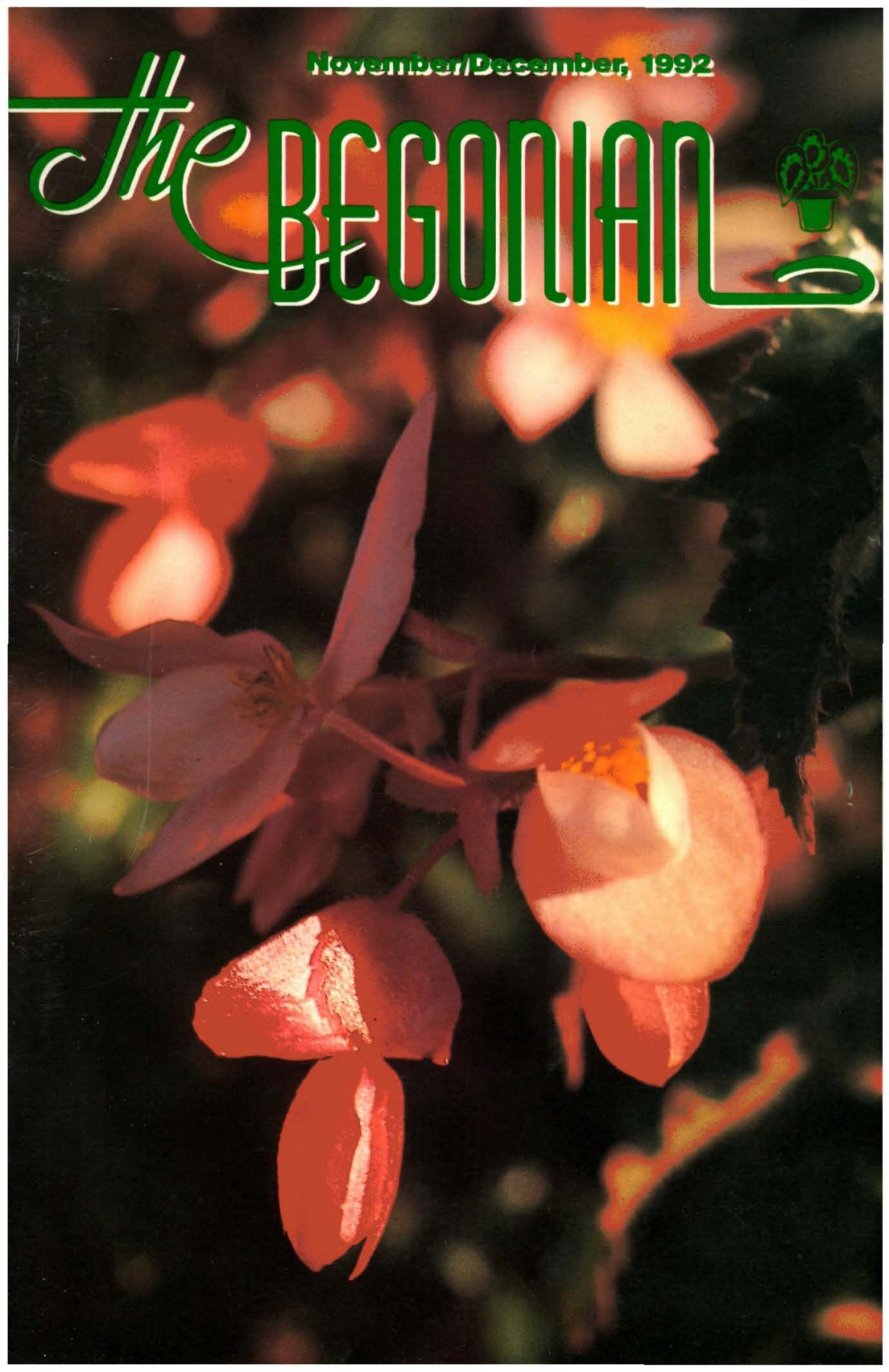


November/December, 1992

The BEGONIAN



The BEGONIAN

ISSN 0096-8684

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 which will be mailed to all members of the society.

To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

The Begonian is published bimonthly by the American Begonia Society, Inc. 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."

Membership (subscription) \$15 annually, \$21 first class mail, also Mexico and Canada. \$25 foreign surface mail except Mexico and Canada, \$35 overseas air mail. Added member, same household, \$2. Consult membership secretary for sustaining benefactor, life membership dues. U.S. currency only. Back issues (current volume) \$2.50.

American Begonia Society—P.O. Box 231129, Encinitas, CA 92023-1129

Membership—Subscription, dues, circulation inquiries, and address changes: John Ingles, Jr., 157 Monument, Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617; (707) 764-5407.

COVER PHOTOS:

Front - The colorful flowers of *B. fuchsioides* attracted the eye of photographer Sue Hessel.

Back - Mary Bucholtz spotted these thriving semperflorens in a traffic circle in Florida.

IN THIS ISSUE

ABS CONVENTION '92

Friendly Convention Contact	204
Show Results	205
Officers Installed	208
Karegeannes Honored	208
Seminars	
Creating Captivating Canes	209
Growing for Show	211
People & Places	213

ABS CONVENTION '93

On With the Show!	217
-------------------	-----

Articles

On Conventions	220
By the Pool	222
Begonias in the Serra do Mar	223
Begonias of Malaysia	225
Handreck Seminar a Success	226
Malaysian Begonias Enthrall	227
Begonias as Bonsai	228
Begonia Memories	230
Begonia Goes Berserk	232

Regular Features

Show News	216
Coming Events	229
Bulletin Board: ABS News	234
President's Message	
Appointments	
Judges' Corner	
In Memory	235
In the News	235
Round Robin Notes	236
ABS Officers	238



B. 'Sophie Cecile'
drawing by Pat Maley Belkham
used as logo for 1992 Convention
Begonia Treasures: "Captivating Canes"
For more on 'Sophie Cecile', see
"Begonia Memories", p. 230.

Quick!

Check your mailing label!
If it says 11/92 or 12/92, your
membership is about to expire.
Please renew!
We don't want to lose you!

Convention 1993!
"Begonias: The Greatest Show on Earth"
Miami, Florida
May 6-9

Friendly Convention Contact

by Walter Dworkin

"To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow Begonias" is one of the Aims and Purposes of ABS. Never was friendly contact so in evidence as at our convention this summer in Anaheim, California.

Since I'm a native New Yorker and love growing and hybridizing cane begonias, I was looking forward to comparing our growing conditions to the ones in California. I found myself counting the days to depart this August. The excitement of attending my first ABS National Convention and becoming part of "Begonia Treasures: Captivating Canes" was becoming an obsession. I proceeded to purchase three rolls of film, stashed the piggy bank (for the plant sale) in my suitcase, and I was off to Los Angeles.

During the flight over, I was day-dreaming about photographing all those Captivating Canes, and all the new cane hybrids I was going to see. Little did I know then that these thoughts would be just the beginning of a wonderful experience.

Over the last few years, I've become friends with other begoniacs either through letters, Round Robins, or the telephone, but never dreamed that I would come face to face with all of them at once! Yes, there they all were, attending the show and lectures, on bus tours, meeting at the hospitality room, and participating in all kinds of convention activities. It was so wonderful connecting all the names with faces, meeting so many old and new friends. The feeling of warmth and friendliness was overwhelming. It was such joy to sit and talk with other hybridizers and growers from all over the country and share our love and experiences of this great plant family.

it was evident that all the convention lectures were a smashing success, with huge attendance (how could you go wrong



The author is dwarfed by B. 'Paul Hernandez' at the Corwins' place. photo by Don Miller

with a line up of speakers like that!) Of course, the garden tours were to die over, and we are still walking around in disbelief!

Oh, yes, the plant sale was unbelievable, and so many of you did catch me totally out of control - but what good is money if you can't enjoy spending it? (I think I paid for half their room rent.)

Finally, I did manage to photograph those Captivating Canes. But my greatest memories will be of all the wonderful people that I met and all the new friendships that I made. Thank you, California, for a job well done, and for bringing us all into friendly contact.

Walter Dworkin is President of Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau Branch. His address is 8 Rugby Road, Westway NY 11590.

1992 Convention Show Results

BEST OF SHOW



B. 'Cachuma'

Exhibited by Shelley Andros

Trophy donated by Rubidoux Branch

SWEEPSTAKES

Eric Seel, with 8 blue ribbons

Trophy donated by Ann & Gene
Salisbury

SHOWING IS SHARING

Joy Blair

Trophy donated by Miami Branch

DIVISION WINNERS

To win a Division, a plant must score at least 93 of a possible 100 points

Cane-like: B. 'Compte de Lesseps'
Exhibitor: Eric Seel
Trophy Donor: Westchester Branch

California Hybrid Canes:
B. 'Jackie Brookshire'
Exhibitor: Elda Regimbal
Trophy Donor: Orange County Branch

Shrub-like: *B. venosa*
Exhibitor: Eric Seel
Trophy Donor: Thelma & Tim O'Reilly

Sempervirens: B. 'Tea Rose'
Exhibitor: Ronnie Nevins
Trophy Donor: Fort Lauderdale Branch

Rhizomatous: B. 'Cachuma'
Exhibitor: Shelley Andros
Trophy Donor: Knickerbocker Branch

Rhizomatous, Erect: B. 'Charles Jaros'
Exhibitor: Elda Regimbal
Trophy Donor: Potomac Branch

Rex: B. 'President Carnot'
Exhibitor: Mike Golub
Trophy Donor: Mike Golub

Tuberous & Semi-tuberous: *B. suffruticosa* x unknown
Exhibitor: Ronnie Nevins
Trophy Donor: San Francisco Branch

Species: *B. albo-picta*
Exhibitor: Brad Thompson
Trophy Donor: Martin Johnson

Wall Pockets: B. 'Looking Glass'
Exhibitor: Ronnie Nevins
Trophy Donor: Carol & Peter Notaras

Hanging Baskets: B. 'Diclata'
Exhibitor: Elda Regimbal
Trophy Donor: Santa Clara Valley
Branch

