THE BEGINNING

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Sheltered

Garden



ACIDA . . . See Page 120 For Description

* VOL. VII — No. 8

AUGUST, 1940

TEN CENTS



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Future Branch

• Mr. Alfred Heller, 159 State St., Bloomfield, New Jersey, is interested in the formation of a branch of the ABS. Will all New Jersey members and others who are interested please get in touch with Mr. Heller.

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GROWING A BEGONIA ON THE "DRY" SIDE

by LAMBERT DAY



INCE THE proper watering of plants grown in pots is one of the most important factors and possibly the least understood by the amateur, we will try to answer in as much detail as possible.

It is difficult to explain exactly when to water and when not to, so some experience must be gained by trial and error methods before successful results can be acquiredmuch judgment must be used.

The water to be used should be clean, fresh, and as soft as possible—rain water being ideal. Never water a plant until the soil becomes dry, though not bone dry; then it should be soaked thoroughly. One way to determine if the soil is dry in a clay pot is by tapping the pot. If a clear ring is heard, it is time to water; a dull thud indicates that enough moisture is present. Be sure that the pot in question is not cracked as this defect might lead to confusion.

Begonias like an abundance of water but will not tolerate for long a dank, soggy soil. When plants that I prize highly are first received, all of the old soil is washed off of their roots. A pot is selected that is neither too large nor too small for the plant in question. The first inch to two inches of the pot (depending on the type of plant and size of pot) is filled with sphagnum moss or very coarse drainage material of broken crocks. A soil is prepared that is porous enough to allow fairly free passage of water. The last one-half to inch of space in the top of the pot should be left for filling with water when watering.

A few napthaline flakes sprinkled in the drainage material will discourage earth worms for some time. These worms do more to destroy the fibrous texture of the soil than any other single factor. They are the fifth columnists that, will in short order, make an otherwise good soil, a soggy, damp, worthless one. Be sure that they are not allowed to close the drainage hole in the bottom of the pot, as poor drainage is fatal to begonias.

Other factors to be considered are whether the plant is in active growth or dormant. Naturally very little water is required by a plant that is not growing, while an abundance of water will be needed by one that is at the height of its active growth period. A plant of woody structure will require water less often than one of succulent growth. Large leaved plants require more water than small leaved ones. The humidity of the surrounding air determines to a large extent the frequency with which water must be applied. Plants

that are to be kept on the dry side should not be left in places where the air is heavy with moisture and poorly ventilated.

As each of these factors mentioned are corelated they should all be taken into consideration if maximum results are to be had. Avoid watering at night during the winter or when there are prolonged periods of dampness and fog. During the hottest part of the summer it is sometimes advisable to water in late afternoon or evening, but here again experience is the best advisor. Water every day if necessary, but only if necessary. The temperature of the water to be used should be close to that of the surrounding air. Colder water will retard plant growth.

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The Picture on the Cover

Begonia acida, A. DC., was first authentically described by De Candolle in his Prodromis of 1864. However, it was pictured and described earlier by Martius on plate 49 in volume 10 of Jose Mariano da Conceicao Velloso Xavier's Florae Flumenens, published in 1790. The plant is native to Brazil, in the province of Bahiensi (Bahia).

At this writing it is impossible to give the date at which this plant was introduced into cultivation. B. acida grows luxuriantly in a lath house or glass house during the summer, but must be grown indoors or in a glasshouse during the winter. This plant may be propagated by stem or leaf-cuttings. During past winters when the parent plant has died during the cold weather, the leaves which were being used for propagating in an open sand flat in the lath house have survived and produced young plants.

As far as can be determined, this plant has not been employed in hybridizing work.

Botanically B. acida A. DC. belongs to the section Wageneria along with B. scandens, SW, and longpipes, Hook.

Description: The root is fibrous. The plant stem grows horizontally, but cannot be called a rhizome as it is not thick and is covered with white hairs. The stipules are persistent, curling downward along their length twice as long as the base width. The leaf stem, which is short, usually not as long as the width of the leaf, is very hairy. The leaves are up to nine inches in diameter, almost round, six to nine veined, green, wrinkled, hairy above and below. The edge of the leaf is toothed and hairy. Veins stand out prominently from the underside of the leaf.

