs, published through the ABS's Thelma O'Reilly Reprint Fund. The first section is on the different types of begonias. The second section is on the growing and care of begonias. The book is a wonderful set of articles to provide begonia enthusiasts with information and delight them with incredible full color photographs of your favorite begonias.

Domestic: \$35; International: \$55

Understanding Begonia

by Samuel Kennedy, Photographs & Art Work by Elizabeth Kennedy

Published in the United Kingdom, 2015, ISBN #978-0-9932897, 95 pages, full color photographs. First half of the book covers begonia history, types, sections, growing, fertilizing. Second half is devoted to growing tuberous begonias. A glorious book containing valuable information from the Jack Golding archives.

Domestic: \$20.00; International: \$30.00

Begonia Note Cards

featuring Begonias of Borneo found in the new Ruth Kiew book. **\$15.00**

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.

Domestic: \$21.00;

International \$26.00 (Includes postage)

Unidentified Species Listing, Update, August 2012

by Mary Bucholtz & Charles Jaros, Co-Directors

Second Edition includes U Numbers 001 through 621. Looseleaf format for easy addition of new material. Notebook not included.

Domestic: \$33.00; International: \$42.00

B. U604–621 to add to the August, 2010 Unidentified Species Listing

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Raising Cane: Experiences in Growing the Species Cane Begonias

by Freda M. Holley

A wonderful work on the cane species with color photographs.

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Jack Golding & Dieter C. Wasshausen, 2002, Smithsonian Institution, Contributions from the United States National Herbarium, Volume 43: 1-289

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Seeing Begonia

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Begonias – 1984 Update

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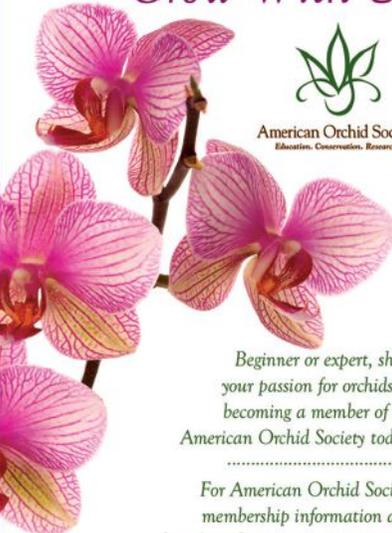
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**November/
December 2017**
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