Novice: B. 'Cleopatra'
Exhibitor: Margaret Fisher
Trophy Donor: Brooklyn-Queens-Nassau
Branch, in memory of Jim Wyrzten

Seed Fund Seedlings: *B. loranthoides*
Exhibitor: Eric Seel
Trophy Donor: Garden Grove Branch

Travelling Begonias: *B. heracleifolia*
'Sunderbruckii'
Exhibitor: John Howell
Trophy Donor: Kay & Lorne Bradley

New Begonia Introduction, Hobby
Grower: B. 'Shooting Star'
Exhibitor: Don Miller
Hybridizer: Dorothy Caviness
Trophy Donor: Astro Branch

New Begonia Introduction, Commercial/
Professional: B. 'Jagged Edge'
Exhibitor and Hybridizer: Michael Kartuz
Trophy Donor: Alamo Branch

Novel Grown: *B. suffruticosa* seedling
Exhibitor: Virginia Carlson
Trophy Donor: Theodosia Burr Shepherd
Branch

Contained Atmosphere: *B. attenuata*
Exhibitor: Carol Notaras
Trophy Donor: Garden Grove Branch

Photographs of Begonias: B. 'Orell x B.
'Dancing Girl'
Exhibitor: Mary Bucholtz
Trophy given in memory of Gene Daniels

Begonia Arts & Crafts: needlepoint, *B.
phyllomaniaca*
Exhibitor: Mary Bucholtz
Trophy Donor: A. D. Robinson Branch,
in memory of Alice Clark

Other Shade Plants: *Alocasia sanderana*
Exhibitor: O. Hard
Trophy Donor: Ruth & Walter Pease

The Show Committee thanks additional
trophy donors Katherine Alberti, and the
Barkley, Jacksonville, Monterey, and San
Miguel Branches; and Joan Coulat, Nettie
Daniels, Jack & Dorothy Golding, Ed Harrell,
Jane Hayes, James Heizer, Joyce Hesse,
Miree & Sandra Lex, Marie McCooey, P. J.
Masters, Dale & Georgia Meyer, Nancy
Rentfro, Paul Riviere, and Jean Vertefeville
for their generous donations to the trophy
fund.

CULTURAL AWARDS

*To win a cultural award, a plant must score
95 or more out of a possible 100 points*

97.3 points:
Brad Thompson, *B. albo-picta*
97 points:
Eric Seel, *B. venosa*
Shelley Andros, B. 'Cachuma'
Virginia Carlson, *B. suffruticosa* seedling
96.5 points:
Mike Golub, B. 'President Carnot'
96 points:
Elda Regimbal, B. 'Jackie Brookshire',
B. 'Diclata', B. 'Charles Jaros'
Jo Pangrazio, B. 'Ramirez'
Ronnie Nevins, B. 'Tea Rose'
Margaret Fisher, B. 'Cleopatra'
Carol Notaras, *B. attenuata*
95.6 points:
Mike Golub, *B. rex* cultivar
95.5 points:
Mike Golub, *B. rex*
95 points:
Joy Blair, *B. hatacoa*

Note: B. 'Tea Rose', a shrub, was entered and
judged as a semperflorens. The error was not
discovered until after judging.

HYBRID OF DISTINCTION

*to qualify for Hybrid of Distinction, a plant
must score at least 85 points*



by Hobby Grower: B. 'Shooting Star'
Hybridizer: Dorothy Caviness Exhibitor: Don Miller
Photo taken by Don Miller in his greenhouse



by Commercial/Professional Grower: B. 'Jagged Edge'
Hybridizer & Exhibitor: Michael Kartuz of Kartuz Greenhouses
Photo taken by Don Miller at Kartuz Greenhouses

Officers Installed

On Saturday evening, August 15, 1992, Parliamentarian Margaret Lee installed the newly elected officers of the American Begonia Society:

President Carol Notaras
First Vice-President Gene Salisbury
Second Vice-President Millie Thompson (in absentia)
Third Vice-President Mary Bucholtz
Secretary Ingeborg Foo Treasurer
Treasurer Eleanor Calkins



Photo from **Begonian**, Nov. 1974

Karegeannes Honored

The Herbert P. Dyckman Award for Service was presented in absentia to Carrie Karegeannes. Carrie, a co-author of Smithsonian Contributions to Botany: Begoniaceae and a contributor to the **Begonian**, has been a member of ABS for many years.

Carrie has been nominated for the honor several times in the past. However, since she is a member of the Awards Committee by virtue of her position as Nomenclature Director, she has refused to allow her name to be considered. This year the Awards Committee voted to overrule her objection and to present her the award she so richly deserves.

Creating Captivating Canes

seminar by Irene Nuss
reviewed by Mary Bucholtz

Some of our most distinctive and best-loved cane cultivars are the creations of Irene Nuss. We who attended her seminar at the Convention in Anaheim were enthralled to hear this lady discuss her fascination with cane begonias and her desire to try her hand at hybridization.

Prior to 1957, when Irene joined ABS, her only begonias were tuberous and semps grown as bedding plants. She had one cane, B. 'Lucerna'. Naturally, after joining ABS, her collection grew.

Like so many of us, when new to begonia growing she didn't know a female from a male blossom. Upon hearing a branch program on hybridization, she was inspired to try it herself.

Irene had B. 'Elizabeth Lockhart', which had enormous, pendulous clusters of female blooms. Crossing this with *B. sceptrum*, the only cane in her garden with a male bloom, began her adventure.

Remembering the instructions given at the branch meeting, Irene knew the female blossoms closed in the evening and re-opened the next morning. However, if pollination had taken place, the blossom dusted with pollen would remain closed. The next morning that flower remained closed: success! The result was her first cultivar: B. 'Kentwood', released in 1961.

Working with Rudy Ziesenhenné's B. 'Orange Supreme' was next. The only pollen she had was on that begonia, and the only female blossoms were there too; so she "selfed" it. B. 'Chet Nave' was the resulting begonia. Unfortunately, it has been lost to cultivation. This shows us, again, how important it is to share our plants.

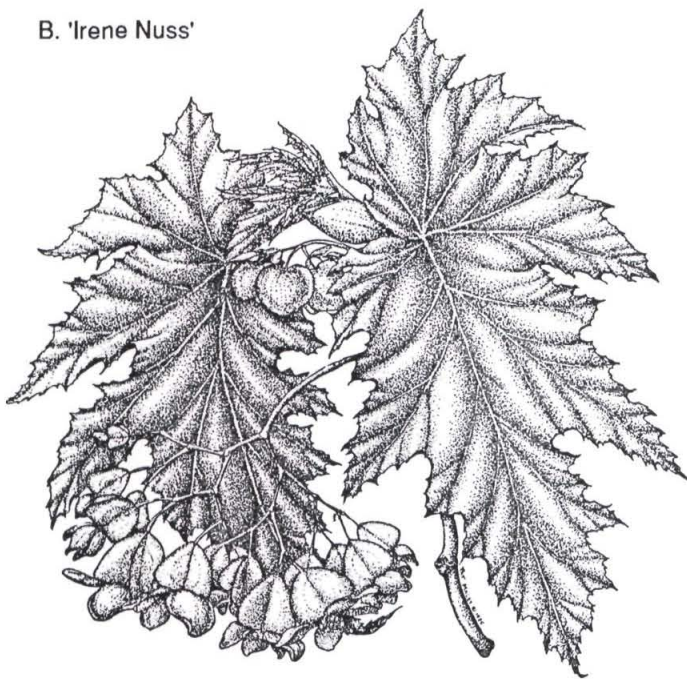
Another early creation was B. 'Eunice Gray' (*B. echinosepalax* x *B. venosa*). Irene says it is the female plant that gives the shape to the offspring; in this cross she was looking for a long, felted leaf. Out of hundreds of seedlings there was no felted leaf; but before she destroyed the seedlings, she had given a few to a friend. A phone call from that friend reporting that one was blooming and quite profusely, and was also fragrant, brought Irene to its rescue. This shrub-like begonia was judged Best in Show at the 1967 National Show, and received the coveted Alfred D. Robinson Medal for outstanding cultivar in 1972. B. 'Eunice Gray' is of easy culture, and a delightful addition to any collection.

Her discovery of B. 'Lenore Olivier', with its gorgeous blossoms, presented even more exciting hybridizing opportunities. She pointed out how many more diverse possibilities there are from pollinating hybrids. A few of the cultivars resulting from the cross of her B. 'Kentwood' x B. 'Lenore Olivier' are B. 'Hannah Serr', B. 'Kent Brandon', B. 'Irene Nuss', and B. 'Alice N.', which has dark red blossoms and a leaf that holds its silver spots.

The discovery of *B. lubbersii* gave Irene new avenues for creation. B. 'Minuet' is one that was produced from an unknown white-flowered species from the Philippines and the pollen of *B. lubbersii*. The chartreuse, white-green of the *B. lubbersii* bloom gives B. 'Minuet' its creamy-white appearance. It is also very fragrant.

Irene has devised a method of defeating the bumble bees' attempts to help her efforts. A small bonnet of netting, secured with elastic to her pollinated blossom, is just the thing.

B. 'Irene Nuss'



drawing by Pat Maley Belkham

She had a large display of cuttings and plants, all of which were her cultivars. Irene pointed out what she liked about each one, and gave its parentage. Once you start hybridizing, she told us, you are limited only by your imagination. You may try many things that give results you will reject while looking for the "one" that will be different and distinctive.

If you have difficulty waiting for those first flowers on a new cross, Irene suggests taking a tip cutting as soon as the plant is large enough. You will have blooms on the cutting much earlier than on the plant from which the cutting came.

Of course, you want to keep a record of your endeavors.

A plea was made to correct the name of one of her newer, much-in-demand cultivars, B. 'Silvermist'. Many of us have been growing this plant and dividing its name into two words. B. 'Silvermist', one word, is correct.

Irene has received awards in national shows on several begonias besides B. 'Eunice Gray'. B. 'Hannah Serr' was Hybrid of Distinction in 1968, B. 'Irene Nuss' was Best of Show in 1971. All of these cultivars have been registered with ABS.