The flowers, which are produced in the winter and early spring, are white but sometimes have a pink tinge. The flower stems grow to two feet or more in height, with tips nodding at first. The tip of the stem is very forked. The flowers are about one-half inch in diameter. Male flowers are four petaled, the top and bottom ones being larger. The stamens are free at the base with the oblong anthers being longer than the filaments. The female flowers are five-petaled. The three short styles, which remain after the petals have fallen, are each divided into two branches, not twisted, each branch being covered



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The temperature last winter was below freezing for many weeks at a time and the B. Evansiana are more beautiful than ever this year. When well established the leaves become quite large and showy and the pink flowers on long stems well above the plants.

We grow them in sunny places and in shady spots. Our wild garden is quite shady and they do just as well there as in the sun.

Few plants can be used so effectively as the B. Evansiana in the garden and with so little effort.

-TRISTRAM COFFIN WHITAKER, Prop., Green Tree Flower Gardens.

with fuzz. The seed pod is three-celled, having three wings, of which one is larger. The placentas are not divided.

The foregoing description by the Nomenclature Director.

The picture on the cover was furnished through the courtesy of WILSON'S BE-GONIA GARDENS.

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FUCHSIAS

O

HE SHOW is on, and what a glorious spectacle the Ballet of the Fuchsias presents. Throughout every garden where one or more of these charm-

ing plants have been set out there will be a colorful display of bloom for the next six months.

There is good reason for the great popularity of the fuchsia here on the Pacific coast when one considers its ease of culture, comparative freedom from pests, long blooming period, and the great range of color of the blossoms. In addition to the above mentioned qualities, it may also be used in many ways in the garden, such as, a ground cover, as a low 18 to 24-inch fore-planting shrub, as a climber on a trellis or fence, for taller four to ten-foot background plantings, with a few varieties going up to fifteen and twenty feet, suitable for small trees, and with many fine varieties for hanging baskets and window box decorations thrown in for good measure.

Since its introduction to this country some one hundred years ago, the hybridists have made great improvements in the size and quality of the blooms of this charming subject. Today one may select any color of the spectrum and find a fuchsia to match, therefore they will fit any color scheme to perfection. June and July are the months to select new varieties for they are then nicely in flower and the plants have made sufficient growth to enable one to get the idea of their habits as to type of foliage, compactness of plant, etc.

If possible plan to visit one of the Nurseries specializing in fuchsias. These people will be able to give you much worthwhile information as to the kind of fuchsias best suited to your local need. Most of the Fuchsia specialists will have from two hundred to three hundred varieties to choose from. If you cannot visit one of the Nurseries send for one of their catalogues. They are full of helpful information.

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by H. C. BAAKE

While it is true that the fuchsia will grow in almost any soil, long years of working with the plant have proven to me that a little extra effort put into the preparation of the soil in which they are to be planted will pay big dividends. I have found the following soil mixture to be entirely to their liking, and best results have been obtained wherever used: 50 per cent well rotted, old oak leaf mold, 40 per cent soil loam or good garden soil (if your garden soil is heavy add a little sand) and 10 per cent peat moss. To every wheelbarrow of the above mixture add one four-inch pot of cottonseed meal. Mix this (Continued on Page 125)

VITAMIN B 1 NUTRIENT SOLUTION

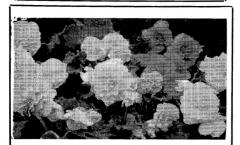
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BEGONIA GLAUCOPHYLLA, HOOK

by RUDOLF ZIESENHENNE, Director of Nomenclature

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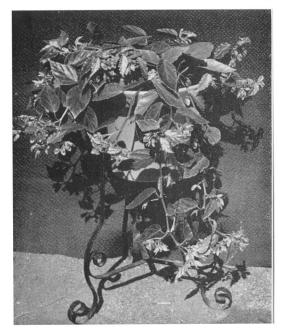
EGONIA glaucophylla, Hook, was first described in Curtis' Botanical Magazine on table 7219, in 1892. At that time its native land was un-

known, but it was authentically found later to be from Brazil. It had been in cultivation for many years before it was botanically described. The following names have been used to designate this plant, although not authentically: B. glaucophylla scandens, Hort; glaucophylla splendens, Hort; B. Limminghei, Hort; B. Comte de Limminghe, Hort.