I enjoyed this seminar very much, as I grow many of Irene's cultivars. It is always helpful to know the parentage of our begonias, for it gives us added insight into their growth habits and cultural requirements.

*ABS 3rd Vice-president Mary Bucholtz lives at 2411 Hendricks Ave, Jacksonville, FL 32207. You'll find Mary's name among the winners at the national show, and in Show News; her expert photography has appeared often in the pages of the **Begonian**, and on several covers, including the back cover of this issue.*



Growing for Showing

Seminar by Joan Coulat
Review by Nancy Rentfro

Joan Coulat's seminar "Growing for Showing" was presented in her straightforward casual manner that many of us have come to enjoy from past seminars. Allotted time was short, and only a "natural" like Joan could calmly do justice in covering several things about her own serious growing methods and involvement in begonias. Her occasional light-hearted humor and commentary were welcome and in proper perspective with plants and people.

Joan joined ABS in 1974 and is a long-time begonia grower known as an expert in "tender loving care." She starts growing for showing at the end of a show - looking ahead already to the next show.

She has a regular pattern of cleaning out her greenhouse annually; preparing a soil mix; cleaning containers and pots; preparing and propagating the plants, as well as handling heating and cooling concerns in the greenhouse.

Her all-glass greenhouse is 14' x 19', cooled in summer with a swamp cooler (in some areas, the cooler is known as an evaporative cooler). Little is kept in the greenhouse during summers, however, as temperatures over 100° can last for 11 days straight. After removing plants, she sprays the greenhouse with fungicide (she uses Bayleton).

Heating the greenhouse is simple, effectively done by using one gallon plastic milk containers, cleaned and filled with blue water, placed around the interior walls of the greenhouse. Winter temperatures drop down to 40° in Sacramento, and this method has proven effective for four years in absorbing and storing heat.

Pots:

Joan uses both clay and plastic pots. She likes plastic best for larger plants. For rooting, she uses 12" clay pots with 4" of perlite, inserting 12 cuttings per pot (she recommends using Rootone). Then, "When I see one inch of growth on the stem in the cuttings pot, I pull and pot it."

Removing leaves:

During winter, when many begonias are dormant, Joan removes all the leaves on her rexes and some of the leaves on her rhizomatous begonias. In January, while there are still no leaves, she decides which ones to grow for show.

Cleaning Pots:

"Give it a good cleaning!" Plastic pots are cleaned by wiping with chlorine water. Clay pots are rubbed with salad oil, scrubbed with pumice, and then washed with hot water. Just before a show, she cleans all pots with 409 cleanser.

Potting mix:

The mix that Joan has used for twelve years in growing her outstanding beauties consists of:

- 1 cubic ft. supersoil
- 1 cubic ft. oak leaf mold
- 3 1/2 gal. coarse perlite
- 2 gal. coarse vermiculite
- 1 cup hoof & horn meal
- 1 cup bone meal
- 1/4 cup iron plus (7-7-7)
- 3/4 cup agricultural lime

She doubles the mix to fill two 33 gallon garbage cans.

(Note: Undoubtedly many growers have heard of or used many of the soil ingredients mentioned. My local nurseries have not heard of hoof & horn meal. General suppliers in Arizona do not carry it.)

Feeding:

Joan advises changing fertilizer brands, using such as Romeo (24-14-14) or Peters (20-20-20), and using a pinch when the directions call for a teaspoon. When watering, she mists heavily with Superthrive (one drop to a gallon of water). In September, she gives all her plants a drink of fish emulsion. In April, she uses Superbloom (12-55-6) for bloom.

Pest control:

In plants prone to mealy bugs, she uses 1 Tablespoon of a systemic by Ortho, working the systemic in after planting.

When taking photos of begonias, "don't use green against green," she advised. The slides she showed of her plants were outstanding examples of her interest in and loving care of begonias.

Finally, Joan answered some questions from the audience, despite the shortness of the time allotted. She was a pleasure to hear.

Nancy Rentfro is a Member-at-Large. She lives at 5301 N. Maria Dr., Tucson, AZ 85704.

61st American Begonia Society Convention

Hosted by the Miami Branch

May 6-9, 1993



Don Shula's Hotel & Golf Club

People and Places

Photographs by Don Miller
Tamsin Boardman
Bruce C. Boardman

Right: At the Corwin's garden,
Mabel Corwin greets visitors.



Below: Bob Cochran (Florida)
admires Mabel's rex and tuberous begonias.

BCB

Below: Visitors in the mist....

BCB

BCB





Above: A sumptuous lunch was served at the Corwin's by Palomar Branch members, (l. to r.) Rumi Dover, Pearl Swatsek, Billie Mahafee, Mary Zemcik, & Juana Curtis.

TB

DM

Right:
 Begonias *albo-picta* (left, under the graceful curving limb) and 'Christmas Candy', greeted visitors to Mary Sakamoto's back yard.



Left: Brad Thompson and Mary Sakamoto were co-chairmen of the convention. Here, Brad is pictured with some of his hybrids that are being grown by Mary.

DM



Near the entrance to Elda Regimbal's ^{DM} garden...

Not shown: the lath house vacated when Convention Chair Elda donated 1300 (!) plants for the sale.

Below:

The ideal picnic set-up: Elda's backyard, under towering eucalyptus trees, with soft fragrant eucalyptus leaves underfoot...



^{DM} Helen Spiers (Texas), president of Satellite Branch, and ABS v-p Mary Bucholtz (Florida) enjoy Elda's greenhouse.



TB



Above: Jane Hays (Colorado) admires Elda's "youngsters."

TB

Below: Nettie Daniels (Oregon) and Wanda Macnair (Massachusetts), finding lots to smile about in the Sakamoto garden.

TB



Show News Around the Country

At the *Jacksonville Branch Show* 'way back in May, **Mary Bucholtz** won Best of Show with *B. acaulis* in a large field of 110 entries. Mary also took Sweepstakes, winning the Rhizomatous, Tuberos, and Species Divisions. Another big winner was **Lee Guthrie**, who took top honors in the Cane-like, Semperflorens, and Shrub-like Divisions.

Pat Elderberry took Best of Show at the *Westchester Branch Eleventh Annual Show* July 18-19 with *B. 'Lois Burke'*, which qualified for a Cultural Certificate with 98 points. *B. 'Autumn'* won Best Novice for **Shirley Nemecek**.

Also winning Cultural Certificates were **Brad Thompson**, with *B. albo-picta* (97 points); **Jo Pangrazio**, with *B. pearcei* (96 points); **Janet Brown**, with *B. 'Medora'* (95.5 points); and **Arnold Krupnick**, with *B. 'Carousel'* and *B. dregeix B. herbacea* (both 95 points). Judges were Gilbert Estrada, Elmer Lorenz, and Elaine Baxter.

High scorers at the *San Francisco Branch Show* included May and Richard Chang (with blue ribbon entries scoring 98.5, 96.5, & 96.16); Alice and Isadore Gold (entries scoring 95.66 & 95); Carol and Peter Notaras (96.12), and Debbie Best (95.75).

Quote:

"Most of us won't do great things, but we can do small things in a great way."
Westchester Branch newsletter



BEGONIAS, GERANIUMS, EXOTICS
FERNS, OXALIS, CACTI, HERBS
new Full Color Catalog...\$3.00

LOGEE'S GREENHOUSES
(Est. 1892)

Dept. B, 55 North Street, Danielson, CT
06239

On With The Show!

by Alma L. Crawford

In spite of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Andrew on the homes and begonia collections of Miami Begonia Branch members, the 1993 American Begonia Society Convention and Show will go on!

While several members of Miami Branch were enjoying the warm hospitality exhibited at the 1992 ABS Convention in Anaheim, Andrew came roaring into South Florida and really tried to ruin our convention plans. We Floridians had spent most of our mealtimes together, and a prime topic of conversation was the 1993 Convention in Miami, scheduled for May 6-9. When news of the impending visit of Hurricane Andrew reached us, we began to make contact with our families about their own protection, and the safeguarding of our homes and our begonia collections. Two of our members, Nan Scoble-Burbles and Marilyn Goldstein, who live in Ft. Lauderdale, were able to change their reservations and leave for home early Sunday morning. Wanda and Bob Cochran made several calls to their niece Jody, with instructions to bring their plants and their racing pigeons into the house. Charles and Helene Jaros were in contact with Chuck Jaros about the protection of their plants (to take all of their plants inside would have required several more pairs of hands than Mr. Jaros has). Unfortunately for me, there was no one at my home to make preparations for the hurricane, so I had to try to concentrate on praying that Andrew would change his course and go out to sea.

The radio, television, and newspaper stories about Andrew cannot begin to tell the full story. To see the destruction and to be affected by it is an experience that defies actual description. It is so overwhelming that even after three weeks I still

find myself seeing new areas of devastation each time I make the daily trip to my uninhabitable home in South Dade from my sister's El Portal home in north Dade (where I am temporarily living.)

Several members of Miami Branch live in South Dade. I have heard that many of them lost their homes, as well as their begonia collections. Most of our homes are uninhabitable, but we have not given up. Plans are being made to rebuild our homes and our begonia collections. We will recover. We will host the 1993 ABS Convention.

The members of the Ft. Lauderdale and Palm Beaches Branches will be heavily involved in helping the Miami Branch to put on "Begonias - The Greatest Show on Earth."

My begonias were grown under huge mango trees and in two small shade houses. A picture of this area after Andrew's visit tells the story of my loss. This picture is typical of what happened to many begonia growers living in South Dade. Bob Cochran spent a morning removing debris from this mess and was able to recover a few of my bruised and battered plants. He unearthed a few large pots that still had remnants of begonias. Bob is going to try to revive them, and will give cuttings to me when I have a place to grow them. I also gave him my big staghorn, which had hung by a chain from a mango tree. This was pulled from beneath the fallen tree. However, two husky men who tried to lift it to put it into a pickup truck were unable to budge it; we will probably need a hoist in order to remove it from my property.

At Bob's house, the plants put inside by his niece were fine. However, his large



Hurricane Andrew uprooted trees and dropped them on shade houses: left, in Alma Crawford's garden

plants, left outside, took a beating. Still, he has cut them back and they are recovering. Wanda's terrariums survived, so they should be in good condition for the show.

Several members of the Miami Branch helped the Jaros family salvage some of their plants. Huge trees toppled their shade house and their plant tables, but they are optimistic that many of their plants will recover. Even now new growth is evident on a number of their plants.

Our branch president, Edythe Ropeik, and her husband Bernie were trapped in their house by fallen trees and had to cut their way through the branches to get out. Two of their shade houses survived, so Edythe hopes to have some plants ready for the show. However, her begonias have to share space with her orchids, in the same way that in many homes, families are sharing



Below, the Jaros' shade houses were crushed with their begonias underneath

their living quarters with other relatives and friends. Andrew has brought us closer together.

A couple of weeks before attending the Convention in Anaheim, I visited with Maybelle Green and was thrilled by the beauty, vigor, and lushness of her begonia collection. Although she lives in Houston part of the year, her begonias were looking so great that I suggested to her that perhaps she should offer to

be one stop on the garden tour in 1993. Sad to say, Andrew has made this an impossibility. Her shade house is in shambles like mine.

The damage to Fairchild Tropical Garden, the Parrot Jungle, and Daisy Farm is so extensive that we are reasonably sure that they will be excluded from the convention tours. Recovery on such a big scale may not be accomplished in time for the 1993 Con-

vention. Rest assured, however, that some very exciting and interesting tours are being planned for you. There are a number of fascinating attractions to visit in Broward and Palm Beach counties, and you will be hearing from us later about where we will be going.

Although several of the collections in the Miami area have been saved, the big problem is lack of shade. Most of our shade houses, greenhouses, and shade trees have been destroyed. The excessive rain and the blazing sun have only compounded the problem. Branch members are already in the process of rebuilding. We are helping each other in many ways, both physically and mentally. There has always been a special closeness and rapport among the members of the Miami Branch. We believe Hurricane Andrew has strengthened the bond between us.

Because I am specifically interested in reassuring you that the 1993 American Begonia Society Convention will go on, I have talked mostly about begonia collections in this article. However, I am sure you are interested in knowing how our families and our homes have fared. We are fine,

and so are the members of our families. The damage to our homes ranges from complete destruction to a few loose shingles on the roof. Many of us are living with relatives and friends. Others were deprived of electricity and telephone service for a few days, but were able to remain in their homes. We are coping with various problems and working to meet the challenges that have come with the aftermath of Andrew. We believe that we will become more appreciative individuals because of our shared experiences.

The Don Shula Inn and Golf Resort, site of the 1993 Convention, remains as beautiful as ever. Plans for the Show are in full swing, and from time to time you will be hearing more convention news from us.

We look forward to a brighter tomorrow because we know that "Joy cometh in the morning." THE 1993 AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY CONVENTION AND SHOW WILL GO ON!

Alma L. Crawford is Vice-President of the Miami Branch and a Senior ABS Judge. Her address is 14250 Madison St., Miami, FL 33176.

One of the nicest things about ABS members is their joy in sharing. If you would like to help Miami Branch members rebuild their begonia collections, send cuttings or plants to Charles Jaros, 2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami FL 33142. Charles will see that they are distributed. *Remember, it's hot down there - please ship next day delivery if possible.*

LAURAY of SALISBURY

Begonias, Gesneriads, Orchids
Cacti & Succulents
432 Undermountain Road, Rt. 41
Salisbury, CT 06068 203-435-2263
Usually open daily, 10 am - 5 pm
1992-93 Catalog \$2.00

**REX BEGONIA SEED
RUDOLF ZIESENHENNE**

1.00 per pkt plus 25c postage
Calif. residents add 6% Sales Tax
1130 NORTH MILPAS STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
93103

Reflections on Conventions

by H. Alton Lee

I am one of those crazy people who finds a convention potentially one of life's small pleasures, especially if it's a plant society convention. I've been to a lot of them over the years and found almost all of them beneficial in some way.

Plant people have the generally justified reputation of being good and friendly types, perhaps only inclined to serious "pickiness" when they become celebrated judges. But I do think it is possible to be constructively critical. And I certainly think there needs to be more critical evaluation of most conventions I attend and more effort to learn from past errors and correct obvious problems.

So this is an admittedly opinionated list of ideas and suggestions of how one person thinks a convention could be improved.

The big problem for most conventions is a lack of continuity of planning. Conventions move from place to place and, generally, different people are doing the arranging each year. Often, the people organizing a given convention simply are not up to speed about what has not worked in the past or what needs changing.

So suggestion number one is to include a comprehensive evaluation survey in all registrants' packages, asking them to tell it like it was - what they did and didn't like. If one is sincerely attempting to offer constructive help, I see no reason why there should be reluctance to sign such a form; but people who really feel they must remain anonymous - especially if it means they'll be really candid - should still be heard.

Another mega problem is lack of detailed information as early as possible. Those who plan need to remember that not

every recruit is a retiree or wealthy idler, and even these people rarely have endless time on their hands. Most people need to be able to plan many months in advance. Since many combine plant conventions with vacation, they must often request leave as much as a year ahead. The locale and dates of the next convention should always be announced during the present one.

Information about the hotel, with a ballpark figure of an expected rate and any clues about costs of various means of travel won't hurt. Airfares and airlines change rapidly; but registrants should at least be aware of alternate airports and airlines, train and bus service, and rental cars as well as some fix about what the local public transportation is like.

Many convention planners offer this kind of information in the package given the arriving registrant. But this is generally anticlimactic. Upon arrival is too late to learn that there was an inexpensive alternate to the expensive taxi ride. Again, people have made their plans, rented a car, settled on the number of days they can stay in the area, etc. Much of the material given out in registration packages really needs to be mailed to the recipients at least as soon as they register.

Even better, it should be offered with the original solicitation. Information transmitted early about the seminars, who is doing them - at least a thumbnail autobiographical sketch for those who don't know all the speakers, and some detail about the subject matter - would also be a great help. People don't necessarily attend every seminar/lecture, and like to be able to plan. The same goes for tours. Much more information is usually needed.

One really important item is a detailed map of the convention area, drawn to scale.

People need to know about alternative hotels and services. Even the best hotel food gets boring - and very expensive - after a while. Are other restaurants within easy distance - even walking? Perhaps sending a weekend section from a local paper or one of the hotel's "What's On/Happening?" magazines would be a great help. Registrants want to know if there are some fast food places nearby, a convenient grocery store, cleaners, gas station, quick copier, movie theatres, shopping mall, etc. This is important information that is sometimes essential for the mate of the registrant, who may not be as crazy about begonias (or bromeliads, etc.) as the addicted spouse.

A complete disclosure of what the hotel offers is important, too. Are there refrigerators in the room, television service with cable - especially a reliable weather station - movies in the room or VCRs with rental movies in the hotel (a growing and long overdue trend)? What other services are in the hotel, and what are the food options? Is there a health club, a pool, a spa? Are these services near and reasonable, if not at the convention hotel? What else is near that might be of special interest? Museums, parks, other gardens, worthwhile tourist sights and shopping? Convention schedules are usually packed and time is limited, and the more one can know about an area going in, the more helpful the information is: it might make the difference in whether someone decides to come.

It should also go without saying that there needs to be an acknowledgement of registration, even if it's only a postal card that says "Glad you're coming."

Some other thoughts: copies of local branch newsletters would be a help in giving an out-of-towner a sense of the local group, learning names, thus coming into a situation feeling more a part of it.

Most experienced plant conventioners pack materials they will need to get

plants home, but why not have a booth set up to sell cartons, tape, wrappings, plastic and styrofoam packing materials? The local branch might be able to make money on this. It might even be possible to help people pack and mail their bounty with the two-day service now available throughout the country. Plants I ship this way invariably arrive in better condition than those I pack and bring home myself, despite the fact that I've become pretty competent at packing.

The importance of a hospitality room, where registrants can meet friends and locals and socialize, can't be overstressed. Not every registrant has been coming to conventions for decades, nor knows all the participants by their nicknames. Making the first timers or occasional attendees feel really welcome is an assurance of the success of a future Begonia Society, not to mention a convention. Tomorrow's convention planner may be timidly standing on the sidelines somewhere trying to distinguish rhizomatous from shrub.

Most members probably are not familiar with the names of all the other begonia branches, so it would be wise to include a person's city and certainly state on name tags for quicker/easier social interaction.

Most people who attend plant conventions tend to be on the dark side of middle age, a time when creature comforts become all the more important. The watering and draining of registrants is a priority concern and careful thought should be given so that conventioners are never far from water and comfort stations. Long outings can be a problem if plans haven't been made to meet such needs. People are going to remember whether they were comfortable even after they've forgotten what won best of show.

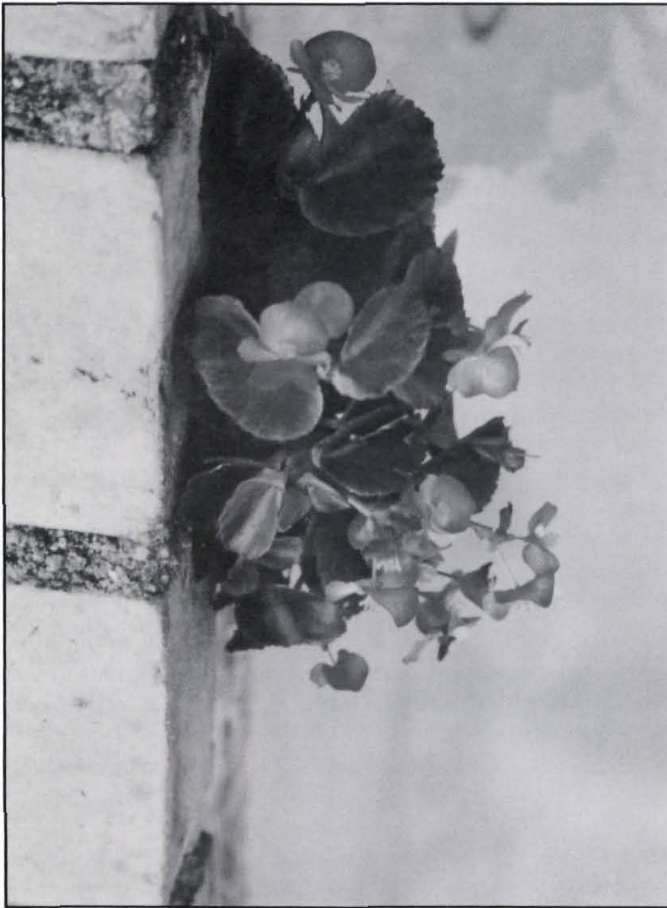
Many of these suggestions will add time and some money to the planning of a good convention. The chance for even greater enjoyment by all and for more people responding is worth it.