B. glaucophylla, Hook, is a true drooping or creeping plant. It is usually grown as a basket plant and where a large specimen plant is desired three plants are placed into a 12-inch pot. It has also been grown as a ground cover where under ideal conditions it will spread rapidly. It is a relatively heavy feeder. A lovely specimen was obtained by Mrs. Frey of Santa Barbara by planting the begonia on the top of a wire cylinder, two feet high and six inches in diameter, which had been lined with sphagnum moss and filled with leaf-mold and placed into a 10-inch pot.

In 1901 Mrs. Theodosia B. Shepherd of Ventura introduced B. Marjorie Daw which was produced from a cross between a rubra and glaucophylla, Hook. This was a splendid addition to the begonia group and will be described fully at a later date. In recent years Mr. Robinson of Point Loma produced "Glauco-Daw" by crossing glaucophylla with Marjorie Daw. Mr. and Mrs. Fewkes of San Diego have also made the same cross but to

Picture Courtesy Baake's Nursery



date have not named the plant.

Botanically glaucophylla, Hook, belongs to section Gaerdtia along with B. maculata, Radd, and Kunthiana, Walp.

Description: The entire plant is free of hair. The root is fibrous. Stem, long, being several feet in length, creeping or drooping, green with red at the young joints; stem joints are short. Leaf stems are green with a red band where they connect with the leaves, the entire stem reddish when young. The stipules are narrow and long and drop off very soon after the leaf emerges. The leaf is egg shaped, about 3 inches long, feather veined, pointed at the end, shiny, green, underside lighter green, the edge wavy. Flower clusters are drooping, of a dull brick red color outside, lighter inside. Male flowers about 1 inch in diameter. Top and bottom petals being longer than wide. The two side petals are very narrow, about 4 times as long as wide. Stamens: Anthers are oblong, the filament very short. Female flower has 4 petals. Styles 3, divided, placentas divided, three wings. The plant blooms during the winter and summer and quite often are ever-bloom-The male flowers are produced in abundance, but the female flowers are very seldom seen.

Index Requested

• Dear Mrs. Ney: I have kept all issues of the Begonian and often would like to refer to some article or comment, and though I have them in binders (even before you punched the holes) I find it difficult to locate the article, so, I am making an index for myself and pass the idea on to you for future use with a hope that you will adopt it.

I am enjoying my venture in seedlings thru the Seed Fund and Mr. Day's very fine article which started me off last winter. I always did love surprises and I'm having thrill on thrill as each new leaf and individual characteristic manifests itself. With greetings from an enthusiastic begonian, I am,

Sincerely,

—ALMA MENDES LEVINE, New Rochelle, New York.

The Begonian appreciates and welcomes suggestions such as the above. At the February meeting of the National Board it was decided to run an index in each December issue of the Begonian for the year just finishing.

THE BEGONIAS

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UBEROUS begonias demand a very flocculent and porous soil, with abundant and even watering, and good drainage. They are gross feed-

ers and thrive on a high percentage of well rotted manures or guanos of natural origin. Mineral fertilizers and so-called complete fertilizers are best administered in weak solutions at weekly intervals. The exact value of hormones and vitamins has not yet been clearly established though extremely weak solutions of vitamin B1, seem to have a definite value in the stimulation of root growth. All the tuberous forms and the Gloire de Lorraine series like a mild acidity. Heavy doses of aluminum sulphate or similar acidifiers are fatal; the acidity should be of the humous sort rather than artificially induced.

The miniature types, Mrs. Helen Harms, Fireflame and others, are fairly light tolerant and will thrive in full sunshine in a cool, moist climate. The large flowered tuberous forms, including the hanging varieties, prefer the screening out of at least 50% of direct sunlight and will thrive in shade of even greater density. They are best grown in the lath house with 50-50 spacing. Very few of the finest begonias are sunfast and will show blotching and discoloration when exposed to full sun for any considerable length of time.

Begonias should be watered on the surface of the soil by gentle sprinkling or from below by immersing pots or soaking beds. Until the blossoms open the whole plant may be sprayed but when this method is used careful inspection will frequently show marked dryness of the soil, the water being shed away from the plant by the leaves. Flowers should be moistened only with a mist spray and very sparingly so that drops do not form on the floral leaves. A globule of water acts as a lens and will concentrate light and cause ugly spotting.

The begonias are a noble race. They never become weeds. Their rich nature responds readily to careful and intelligent nurture. In all their forms they abundantly repay all the

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care that they receive and in their finest forms they repay with a glorious beauty that is lasting and long-continued, and neither flamboyant, fickle nor over-exacting.

Robinsons Hosts To Begonians

With approximately one hundred members of the ABS seated in the spacious lath house gardens of Rosecroft, Mr. Alfred D. Robinson passed on words of gardening wisdom gained from many years of actual experience.

Mr. Robinson read excerpts from an English publication "Garden Illustrated" from

which we quote the following:

. . . "But science very soon discovered that one cannot make bricks without straw, and, all honour to it, came to admit that the fundamental element in all good cultivation must be organic matter-humus. This, after all, was only nature's inflexible law, and the swing of the pendulum from the chemical theorist to the practical agriculturist who still held unmoved his ancient belief in "muck" was decisive. It swung so far, indeed, that in spite of the fact that we are making a steadily increasing use of artificials as supplementary aids, a higher value is now being placed on organic material (witness the extensive use of garden composts and peats) than we have seen in our horticultural history for a generation.

"Let us repeat that it is no part of our policy to underestimate the enormous value of scientific research, but science and horticultural practice must go hand in hand before any useful purpose can be attained.

"The ill-favoured movement which indulges in a pin-pricking criticism of garden usage unsustained by actual proof may be amusing to some addicts of cheap sensation, but it is disturbing in effect and more likely to put the clock of horticulture back than to throw light upon the infinite number of real problems which are crying out for solution."

Leaving Rosecroft the tour visited the Montalvo Gardens where Mr. and Mrs. Fewkes served refreshments, greeted old friends and met new ones.

The party rounded out the day by visiting Tyson's Begonia Gardens where tuberous begonias in all their beauty made a beautiful display.

READING TIME . . . I Min., 30 Sec.



HEN WE suggested an editorial along the following lines to our advisors we were told to lay off, that we were leading with our chin. That, not unlike other organizations, the rank and

file are not interested in what makes the wheels go 'round but only in results.

We didn't agree but if such is the case, we're not the type to prolong the agony. So, here goes and we hope you will read and digest the following.

We wish to repeat that your officers are serving at a terrific sacrifice of both time and money to further our mutual interests.

This year has been a particularly hard one, fraught with many difficulties because of unsettled conditions throughout the world, necessitating the opening of new avenues in furthering our research work.

Printing costs have jumped because most of our domestic newsprint is imported from Sweden and Finland. These shipments being stopped has caused paper costs to skyrocket.

Then our new membership schedule has certainly not been up to expectations. seems such a little thing to ask of you to bring in just one new member, yet it is surprising how few of you have answered this call. We have asked the permission of our officers to put on a membership campaign for one month. Will you get your new member and mail it in to the Begonian? The address is 757 Athens Blvd., Los Angeles.

The improved typographical appearance of the Begonian has elicited praise not only from our members but contemporary publications. Our commercial members have supported it in a grand manner. Now we are going to ask you to do your part.

Will you get ONE new member this month and send it in to the Editor? This will be concrete evidence that you want and appreciate the BIGGER BEGONIAN, and will amply repay your officers for the many hours they have spent in furthering our hobby.

Now just a word to branch officers.

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—Proprietors—
ANNIE C. and ALFRED D. ROBINSON

have attended many of your meetings and were surprised to find a great many present who are not members. It takes but a minute to announce that a membership and subscription to the Begonian costs them but ONE DOLLAR.

We feel that few would be picayunish enough to attend the meetings, accept our hospitality, enjoy an evening's entertainment each month, and not be willing to assist with such a small sum to further our interests.

Of course, as Mr. Roosevelt would say, we will have CHISELERS, (couldn't find the Greek word for it), people who will borrow their neighbor's magazine or attend the various meetings with no thought of anything but what they can get for nothing. But we feel that \$1.00 won't make nor break anyone and that if they are truly interested in our work they should do their share the same as you and I.

This can and should be OUR BANNER Will YOU back us by doing YOUR part?

Names of all members bringing in a new member before August 15 (deadline for the September issue) will be published in the September BEGONIAN. See the article "Back Numbers Available" on page 108 in the July BEGONIAN.

Redwood Begonia Garden

Tuberous Begonias AND SEEDS

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Fuchsias

(Continued from Page 121)

into the soil and you are ready to plant.

A lath house is an ideal place in which to grow your fuchsias. However, if you do not have one, any partially shaded area of the garden will do, the idea being to protect your plants from the hot sun during the hours of ten to three-thirty.