Good planning involves research and a person or persons good with details. Most groups have members like that, perhaps someone uninclined to enter plants, move tables, or conduct tours, who could contribute and in a way that will be enormously helpful to all. And if there isn't a volunteer, it might be wise to consider paying someone to do this detail work. Most societies have someone who could use the cash as well as the chance to be useful.

Is all this a lot of work? Yes. But what convention is not? And these suggestions should be but a beginning. All registrants should be encouraged - even pushed - to come up with good ideas to make our plant reunions better and better.

Professional writer H. Alton Lee is addicted to plants as well as conventions. He lives at 5813 19th Ave. S., Gulfport, FL 33707.

By the Pool



Let us introduce you to B. 'Scarletta'.

The picture is of a begonia found and photographed by Peter Lloyd of Keepin' Green Enterprises in Houston, Texas. It was found growing between the brick and the tile of a swimming pool. It most likely germinated from a seed and was thriving on neglect, as it was never watered nor fed - and yet it flourished in all its beauty on its own!

Peter Lloyd's photo and Tom Keepin's notes appeared in the newsletter of the Astro Branch.

BEGONIAS IN THE SERRA DO MAR SAO PAULO STATE, BRAZIL

Photographs and Text by Jacques Jangoux

Part 3

In November 1991 Jacques Jangoux travelled to one of the richest begonia regions of the world, Brazil's Sao Paulo State. There he photographed begonias in reserves established by the State. Our last issue featured some of the begonias found at Fazenda Intervales. Here the focus is on trailing-scandent begonias in Parque Estadual Turistico do Alta Ribeira (PETAR).



Begonia radicans, a climber, has abundant coral flowers. Here it is photographed growing with a bromeliad.



Left and below:

Begonia convolvulacea was found trailing on rocks, or climbing on trees - even on a tree fern. Its leaves are glabrous.



Jacques Jangoux is a Belgian photographer with a background in botany who specializes in rainforests. His address is Rua dos Timbiras 1375 Apto. 1001, Batista Campos, 66.000 Belém, Pará, Brazil.



Some Begonias of Malaysia

Part 3

by Kevin Handreck

We returned to Kota Kinabalu for a flight to Kuala Lumpur and a further 4 days of exploring by car. First was a quick afternoon trip into the Genting Highlands. The higher part of this area has been developed as a casino and resort complex of the most grotesque kind - the resort is absolutely hideous!

But on the way down we found two beautiful begonias growing on rocks and fallen logs along streams. The first was *B. thaipingensis*, growing on a rock face beside a stream in very deep shade, and in air that would always be humid.

Stopping beside another stream, just a few meters from the busy road, again on rocks and fallen trees in dense shade, we found numerous plants of *B. maxwelliana*.

How do we know these names? Well, the next day we went to the Agricultural University of Malaysia near Kuala Lumpur to talk with Dr. Ruth Kiew, a botanist who is particularly interested in understory plants, including begonias. She has a student working on dispersal mechanisms in begonias. I spent several hours talking with her and looking at herbarium specimens. She told me the names of the Genting begonias, and also where to look for begonias in the Cameron Highlands, around Ipoh, and at Batu Cave near Kuala Lumpur.

With these instructions and some that I had already obtained from Scott Hoover and Don Miller of the American Begonia Society, we were able to find about six

begonias in the Cameron Highlands: *Begonias decora*, *pavonina*, *lowiana*, and *venusta* are the only names we know. *B. decora* has beautiful pustulate leaves and grows almost in the water along streams in medium shade. *B. pavonina* grows in dense shade and has iridescent blue-green leaves, hence its common name of "Peacock Begonia." Again we see that iridescence is an adaptation to very low light. It is absolutely stunning to see a whole rock face of an unused quarry literally covered with this species. *B. lowiana* grows beside the road on the top of Gunung Brinchang at about 2,000 meters.

The second last begonia was found on vertical rock faces on limestone outcrops in the Ipoh area, to which we drove on our second last day in Malaysia. We really exhausted ourselves getting in to see it, as we had to walk across a construction area, through tall grass andlantana thicket, and up a very steep slope to get within viewing distance! And all this in the lowlands at about 100% humidity. Fortunately, we did finally see the sought-after *B. kingiana*. Just as well, because we were too scratched and exhausted to want to try at another limestone outcrop.

B. kingiana is a small rhizomatous plant with thick, peltate leaves. It grows in shade on tiny ledges in the rock face. There was no water trickling over the rock at the time of our visit, but there must have been some in the crack in the rock. I think that this begonia is really tough.

Our last begonia was seen at Batu Cave, which is in a large limestone outcrop now situated within the suburbs of Kuala Lumpur. We had been told that we could see it from the staircase of 300 steps leading to the cave (which is a Hindu temple), but that we would not be able to get close to it. We were nearly resigned to this, but when we had reached the top of the steps, there, right at the entrance to the cave, behind some derelict seats and in dampness oozing from the rocks, joy of joys, were several plants in full flower! The flower buds have stripes on the outside, and these are on the edges of the opened flowers. The name of this plant is *B. phoeniogramma*. This means "red-purple stripes".

We are still riding high from our Malaysian trip. It was enormously exciting to see begonias in their natural habitats. Most of the species were growing along streams and in soakages flowing down sheer rock faces. Almost all were growing in quite dense shade. I did not have a light meter, but judging by the difficulty of getting enough light for photographs, I would guess that often the light level was little more than 10% of full sunlight. On really cloudy days photography was quite difficult, even with film rated at 200 ISO. The only exceptions to this dense shade habitat were *B. burbidgei* on Gunung Kinabalu and one growing at Robinsons Falls in the Cameron Highlands.

The Smithsonian publication Begoniaceae lists 83 species for Malaysia, but that does not include those named in the last couple of years, and perhaps 100 species yet to be found or named. There is plenty of exploring still to be done in Malaysia for those who want the excitement of seeing begonias in their natural habitat. From Australia it costs a lot less to explore Malaysia than to go to Central and South America, and it's a lot safer.

Globetrotters Kevin and Eleanor Handreck visited the USA this past summer. Read on...

Handreck Seminar a Success

It was an exciting event at the Dorothea Leonhardt Auditorium at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden on August 1. The Mae Blanton and Dallas Area Branches sponsored a reception for Eleanor and Kevin Handreck, and Kevin gave a slide presentation about the begonias they found on a recent trip to Malaysia.

There was a large crowd to hear him speak, with representatives of Southwest Region coming from all over Oklahoma and Texas. Several people remarked that it seemed like a mini-Southwest Region Get-Together.

Kevin started off with a short tour of Australia and his home in Adelaide. He also invited everyone to the Australia Begonia Convention in Brisbane, Queensland in 1995.

His slides and commentary on his Malaysia trip proved to be very educational and rewarding. We thank Kevin and Eleanor for sharing their trip with us.

After the reception and seminar, Kelton Parker, Curator of Begonias at the Garden, gave tours of the begonia collection. Many folks stopped by North Haven Gardens to pick up more begonias before the drive home.

Condensed from the report by Don Miller in the Southwest Region Begonia Leaflet.

The Indoor Gardening Society of America, Inc. Dept. B

944 S. Munroe Rd., Tallmadge, OH 44278
Dues \$15 a year **INDOOR GARDEN** issued 6 times yearly. Seed exchange, round robins, cultural guides, slide library.

Colorful Species from Malaysia

Enthrall

Potomac Branch

by Carrie Karegeannes

Slides of exotic and beautiful begonia species kept Potomac Branch members wide-eyed in August as Kevin Handreck, president of the Association of Australian Begonia Societies, and his wife Eleanor shared scenes from their July 1991 visit to Malaysian rainforests.

Kevin and Eleanor clambered up rock faces and through brush and water to photograph begonias in their native habitats - often distinct microclimates not far apart.

Several of the species they saw in Sabah are among those named by Martin Sands in the May 1990 Kew Magazine. Here was evidence that those exciting color plates were not exaggerations! Perhaps the most striking is *B. amphioxus*, with narrow petalate leaf blades pointed at both ends and marked by deep-red spots and red edge. Its Greek-derived name means "sharp at both ends," Sands translates. It bears white flowers.

Another unusual species is lanceolate-leaved *B. cauliflora*, named for its pink flowers carried close to and down along the stem at leaf nodes, often after leaves had dropped from the nodes. Leaves of *B. kinabaluensis*, from Mount Kinabalu, are glossy green with red veins and deep-red

hairy petioles. Stems are also red-hairy. Short flower clusters of pinkish-white flowers carry striking pink to red glandular bracts.

Kevin also photographed species named by earlier botanists: *B. phoeniogramma*, with red-striped flowers; *B. maxwelliana*, *B. venusta*, *B. burbidgei*, *B. decora* (the dark coloring known to us in cultivation varied in the rainforests to light green in different light exposures); *B. pavonina* (peacock blue when grown in shade and difficult for us, blanketing a bank!), and probably *B. beryllae*. Others were not identified.