Fuchsias are rather heavy feeders and to get the most out of them they must be fed lightly every thirty days. In Southern California because of the alkaline condition which prevails in most of the soils, it is well to use acid-forming fertilizers such as cottonseed meal, blood meal and fish meal. In addition to this it is well to have your soil tested once or twice a year and if the Ph value is above 7 treat your soil immediately with soil sulphur or aluminum sulphate to correct alkaline condition. The amount of alkalinity of the soil. Should you not be able to have your soil tested, it is a pretty safe bet here in Southern California to give your fuchsias one or the other of the above acidifiers once or twice a year.

Besides the feeding of the plants at this time of the year it is always well to top-dress the plants with a couple of inches of coarse leaf mold. Spread this over an area of about twenty-four to thirty inches around each plant. This will keep the roots of the plant cool during the hot summer days and the foliage and blooms of your fuchsia will not suffer.

A yellowing or burning of the leaves in the late spring or early summer generally indicates the presence of thrip. These small sucking insects are attacking the plant from the under side of the leaves. Spray immediately with Black Leaf 40, Red Arrow, Barfoot or Evergreen. The above sprays are also effective for killing aphids. Never use heavy oil sprays as they will damage the tender foliage.

Prune your fuchsias back severely late in December or early January. This will help to shape them up and encourage new growth from which you get your flowers. In March or April give another light pruning to shape the plant and bring out more flower wood.

Because of the great number of varieties space does not permit listing them here. So I say again, visit your nearest or favorite fuchsia specialist where you are sure to see varieties suited to your tastes and requirements. Adios!

Ventura Visitation August 11

 Gardens at the addresses listed below will be open to members and friends of the ABS Sunday, August 11. Directions to reach the ones listed with route numbers will be freely given at any of the other places upon inquiry.

VENTURA

C. A. Hall, 485 Jones Street. G. Coleman, 358 Jones Street. Marion Walker, Rt. 2, Box 328. E. A. Wade, Rt. 2, Box 208. C. Mets. 2222 East Main Street. G. Fitch. 70 So. Hurst Street. H. Weitz, 1655 Thompson Boulevard. W. J. Knecht, 1623 Thompson Boulevard. A. A. Lowdermilk, 1144 E. Santa Clara. Mrs. L. C. Rudolph, 87 Lincoln Drive. F. P. Shaw, 1183 Poli Street. W. T. Kemper, 56 No. Laurel Street. Miss Della Bean, 1038 East Main St. F. H. Gowdy, 919 East Main St. W. D. Monmonier, 201 E. McFarlane Dr. Mrs. J. Dent, Ventura Ave., Rt. 1, Box 130.

H. G. Flaitz, Rt. 2, Box 208, Ojai. Mrs. Tom Hardy, Rt. 2, Box 214, Ojai.

- A. A. Longmire, A. G. Wood Estate, Casitas Road, Carpinteria, Calif.
- R. Ziesenhenne, 1130 No. Milpas, Santa Barbara, Calif.

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LITTLE VISITS WITH ROYALTY

As Interviewed by HARRIETTE W. BRIDGES

OW DID I get my first interest in Tuberous Begonias?" repeated Dr. Richard S. French, as we found him humbly on hands and knees, weed-

ing under the benches. Begonias were all around us in pots and boxes, and in wooden troughs originally meant for water culture. They were of all types and sizes but uniformly healthy and ready to burst into full and gorgeous bloom. The lath house of generous proportions overflowed into outside beds, and cloth-covered shelter and a fifteen by thirtyfoot conservatory. "Well, that's really an old story; in fact the story of half a century! When I was a boy of five I had my first introduction to Rex and the Tuberous forms in the conservatory up in the Healdsburg region where California's grand old lady of floriculture, Aunt Polly Reynolds, kept her fine collection. She later passed on at the age of a hundred and two, showing what loving and growing flowers does by way of health and longevity.

"That was very long ago," continued our host after a pause during which he had risen and shown us several of his choice blooms. He went on talking as he snipped a yellow leaf here and there, pulled up a weed from a box, lifted a blossom for our examination or snipped off one that did not come up to par. "And in those days the finest large flowered Begonias could hardly claim a first place among floral royalty. Thirty years later the story was different. Blackmore and Langdon had carried forward their breeding experiments, and forms, sizes and colors of a fineness undreamed of came on the market. Then the California growers began to do things that left the Old World open mouthed with

"But", one of us interrupted, "I understood that you had entered into amateur competition with the best growers only some six years ago!"

"Yes, but that is another story. It was this way:" he continued, and as he spoke that crinkly expression of genialty came over his face and his eyes twinkled in that way all of of us who have known him at the University know so well. "When the new flower fashion appeared I tried some tubers in a half-hearted way and had only failures. Then some kind friends saw fit to comment on my lack of success and that made me mad! So I started out to do things in a big way!"

"Which I suppose meant lath house and conservatory and so on!" we commented more to tease than anything else.

Dr. French grinned. "Well, not exactly," he replied as hose in hand he wet down the lath house floor. "The amateur does not need all this equipment and we would not be justified in having it, if we did not use it to grow thousands of additional plants for bedding purposes, landscaping and so on. In fact the Tuberous Begonias fill in the lean months when so few other flowers bloom."

"I notice you wet the ground and the place more than the plants," one of us interrupted again.

"Good practice," was the quick comeback. "The fine Begonias require a moist atmosphere and moist but not wet soil; one should sprinkle the foliage sparingly and avoid wetting the flowers. The delicate apricots and fine yellows, for instance, show discoloration if drops of water stay any time on their petals."

"And how do you prefer to start your plants?"

"From seed by all means. You have both the thrill of Scotch thrift and the joy of the unknown. Maybe among my 2500 seedlings there will appear form and color combinations never before seen. To get blossoms like this"—and he pointed to a very gorgeous double Camellia type flower of a deep and pure golden orange—"is like walking into some unhoped-for Golconda. You see, my ancestors have been pioneers, gold seekers, for centuries; and here is my gold mine—this is my pioneering."

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"I understand you are interested in species especially," we remarked. "Have you any of special note?"

Yes, here are some of the Goodspeed expedition collection," he replied as he led us to one corner of the lath house. "This one promises something because of the new leaf form and the special purity of flower color. That fat seed pod that you see on the stem means fertile seed, a cross with a giant single hybrid. Maybe it means something new and fine in hybrids." As he paused we noted that the plant he was describing was unusual in shape of leaves. It still does not have a name -merely one of the expedition numbers. "And the new Baumanniis," continued Dr. French," are not to be passed over too lightly. They have a definite promise in form and size and vigour."

"But in the long run," continued Dr. French as he led us through lath house and outside down to his composting pit, "Fine plants depend on fine treatment, especially good soil. Much of the secret of good form, color, size and health is to be found in the compost pit and in the final potting mixture, as well as in liquid feedings at intervals of a week or ten days. But that, again, is a long story and I have a garden club appointment for tomorrow night, so I must get to my notes!"

Once more we passed through his garden, viewing the beauty of his glorious Lloydii and dainty multifloras, the grace of Sutherlandii, and the promise of the species Novae.

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Inglewood Visitation August 18

• Mr. G. A. Bauman of Palos Verdes Estates will be the guest speaker at the August 2nd meeting of the Inglewood Branch, showing colored slides of Tuberous Begonias.

The following is a list of visitations for August 18th in Los Angeles, Inglewood, Hollywood and Lawndale:—

Mrs. Ward, 6723 So. Arlington, Los Angeles. Mrs. Levee, 7035 So. Arlington, Los Angeles. Mrs. F. W. Schmidt, 7701 So. Dalton, L. A. Erich Wassertheurer, 3627 W. 62nd St., L. A. Mrs. T. J. Ney, 3112 W. 81st St., Inglewood. Mr. J. W. Crowder, 1859 W. 166th Street,

Los Angeles.

Mr. R. J. Coup, 843 No. Genesee, Hollywood. Dr. Van Gelder, 227 W. Olive, Inglewood. Mrs. Knirck, 408 W. Ellis Ave., Inglewood. Mrs. E. Hagenbush, 3838 W. 102nd, Ingle-

Mr. Babstubner, 15427 Larch, Lawndale.

September 8 will be reserved for visitations to Glendale through the cooperation of Mrs. Marek of that city. Mrs. Marek is a "flower show winner" and Inglewood Branch is proud to have such active members.

There will be a picnic get-together for members of Inglewood branch at Ferndell (Western Avenue entrance to Griffith Park) on August 25, for the purpose of getting acquainted with new members and renewing old acquaintances. Further announcement will be made at the August 2 meeting.