The Malaysian species are enticing but tantalizing. Many have had difficulty growing them in cultivation. Kevin had germination on seed he collected, and then seedlings began to melt; others have had the same experience. The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, Sands reported, were able to grow *B. cauliflora* and *B. kinabaluensis* well at first, but then had difficulty maintaining them. *B. amphioxus*, however, did well from both seed and cuttings in fibrous mix and hanging baskets. Two of the others were quite tolerant of changed environment. Cool temperatures, along with the high humidity, may be a factor.

Carrie Karegeannes, Director of the Nomenclature Committee and this year's winner of the Herbert P. Dyckman Award, lives at 3915 Lake Boulevard, Annandale, VA 22003-2319. This article was also submitted to the Potomac Branch newsletter.

Quote:

"When people talk about their family tree they trim off a branch here and there."
The Eardrop, newsletter of the British Columbia Fuchsia & Begonia Society.



photo by Eleanor Calkins

Begonias as Bonsai

Program by Don Miller
Review by Ruth Ihara



The seminar on "Begonias as Bonsai" at the Southwest Region Get-Together in Houston in May of this year was conducted with expertise by Don Miller, who subsequently won Sweepstakes with ten blue ribbons, some of them for his begonia bonsai. Needless to say, Don's seminar was well attended. I'm sure everyone, like me, came away inspired to try his methods. If there were such a title as Begonia Bonsai Master, Don is the one to whom it ought to be awarded.

According to Don, any plant can be trained as a bonsai (pronounced "bon'sigh"), including water lilies and even annuals such as coxcomb. He advises us to look to nature for models when selecting and shaping a begonia for bonsai. He prefers to work with a plant that has a thick trunk, favoring in particular members of the *B. dregei* group because of their habit of

growth. Others he recommends include rhizomatous begonias with rhizomes that grow along the surface of the soil, or grow upright, e.g., *B. wollnyi*, and *B. hatacoa*.

As Don talked, he picked up a plant and worked on it. The following is the gist of what he told us:

After choosing a begonia to train, unpot it, and remove some of the soil from its roots. Cut off the exposed roots to fit the bonsai pot you have picked out (he suggested using a plant from a pot having a diameter of 4 to 6 inches). Look at the plant carefully and visualize it as an old small tree. Expose the trunk by removing small branches, going about halfway up. A bonsai will have a front and a back, though of course you do need to shape all sides. After you have shaped the plant to your satisfaction, partially fill the pot with your potting mix (Don likes to use Pro-Mix) and

set the plant rather high in the pot so that it sits on a low mound. Pack the soil gently but firmly around the plant, then scrape some of the soil away to expose part of the trunk at soil level. At this time, you could, if you like, add a companion plant such as a miniature begonia or a peperomia. Now the soil surface should be covered with a ground cover. Don said that he uses moss which grows under his greenhouse benches. For the benefit of those of us who are not so fortunate as to have a greenhouse complete with moss, he suggested baby's tears (*Helxine soleirolli*) or *Hydrocotyle rotundifolia*, the miniature form.

The begonia bonsai should be watered and fertilized like any other begonia, but you should continue shaping the plant as it grows and changes. It may be necessary after a year to two to move the plant to a larger pot. Shaping of woody branches may be accomplished by using wires, but Don cautioned that most begonia stems are too fragile and brittle for wires. Plant ties are likely to be more satisfactory. In response to a question from the audience, he estimated that after a plant is wired it takes about one year for the shaping to set.

The plant Don used for his demonstration was a *B. partita* from his greenhouse. After he shaped and potted it, it looked like an old, established maple tree growing on a knoll. He cautioned that a bonsai is never complete; it requires constant shaping as it grows and develops.

The bonsai he had created he generously donated for the raffle. If he had donated it for auction, the bidding would have been fierce! If any one needed any further proof of his skill with bonsai, it - or rather they - were exhibited at the show. His magnificent bonsai *B. partita*, several years old, won a blue ribbon, as did his bonsai *B. hatacoa*.

Ruth Ihara's address is Rt. 2, Box 182A, Leesburg, VA 22075. Her article was submitted to both the *Begonian* and the *Potomac Branch newsletter*.



Coming Events

November 14: Mae Blanton Branch sale at the Christmas Gala at the Community Center, Denton, Texas: begonias, baked goods, crafts.

1993

February 26-28: Astro & Satellite Branches participate jointly in the Houston Lawn & Garden Show at George L. Brown Convention Center.

March 13-21: Knickerbocker Branch will have a booth at the New York Flower Show at Pier 92, 51st St. & the Hudson River.

April 16-18: Southwest Region Get-Together, "Begonia Spring Fling" at Green Oaks Inn, Fort Worth, Texas. Mae Blanton Branch is sponsoring.

April 29-May 2, 1993:
American Begonia Society
Convention,
"Begonias -
The Greatest Show on Earth"
Miami, Florida. Miami Branch is host.

Deadline for next issue is January 15

"Schultz-Instant"

The Natural Way to Bug-free Plants!

the
NATURAL PYRETHRINS
Insecticide

Available at leading Garden Centers and Plant Departments
Garden Clubs: SEND FOR OUR FUND RAISING OFFER
Schultz Co. 14090 Riverport Drive, Maryland Heights, MO 63043

the creator of B. 'Sophie Cecile' reminisces...

Begonia Memories

by Belva Nelson Kusler

Some years back my husband Al and I moved from our home at Big Clam Lake into the town of Frederic. The move meant a change of my plant-growing situation. It meant leaving the greenhouse and glass/lath house, and the 32 1/2 ft. by 8 ft. wall of glass that made up the southeast wall of the house that had served as the proving-up area for my new begonia hybrids.

Because of orientation problems, we decided not to build a greenhouse in Frederic. Instead, we decided to rig up the south end of our large walk-out basement with banks of fluorescent lights. In addition, there are eight windows facing east, south, and west. Plants would be moved down here in March, taking everything from Big Clam Lake, all plants and plant materials, leaving until later the final decisions about reducing the begonia stock to fit the new place. It turned out to be a long time before space and plants could be reconciled.

In the interim, while I packed household goods for moving (from November through March, seven days a week) the plants just vegetated, stood with only indifferent watering, and thus they continued to languish for a long time after we had moved. Also, the heart had gone out of it all: unplanted seeds of new crosses waiting (crosses that had been made with much planning and effort), the acquisition of desired stock delayed, seedlings dying from inadequate care, plants in small pots tipping on their sides.

It was all too much for some of the plants; but, strangely, the begonias showed themselves tougher than one could have believed. In one instance there was a crate of cane begonias in foam cups in the basement, definitely removed from direct light, many of the top-heavy pots lying on their sides, seldom watered. Finally, years

after, I decided to throw them out although they were new cane crosses that had never been proved-up. But as I started dumping them out of the foam cups I remembered that one had bloomed and was a dark-leaved, white-flowered specimen (most of the marking tags had long since faded after more than eleven years). I stuck them all into soil in a long planter and there they grew and grew, with my breaking them off when they got too tall - crowded, starved. Eventually I got them potted and they flowered. Now I'm not sure but what two of the dark-leaved, white-flowered canes are different from two of my earlier named crosses, Jeanne and Gigi Fleetham; but since I don't have either of the latter I can't compare.

Now to talk about B. 'Sophie Cecile'. Somewhere, back in the years, in a copy of the **Begonian** there is a picture showing a long-dead-looking cane of a begonia plant coming to life. The grower had taken what, to her, looked like a dead cane to use as a stake to tie up another begonia. The "dead" cane rooted and grew.

To illustrate the capacity of 'Sophie Cecile' to flourish almost anywhere, here are some reports of varied growing situations: under fluorescent lights anywhere - basements, garages, closets. It grows in almost desert heat and dryness, in warm and moist greenhouses, in temperatures ranging from low to high, in foundation plantings in warm climates, in windows with south or east or west exposure, in picture windows, on patios. The frequently repeated comment is: "You can't kill it! It's tough!"

It survives in soil that is sometimes almost bone-dry, other times wet with rare periods of drying out, neglected, battered by the wind in somewhat unprotected ar-

eas. Cut back it springs back up again, over and over; cuttings root swiftly in a glass of water, or almost any other rooting medium.

As for blooming: the reports are diverse, ranging from sporadic to year-round, winter, or fall, or spring, or summer, or all four seasons. Blossoms are profuse, bright rose-pink, and with the dark green (red beneath), shiny, cut leaves it is a beautiful sight.

'Sophie Cecile' is widely distributed now. I recall that when I first introduced it I saw a small plant at a begonia convention plant sale priced at \$9.00. (I was shocked!)

In propagating, even a piece of bare cane with but one node will usually root and grow. The plant develops many canes, becoming very bushy.

The year that I produced 'Sophie Cecile' I had so many good crosses going that I had more or less rejected it and its sisters as too large to be acceptable (I was aiming for house-window-sized plants). But it, and its sisters, performed so beautifully that I couldn't discard them all. When fall came and the plants in the unheated glass/lath houses would freeze, I thought it might be fun for a friend (an entomologist at the University of Minnesota, whose living room had a south wall of glass with a 12 ft. ceiling) to raise a couple of the 8 ft. tall specimens for the winter. He borrowed a long passenger van, and drove the eighty miles to pick them up. We could barely squeeze in the two plants; when they were propped on their sides, only the driver's seat remained unfilled.

Al, my husband, didn't think I should save even the best of the lot of mature plants - they were too large, too vigorous, and no one would want to grow them. I chose what I thought were the best, since all of the seedlings were somewhat different, and named the very best after an elderly aunt, Sophie Cecile.

Two more notes: when our son and wife were travelling in Central America, 'way off the beaten path, they entered their lovely motel to see a magnificent huge specimen of 'Sophie Cecile' in full bloom at the registration desk. The owners were justifiably proud of it.

This last winter when Al and I were at a wholesale garden supply company in Minneapolis and, just for joy, going through the very large greenhouses carrying house plants and trees for indoor growing, the clerk told us to go to the end where there was a large selection of plants that we should look at (she gave us the incorrect name for the category). Surprise! They were all beautifully grown specimens of 'Sophie Cecile'. When I told the clerk that they were begonias and that they were my hybrid, she looked rather disbelieving. Perhaps she thought I had always been this grey-haired lady.

B. 'Sophie Cecile' won the Alfred D. Robinson Medal in 1966. It is one of the most enduringly popular and widely distributed begonias (although, as pointed out, it is not always correctly labeled). Belva Kusler lives at 311 Ash St., Frederic, WI 54837-8927. Her article was written at the request of K. Mose Fadeem.



THE AMERICAN IVY SOCIETY

is the International Registration Authority for *Hedera*; provides sources for new & unusual ivies; publishes *Ivy Journal* three times a year with reports on research, hardiness testing, life-sized photos of ivies. Memberships: General \$15; Institutional \$25; Commercial \$50. Information: The American Ivy Society, P.O. Box 520, West Carrollton, OH 45449-0520.

more "odd things begonias do"



B. 'Robert Shatzer' Goes Berserk

by Tamsin Boardman

This is all Mose Fadeem's fault; he not only wrote about odd growths begonias produce, but kept nagging the rest of us to notice our plants in more detail - and to share our information.

The latest in my experiences with odd growth came to my garden by chance. I had stopped at a nursery, looking for shallow pots, and saw a huge lovely basket of rhizomatous B. 'Robert Shatzer', still in bloom in June and on sale. I couldn't resist - what begonia nut doesn't know the feeling?

In the next few weeks the flowers began to fade away. During this time we had several thunderstorms, two of them frighteningly severe.

After one thunderstorm, which had been accompanied by heavy rain, I checked the basket to see if the rhizome and roots were drowning. And there, hanging on the end of a flower stalk, was a tiny plantlet. It fell off in my hand, and is now potted in moss and doing just fine.

Closer examination revealed four more little plantlets at the end of flower stalks. These were well distributed around the plant, and did not all come from one rhizome. The plant's growth somewhat resembles the more common Chlorophytum (known variously as "Dutchman's pipe", "spider plant", or "airplane plant"). None of the plantlets were present when the plant was purchased; but it is possible that the trig-

gering agent occurred before B. 'Robert Shatzer' came to grace our deck.

Some explanations that have popped up over the years to explain unusual growth patterns and mutations are fungal infection; exposure to electrical storms, pesticide, herbicide fumes, radiation, gas; and genetics. We do know that geography isn't important: articles on peculiar begonia behavior have come from Scotland and France as well as California, Florida, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, Texas.

B. 'Robert Shatzer' was registered by Edna Mae Stewart in 1968, a cross of B. 'Bow-Nigra' x *B. bowerae* var. *nigramarga*. 'Bow-Nigra' in turn is a cross of *B. bowerae* x *B. heracleifolia* var. *nigricans*. All of the species mentioned are of Mexican origin, which would tend to support my thesis (outlined in the May-June 1991 **Begonian**, p. 100) that phyllomania and other weird growth patterns among begonias are found primarily in rhizomatous or rex begonias that trace their ancestry back to Mexico and Central America.

B. 'Robert Shatzer', rhizomatous, with a Mexican background, in bloom, had come from a gas-heated greenhouse and was subjected to some really terrifying lightning/thunder displays. With all that, perhaps I should have expected bizarre behavior.

However, Annette Boree has found peculiar growth habits on a cane! (See the September-October issue, p. 170). The only species she finds in the background of B. 'Sugar Moon' are Brazilians, *sceptrum* and *dichroa*. (Although it's ancestor 'Lucerna' must of course have species in its murky background, they wouldn't be rhizomatous or from Mexico - canes are almost exclusively from Brazil.) It is interesting that one hybrid ancestor, B. 'Lenore Olivier' was reported to have produced adventitious leaves when exposed to herbicide fumes (Carlton L'Hommedieu, "Notes on Adventitious Growth", **Begonian** January 1976, p. 14).

Is the growth of leaves from stipules shaped by the same factors as the growth of plantlets on peduncles, or flowers growing out of leaves? Are we dealing with the same phenomenon, or a new one? Are these common occurrences we haven't paid much attention to before, or is there some new factor involved?

One factor is common to all the reports of unusual growth. Mose noted that oddities appeared in conjunction with bloom. In every case so far, unusual growth has occurred on plants that are blooming - 'Sugar Moon', Annette says, is the most floriferous cane she has grown, which may be one factor in its developing those odd stipule-leaves. (See "The Little Martian Chronicles", **Begonian**, Nov.-Dec. 1990, p. 205-207, for Mose' discussion of bloom and ethylene gas.)

This hardly explains why the majority of begonias go happily about their blooming business, with nary a weird offspring or offshoot, even when grown right next to a begonia producing oddities.

In lieu of learned theories to explain odd begonia behavior, I have a last question: have you checked your begonias carefully today?



Recycle!

Hanging wallpaper? The pans (used for dipping the paper in paste) make good planters and window boxes - just punch holes in the bottom.

Pacific Horticulture

The color illustrated quarterly

for keen gardeners

\$12 a year

(\$14 Canada & Mexico,

\$16 elsewhere)

P.O. Box, 485, Berkeley, CA 94701

BULLETIN BOARD

ABS News



An Urgent Message From Our President

It has been almost a month now since I attended an extremely successful National Convention in Anaheim and was installed to my own term as President. I have talked to so many people this past year that I really enjoyed being able to put names, voices, and faces together.

I want to congratulate Elda Regimbal and her chairmen for the wonderful convention they put on for us. It was a success in every respect. Now we have Miami to look forward to in May; let's all support the members who will have to work much harder now because of the hurricane they have just gone through.

In the months that I have been President there have been many changes in the Chairmen and Directors positions. I want to thank all who have come forward to volunteer their services and those who have contacted me with potential candidate names. You will notice that we have a new Seed Fund Director, Marilyn Goldstein. But - the very important position of editor is still open. Tamsin resigned over a year ago and yet has graciously carried on for us. We cannot expect her to continue this position any longer. With this last issue we may find ourselves with no publication at all. Surely there is someone within or outside our organization that can fulfill the requirements. Please contact me with your suggestions.

Carol Notaras

Appointments:

Research Librarian: Stephen Coppins,
30 Mygatt St., Binghamton NY 13905.

Director, Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund:
Marilyn Goldstein, 1001 Diplomat
Parkway, Hollywood FL 33019.

Please note:

As seeds and materials are in transit to the new Seed Fund director, there will be no Seed Fund Notes this issue.

The Board thanks **Diana H. Gould** for her many years of devoted service to the Seed Fund and **Lorra Almstedt** for her work as Research Librarian.

Gift hunting? Consider an ABS membership for your plant-loving friends. They'll enjoy it all year (and you'll avoid crowded malls and holiday traffic jams).

JUDGES' CORNER

Congratulations to our newest judges:

Joy Blair
Pat McElderry
Jo Pangrazio
Elda Regimbal
Mary Sakamoto

IN MEMORY

Long-time begonia grower and hybridizer **Hazel Burley** passed away peacefully on August 1, aged 75 years. Hazel was a member of the Queensland Begonia Society, a former member of the Australian Begonia Society, and a member of the American Begonia Society from the 1960's through the 1980's.

Many wonderful registered hybrids stand as a testimony to her dedication and efforts. Her infectious personality and vast knowledge will be greatly missed by all.

Long-time correspondents of Hazel's who wish to pass on condolences to her family may do so via the Queensland Begonia Society, Peter Henderson, Secretary, 79 Chuter Street, Stafford North 4053, Queensland, Australia. - Barry Mann

The Alamo Branch lost a wonderful grower and good friend. **Charles Zwiirn** died Saturday, August 22. Members throughout the country will remember visiting the Zwiirns' garden during the 1990 convention in San Antonio.

I kept his begonias (some of them, not all!) over the winter in my greenhouse - they were always so lovely, which inspired me to keep trying with mine. - Mary Ellen McCormick

IN THE NEWS...

"Holy Begonia! Bayview tubers bloom beautifully" was the headline in the South Whidbey Record on August 1, 1992. South Whidbey is on Whidbey Island in Washington State, and Editor Jim Larsen had been introduced to the world of begonias, **Howard Siebold** style. The article highlighted begonias, Howard, and Howard's hybridizing of fragrant tuberous begonias. Photos showed some of Howard's magnificent results. The article concluded with an invitation to visit, giving Howard's address and adding: "You can't miss it, it's the house surrounded by begonias."

Last Minute Flash!

Now Howard and his begonias will be on television, too. Ed Hume and his crew for the ABC program "Gardening in America" taped Howard's garden on September 22. The program will air on Sunday, October 25 at 9 a.m. in the Washington area. Watch for it in your state!

The 1992 Convention received tremendous publicity, including a two page article in the Orange County edition of the Los Angeles Times on August 22. Show, sale, and begonias were covered, and convention chair **Elda Regimbal** was photographed sitting in her greenhouse surrounded by her favorite plants. (Those in the know say it's the only chance she had to sit down that week!)

ROUND ROBIN NOTES

Virginia Hamann, Round Robin Director

The position of Round Robin Director has been interesting and a bit challenging. Thinking that #57 Miniature Begonias had been misplaced, I restarted it - now I find there are two #57's making the rounds. The original and restart, hopefully, will return, and one can be put back on the ground.

In the first Round Robin Notes I wrote, I said that begonia lovers seem to enjoy the company of cats. Now I am finding several who raise birds for pleasure. Cockatiels in California, and finches and canaries in Illinois: this makes for interesting talk in the Robins.

#53, Rhizomatous

Robin members will have some fun, as Cynthia Bishop (CA) put in packets of seed. The rhizomatous mix includes seed from Begonias 'Essie Hunt', 'Small Change', U064, U192, 'Cleopatra', 'Apache', *bowerae*, and 'Emerald Lacewing'. Who will be able to identify them all? Cynthia uses GroMats, which are thermostatically controlled heating units that help keep bottom heat stable, an important part of starting seeds and cuttings. She also uses Fisons Sunshine mix #3 for seed starter and for cuttings.