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THE EVOLUTION OF A RENTER

And the Start of the First Branch of The American Begonia Society—1936



Y FRIENDS began to get interested in begonias. I would give them leaves and slips; still do in fact. We joined the American Begonia Society

in Long Beach and attended several meetings, but it was a long trip—180 miles and we would not get home until after 1 P.M.

Mr. Kelly, Mr. Dyckman, Mr. Williams and others began to encourage us to start a branch in Ventura. In May of 1937 eleven of us met in our little rented home and organized the first Branch. They elected me President. Not being any hand to talk to the public, I could not remember from one meeting till the next what I was supposed to say. So I wrote out the order of business, and everytime I stood up to call the meeting to order I would look at my precious bit of paper. I could see that Mr. Weitz was so provoked, but I would give him an "I don't care" look and go on.

We feel very proud that we are the first child of the American Begonia Society. Those present at the first meeting were Mrs. John Dent, Miss Alice MacFarland, Mrs. Thos. Hardy, Mrs. L. C. Rudolph, Mrs. W. Monmonier, Mrs. Lowdermilk, Mrs. Bounds, Mr. and Mrs. Gowdy and Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Weitz.

We named our Branch in honor of Mrs. Theodosia Burr Shepherd, an early resident of Ventura and one of California's first flower seed growers, who originated many varieties of begonias.

By this time our little back yard garden was getting beyond us. Our "Hobby" began to ride us, so we decided to make a nursery out of it. Then we had to move. We built a modest little home, painted white with yellow shutters and a white fence around it, and it is happily adorned with beautiful roses. fuchsias, etc. Several people have said "What a beautiful back yard garden. No one would think you had all these beautiful ferns and begonias here." I tell them: "When you go to Tiffany's in New York you do not see the diamonds hanging outside. You have to go inside to see the precious stones."

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Clarence Hall. He came to see our garden about three years ago. He said "Now, Mrs. Weitz, after seeing this beautiful garden, I am going to have one and want to buy a few begonias." I said, "Have you your lath house ready?" He said, "No, but I will keep them until I get it built." I said, "No, you build your lath house first and then get your begonias." He went home and told Mrs. Hall I was a peculiar saleswoman. But when he built his lath house he came back and secured his begonias, etc.

He has added to it, and now has built a new lath house forty feet long across the side of his back yard with the high side open, facing north. It is very beautiful and well lighted and arranged. It will be one of the show places to visit, along with many others when the Society members visit Ventura this Summer.

As the oldest daughter of the American Begonia Society, Ventura is having the Annual Convention in November when you will be very welcome to our city, and can then see for yourselves what beautiful begonias and ferns grow in our fair City.

—KATHRYN WEITZ.

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Inter-Branch News

• VENTURA—August 11 is the big day. The members of the Theodosia Burr Shepherd branch are looking forward to your visit and to welcome you in our gardens on your annual Ventura visitation.

-WALTER J. KNECHT.

 EAST BAY BRANCH—Instead of the usual meeting on the fourth Monday in August we will meet at the Redwood Begonia Gardens, 1105 Madison Ave., Redwood City, Sunday August 25. Mrs. Schath has kindly invited us to have a basket lunch in the lath house in the garden. It is a delightful spot and I am sure every one will enjoy a visit. Our annual meeting and election of officers will be held in September.

—HARRIETTE W. BRIDGES.

SAN FRANCISCO—Just a few words to let you know that the San Francisco Branch is still very much in existence. Our July 3 meeting was devoted to discussion for the benefit of new members to the subject of the various potting mixtures and the success each one had with his own pet mixture.

Yes, I'll tell you mine. It's one-third Calpeat, one-third rough leaf mold and one-third well rotted manure. That's all. No earth or

Tuberous begonias are out in all their glory now and the San Francisco branch will hold a garden tour to the gardens of its members starting Sunday, August 11. Am off to the high Sierras for a vacation so I'LL BEGON-IA. Happy Gardening.

-HARRY F. O'DONNELL.

SAN GABRIEL—The San Gabriel Valley branch will hold their next meeting Sunday afternoon, August 18 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dodson at San Gabriel with a potluck dinner for members only.

On Sept. 20 the meeting will be held in the spacious gardens of Dr. C. H. Lauder, 952 Fallen Leaf Road, Arcadia, at 8 P.M. By October the club will again resume meetings in the Arcadia City Hall, Arcadia.

-MAUDE A. FOX.

SANTA BARBARA—"Christmas Jewel", a new begonia originated by Mr. Arnold Peep, was introduced to the members of the Santa Barbara branch at the last meeting.

This begonia is a cross of "Little Jewel of the Garden" and "Christmas Cheer." Our branch will meet regularly in the future at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. August meeting at the Morrell home, 12171/2 Quientos Street.

HARRIETT WORDEN.

LONG BEACH—The Herbert P. Dyckman branch met July 2 and heard a discussion of the begonia "Rubra" by Mrs. Anna Haller and witnessed a beautiful demonstration on flower arrangements by Mr. Floyde Blades. A particularly beautiful arrangement of gladiolus reminded one of a gorgeous sunset.

The August meeting will be at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Randall, 3638 Cerritos Ave., August 6.

ESTHER RANDALL.

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THE COMPOST PILE

From The Editor's Mail Box

Dear Editor:

I believe it was Mr. Fewkes who first told of a powder, that if placed on the soil of a potted plant and watered, would cause earth worms to literally jump out of the pot. Mostly from curiosity I purchased some of this material and was astounded to see the worms pop out of the soil. One, I believe jumped as high as three inches—gave a few spasmodic wiggles, and went to the happy hunting grounds of all earth worms.

Because my brother recently informed me that earth worms were good for potted plants, assuming that they aerated the soil, I informed him of his error, telling him of our California method for disposition of worms. His reply was very interesting, and is certainly educational, and because the locale of his story is in Washington State, I cannot assume that it is 'unusual' like most things Californian.

"During the damp weather I was digging in my garden, and worms were popping out all around me. This day, I happened not to have my hat on, and one flopped on my head, landing with a 'splat.' I grabbed it and threw it to the chickens, and that worm got so mad it chased the chickens around the run, and



sunk its teeth into some of them. And to prove it, just drive up here, and I'll show you where the worm's teeth tore their flesh. I have proof. You have nothing to show. I eventually killed the worm as it was going through the chicken wire fence—then did the chickens dig in on the fresh meat."

It really does get damp in Washington State and undoubtedly they raise large sized earth worms there. I am thinking it must be a terrible handicap to Begonia growers in that vicinity and would prove of immense value to the manufacturers of the powder Mrs. Fewkes recommended (and which I found so effective) to advertise in the Begonian. It would be a humanitarian action on their part, aiding the Washingtonians to combat the earth worm menace, as undoubtedly it would.

Sincerely,

—C. H. VENTURA.

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MEETING DATES

INGLEWOOD BRANCH

Friday, August 2, 8:00 P.M. Woman's Club, 325 No. Hillcrest Blvd. Mrs. V. SirKegian, Secretary, 413 West Ellis Ave., Inglewood.

HERBERT DYCKMAN BRANCH Tuesday, August 6, 7:30 P.M.

3638 Cerritos.

Mrs. Frank Graves, Sec'y.-Treasurer, 651 Loma Avenue, Long Beach.

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH

Wednesday, August 7, 8:00 P.M. 1060 Francisco St., San Francisco. Harry F. O'Donnell, Secretary. 1575 - 31st Ave., San Francisco.

LONG BEACH PARENT BRANCH

Thursday, August 8, 7:30 P.M.
Community Hall, 9th & Lime, Long Beach.
Mace Taylor, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer,
520 East Esther St., Long Beach.

SANTA BARBARA BRANCH Thursday, August 8, 7:30 P.M.

1217½ Quientos Street. Mrs. Harriett Worden, Secy-Treas. 1224 E. Montecito St., Santa Barbara.

THEODOSIA BURR SHEPHERD BR.

Tuesday, August 13, 8:00 P.M. Coca-Cola Hall, Ventura. Mrs. Irene Van Fossen, Sec'y.-Treas., 349 Jones St., Ventura, Calif.

MARGARET GRUENBAUM BRANCH

Tuesday, August 13, 2:00 P.M. Home of Mrs. Frank Oehrle, Hatboro, Pa. Mrs. Wm. L. Paxson, Secretary, Willow Grove, Pa.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY BRANCH

Sunday afternoon, August 18. 1064 E. Hermosa Drive, San Gabriel. Mrs. A. N. Hartwell, Secretary, 1719 Alamitas Ave., Monrovia.

EAST BAY BRANCH

Sunday, August 25. Redwood Begonia Gardens, Redwood City. R. L. Barnhard, Secretary, 2419 Oregon St., Berkeley, Calif.

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