The heat in Florida is giving Mary Bucholtz problems with plants. She likes sphagnum moss-lined baskets and clay pots for her begonias, as roots are able to breathe in the porous containers.

Hubert Watson (TX) asked, how does one resist buying new plants? The answer was, stay away from plant sales! He was amazed at the amount of plants sold at the Southwest Region Get-Together, and had a hard time resisting buying all the plants he needs for his collection. Hubert's enthusiasm for growing and showing plants is contagious.

#32 Kusler/Other Canes

Vanessa Young (NY) recently joined this Robin. She grows mostly in natural light and natural conditions. Using no sprays in her home, she cleans her begonias in the shower at least three times a year and uses mild soap, rinsing with water.


With all the rain in North Texas, Glennis Crouch says her cane begonias are filling out and growing lush and tall. Dorcas Resleff (WA) uses a potting soil with earthworm castings, peat moss, pumice, and forest humus. When repotting she mixes in Osmocote, and fertilizes again in October and in March.

During fruit harvest season, many members were canning peaches, apricots - yum!

#14 Semperflorens

John Howell (TX) sent an interesting report. His semperflorens are being tested for disease and mildew resistance. I think that semps are the most misunderstood members of the begonia family. They are known as the wax begonia and used as a common border plant in shade gardens. They are not "common" at all, and I am always on the lookout for something different.

As fall approaches, greenhouses are being readied for winter, and soon begonias summered outdoors will be brought inside. This can be done gradually, acclimating the plants to inside conditions. Check the plants over. There might be unwelcome insects such as spiders and ants lurking in the foliage, and toads have been found burrowed in pots.

Happy Growing, and Keep 'Em Flying!
Virginia Hamann
Rt. 1, Box 10, Chester IA 52134 

BEGONIAN MINI-ADS

Mini-ads are a service to our members. The charge is \$1 per line per insertion with a minimum of \$4. Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to ABS and mail to:

Cynthia Bishop
4150 Auburn-Folsom Rd.
Loomis, CA 95650
(916) 652-7311

BEGONIA CUTTINGS AND PLANTS. Send \$2 for expanded 1993 list. Kay's Greenhouses, 207 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78221.

SOUTHWEST REGION, ABS: Annual Get-Together, show, sale; newsletter. Membership \$7, family \$10. Send to Marie Harrell, Rt. 3, Box 689, Elgin, TX 78621.

"VICKI'S EXOTIC PLANTS" Beautiful Begonias, Episcias, and Hoyas. Large variety of each. Please send \$1 for list to 522 Vista Park Dr., Eagle Point, OR 97524.

BEGONIAS, FERNS, SHADE PLANTS. We are now open to provide you with quality plants...Come visit. Send \$1 for plant list. Golden Hills Nursery (Cynthia Bishop), 4150 Auburn-Folsom Rd., Loomis CA 95650; (916) 652-7311.

BEGONIAS: THE COMPLETE REFERENCE GUIDE by Mildred L. and Edward J. Thompson. 884 pages, 850 illustrations (165 in color). Culture, classification, and history. \$20.00 to ABS members. To order autographed copies write: THE THOMPSONS, P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968. **BEGONIAS: 1984 UPDATE** \$6.75. Prices include shipping. Foreign orders \$5 additional for shipping via Surface Mail.

RARE DISTINCTIVE BEGONIAS. Sym. U012, *bogneri*, U089, ex-Kew, etc. Send SASE for list. USA only. BILL VOSS, 3805 Louise Ave., Chantilly, VA 22021.

BEGONIAS, hundreds of varieties. 1993 season list \$2. Robert Hamm, P.O. Box 161361, Sacramento CA 95816. Wholesale collections available.

BEGONIAS, Episcias, and Hoyas. Cuttings only. Send \$1 for list to B & K Tropicals, Dept. B, P.O. Box 28182, Kenneth City, FL 33709.

BEGONIAS, Texas' newest hybrids. 'Faded Love', 'New Moon', 'Kitty Twitty', 'Puffy Pop' and many more. Send \$2 for complete list. Stew's Greenhouses, HC 52, Box 2307, Bulverde, TX 78163 (512) 980-9439.

FLUORESCENT PLANT STAND. Hand-made construction in American hardwoods. Adjustable shelf. Four tube lighting. Comes fully assembled. \$159.00 plus shipping. Free brochure. J. F. Designs, 13 Elm St., Brookline, MA 02146 (617) 731-2754.

WANTED: COLOR SLIDES. Good shots of individual begonias to be used in book "Beautiful Begonias." Pay & full credit. Milo Sulc, 1580 Oleyres/VD, Switzerland.



GROW GREAT FERNS JOIN LAIFS

Annual membership \$15.00

LAIFS Journal with Fern Lessons
Spore Store, Books, Educational programs

Los Angeles Int'l Fern Society
P.O. Box 90943, Pasadena, CA 91109-0943

Join the NATIONAL FUCHSIA SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP \$15 per year
includes bi-monthly FUCHSIA FAN

The new A to Z on Fuchsias abridged version

\$6.95 plus \$1 shipping (CA residents add 42c tax)

Mail to: National Fuchsia Society, 11507 E. 187 St.
Artesia, CA 90701



Elected Officers

- President.....Carol Notaras
2567 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94123
- Past President.....Jeannette Gilbertson
410 JoAnn Circle, Vista, CA 92084
- First Vice-President.....Gene Salisbury
P.O. Box 504, Tonkawa, OK 74653
- Second Vice-President...Millie Thompson
P.O. Drawer PP, Southampton, NY 11968
- Third Vice-President.....Mary Bucholtz
2411 Hendricks Ave., Jacksonville, FL32207
- Secretary.....Ingeborg Foo
1050 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92083
- Treasurer.....Eleanor Calkins
910 Fern St., Escondido, CA 92027

Appointed Chairmen & Directors

- Audit Committee
Ed Bates
P.O. Box 230502, Encinitas CA 92023-0502
Ralph Corwin
1119 Loma Vista way, Vista CA 92084
- Awards.....Thelma O'Reilly
10942 Sunray Place, La Mesa CA 91941
- Ballot Counting.....Ronnie Nevins
1913 Aspen Circle, Fullerton, CA 92635
- Begonian**, Back Issues.....Betty Tillotson
3912 Wildrose Way, Sacramento, CA 05826
- Book Store.....Anita Ruthenberg
1016 W. Arlington Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76110
- Branch Relations.....Douglas Hahn
7736 Stonehill Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45230
- Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund...Marilyn Goldstein
1001 Diplomat Parkway, Hollywood FL 33091

- Conservation Committee
Director.....Scott Hoover
718 Henderson Rd., Williamstown, MA 01267
- Administrator.....Bruce C. Boardman
Box 249, Roanoke, TX 76262
- Convention Advisor.....Elda Regimbal
3117 San Juan Dr., Fullerton, CA 92635
- Convention Chairman.....Charles Jaros
2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami, FL 33142
- Historian...Norma Pfrunder
3484 Jefferson St., Riverside, CA 92504
- Judging.....Maxine Zinman
Rt. 1, Box 73, Boyce, VA 22620
- Long-Range Planning.....Kay Tucker
207 W. Southcross, San Antonio, TX 78221
- Members at Large.....Thelma McRae
5471 S. Libby Rd. #15, Paradise CA 95969
- Nomenclature.....Carrie Karegeannes
3916 Lake Blvd., Annandale, VA 22003
- Parliamentarian.....Margaret Lee
1852 31st St., San Diego, CA 92102
- Public Relations/Special Advertising
Russ Richardson
1854 Chancery Lane, Chamblee, GA 30341
- Research.....Houston Knight
13455 Hadley St., Whittier, CA 90601
- Research Librarian.....Stephen Coppins
30 Mygatt St., Binghamton NY 13905
- Round Robin.....Virginia Hamann
Rt. 1, Box 10., Chester, IA 52134
- Slide Library
Co-Chairman.....Daniel Haseltine
6950 W. Nelson St., Chicago, IL 60634
- Co-Chairman.....Charles Jaros
2621 NW 23rd Court, Miami, FL 33142

OPENINGS:
Begonian staff: editor,
advertising manager
Horticultural correspondent

BEGONIAN STAFF

- Editor: Tamsin Boardman, Box 249, Roanoke, TX 76262 (817) 481-4305
- Nomenclature Editor: Jack Golding
- Editorial Associates: Phyllis Bates, Bruce C. Boardman, Kit Mounger, Mary Weinberg
- For subscription, dues, circulation inquiries contact John Ingles, Jr. 157 Monument, Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617



Help Available from ABS

These services are available to all ABS members. For names and addresses of department heads, see preceding page. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope when you write.

At-Large Members

Members who do not belong to branches are represented at board meetings by the Members-at-large director. MAL committee works on projects by mail.

Bookstore

Books about Begonias and back issues of the **Begonian**.

Horticultural Correspondent

Prompt assistance with questions pertaining to growing begonias.

Judging Dept.

Certifies accredited judges through judging schools and correspondence course.

Nomenclature Dept.

Monitors newly published findings on *Begonia* names. Handles official international registrations of new *Begonia* cultivars and publishes these registrations. Gathers information about and assigns numbers to unidentified species.

Research Department

Works on problems relating to begonia culture.

Round Robins

Members exchange information about begonias and their culture through packets of letters which circulate among a small group of growers. There are dozens of these packets, called flights, on many specialized subjects.

Seed Fund

The Clayton M. Kelly Seed Fund offers seeds of begonia species and cultivars by mail. New acquisitions are discussed in the **Begonian**.

Slide Library

List of programs available from Slide Librarian.

Member Input Opportunities

Conservation Department

wants lists of species grown by members.

Nomenclature Department

wants photos and information on "U" numbers members are growing from seed.

Research Department

solicits suggestions on projects and participation in research.

Seed Fund

seeks donations of seed.

Slide Library

requests individual slides of begonias as well as complete slide programs.

**See also "Openings", preceding page.
Participate. You can make a difference.**



American Begonia Society
157 Monument
Rio Dell, CA 95562-1617

Address correction requested

Non Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 3735
Dallas, TX